

BRIDGES FOR NEWBORNS

The Bridges program links Orange County newborns to a healthcare home by facilitating access to healthcare coverage, a consistent medical provider and community resources.

How It Works

Case managers at the 11 participating hospitals screen mothers of newborns with a standardized screening tool to identify factors that may pose barriers to healthy growth and development and/or establishment of a healthcare home, such as lack of health insurance and chronic medical conditions. All families receive a Kit for New Parents, which includes a set of six parenting videos, a how-to guide for child illness titled, “What To Do When Your Child Gets Sick,” a bathtub safety thermometer, an emergency numbers magnet, the Infolink resource guide and a children’s book. Families with identified risk factors are referred to community or hospital-based service providers for ongoing follow-up, including home visitation. Up to 2,500 of these families receive in-depth Bridges assessment, case management and family support services for two years.

As the program manager, HASC:

- Sets protocol and guidelines for best practices
- Monitors program activities
- Coordinates data collection and reporting
- Establishes referral relationships with community-based organizations
- Facilitates continuing education for staff
- Provides ongoing day-to-day support to participating hospitals

Who Benefits

Newborns who receive proper health care as a result of the program's efforts—such as timely, complete immunizations and preventive care—benefit most directly from the program. Caregivers in need of parenting education and support, psychosocial services, financial assistance referrals, and health care for themselves and their babies also gain program benefits.

Bridges for Newborns, which originated from the Orange County Health Needs Assessment, is funded by the Children and Families Commission of Orange County from Proposition 10 tax revenues on a renewable basis. The Commission established a goal to see that children are ready to enter school healthy and ready to learn by age 5.



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