SEQUESTRATION’S DEVASTATING CUTS TO MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH PROGRAMS: MISSISSIPPI

On January 2, 2013, federal agencies and programs that fund maternal and child health services and research will experience an across-the-board 8.2% cut under sequestration. These cuts will devastate the ability to deliver critical services to mothers and babies in need, disproportionately impact low-income and uninsured families, and deliver a major blow to local economies. Below is a snapshot of how Mississippi women, infants, children and families will be impacted.

ACCESS

- 8,000 mothers and young children in Mississippi will be cut from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program. WIC provides nutrition and breastfeeding education, nutritious foods, and improved healthcare and social service access for low and moderate-income women and children.
- Cuts to the Children’s Hospitals Graduate Medical Education program would worsen shortages in pediatric specialties, especially in rural areas. This is funding the Nation relies on to train its next generation of pediatric physicians.

PREVENTION

- Nearly $780,000 would be cut from the Mississippi Title V Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Services Block Grant. This would result in over 28,500 fewer women, children and families served in the state. The MCH block grant supports a myriad of initiatives designed to promote optimal health, reduce disparities, combat infant mortality, prevent chronic conditions, and improve access to quality health care in the state. It currently serves over 208,000 individuals in the state.
- Over $238,000 would be cut from the Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program, resulting in 900 fewer Mississippi women being screened for cancer. Roughly 1,938 cases of breast cancer and 158 cases of cervical cancer are diagnosed every year in Mississippi. This program – which helps low-income and uninsured women get access to cancer screenings – served over 21,260 women in Mississippi over a 5-year period, catching 416 cervical/pre-malignant cancers and 280 breast cancers.
- Over $130,000 would be cut from the Mississippi Section 317 Immunization Program, resulting in 1,850 fewer children getting vaccinations. This program targets uninsured and low-income children who may not otherwise have access to life-saving vaccinations.
- 1 out of every 33 babies in Mississippi is born with a major birth defect. The causes of about 70% of birth defects are unknown. Sequestration will result in $1.7 million in cuts from the national birth defects tracking program.

RESEARCH

- $3.7 million in Mississippi research funding could be cut from the National Institutes of Health. Currently, about $34 million in NIH-funded awards goes to MS, supporting research at 9 institutions. These grants support local economies, contributing to over 5,110 jobs in biological sciences in Mississippi and over $15.4 million invested by venture capital firms into biomedical firms between 2004 and 2009.
- Nearly $67,000 could be cut from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development – the NIH Institute that conducts a majority of the Nation’s federally-funded maternal and child health research. Mississippi is home to the University of Mississippi and its medical center, Jackson State University, as well as the University of Southern Mississippi. A variety of NICHD-funded research is performed at these institutions, including research focused on hypertension and kidney disease in pregnancy, pre-eclampsia, barriers to HIV testing, and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).