



## **DULCE: Developmental Understanding and Legal Collaboration for Everyone**

### **The Opportunity**

Babies under age 3 in RI are the most likely to be homeless, live in poverty, and experience effects of parental substance use disorders and/or maltreatment/neglect, risks known to be associated with poor health and development. Safe, secure, and nurturing early relationships can buffer these risks. Pediatric primary care is in a unique position to identify a family's community-based challenges and needs, and to promote early relational health, all critical for building a strong foundation for lifelong health and mental health.

CTC-RI is offering the opportunity for two pediatric/primary care practices to participate in a DULCE learning collaborative, a universal, early relational approach to strengths-based, family-centered child health care during the critical first six months of life.

### **DULCE**

The DULCE learning collaborative takes an interdisciplinary approach to foster healthy children and families. All families with infants in the primary care practice are eligible to participate, starting with their baby's first routine healthcare visit, and continuing for the next six months.

A Community Health Worker (CHW) Family Specialist – a CHW provided with specialized training– is embedded in the practice to help families with their identified goals, connect them to needed resources and co-create conditions for life-long health. The Family Specialist (FS) works with all interested families with newborns, supporting them through the infant's first 6 months of life. The CHW/FS works to better understand the needs of families by meeting with them during and in-between routine well-child visits, screening for health-related social needs and supporting the parent/infant relationship and infant's development. The CHW/FS and the interdisciplinary team (i.e. medical provider, legal partner, mental health representative, and practice lead) meet weekly to review positive screens and identify appropriate services or resources to assist families. The CHW/FS follows up with families to ensure that positive screens are addressed and families are thoroughly supported between well-child visits. CHW/FS serves as a bridge in connecting families to supports, building trusted relationships, providing support that parents need to raise healthy infants and advocating for their well-being.

### **Learning Collaborative Benefits**

The learning collaborative will run over a 15-month period, providing support to creating training, and managing the interdisciplinary team.

In collaboration with UnitedHealthcare and the Rhode Island Department of Health, each practice will receive \$20,000 in funding to support the project and have access to Medical Legal Partnership and practice facilitation support.

CHW/FS are required to attend trainings. All other team members are encouraged to attend.

DULCE – 9 hours	Newborn Behavioral Observations – 16 hours	Brazelton Touchpoints – 23 hours
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For more information, please refer to the [Call for Applications](#)