

**APPLICATION TO IOWA PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
FOR AMERICORPS HEALTHCORPS SITE**

APPLICANT: Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa
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1. CASH MATCH

Visiting Nurse Services (VNS) of Iowa, a current IPHA member, is excited about the opportunity to partner with the Iowa Public Health Association and serve as a host site for an AmeriCorps member. The agency is prepared to make the \$8,700 cash commitment to the position.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

VNS of Iowa is a private, not-for-profit 501 (c)(3) agency providing health and human services in Polk County since 1908. Both the mission statement of the agency..... *"Partnering with our community to promote health, education, and well-being for a lifetime"*..... and the vision statement..... *"As a public health leader and advocate, VNS of Iowa partners with the community to meet the preventive health and educational needs of our diverse population"*..... coincide well with the premise of the IPHA AmeriCorps HealthCorps project.

The agency is managed by a President/CEO, an Executive Team of five (5) upper management level staff, and governed by a 14-member Board of Directors. The AmeriCorps member will be located with the Maternal/Child Health Division of the agency, which is directed by Cari Spear, RN, BSN, MSN, a member of the Executive Team. Direct supervision of the AmeriCorps member will be provided by Zoe Prevette, BSN, Maternal/Child Health Manager. Kevin Spitzig, Human Resources Director, along with Ms. Prevette will be responsible for member recruitment, the interview process, and recommendations to the IPHA Director of member selection.

VNS of Iowa will provide access to office space, phone, computer, email, fax and any equipment and/or materials that will be required for the AmeriCorps member to complete work tasks. All new staff at VNS of Iowa participate in a half-day new staff orientation, which the AmeriCorps member will attend. Ms. Prevette will also develop an on-site orientation for the AmeriCorps member to introduce the agency, programs/services offered, and information regarding community health issues which the agency is engaged in addressing.

3. CAPACITY AND ABILITY TO:

3.A. RESPOND TO COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS

Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa (VNS of Iowa) has the capacity and ability to support an AmeriCorps HealthCorps member who will identify and respond to community health needs for childhood wellness. The Iowa Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Comprehensive Title V Assets and Needs Assessment for 2015 (July 2010) identifies 1) racial disparities in infant mortality; 2) barriers to access health care, mental health care and dental care for low-income pregnant women; and 3) insufficient early and regular preventative dental care for children ages 0-5 years among the top ten community health needs in Iowa.

The report identified a 27% increase in tooth decay among low-income and Medicaid-enrolled 3rd graders in Iowa from 2006 to 2009. In addition, 26% of African American children in Iowa, compared with 19% of Caucasian children, have a special health care need that may have been prevented by early and ongoing prenatal and maternal health care. Rural health disparities were also identified, as 60% of Iowa children live in rural areas and face limited access to health services and providers who can deliver appropriate care.

According to the Iowa Department of Prenatal Health's Barriers to Prenatal Care Project Report (2008), between 3-5% of pregnant women in Jasper, Mashaska, Polk and Poweshiek Counties have difficulty accessing prenatal care, and 6% of pregnant women in these counties did not access prenatal care until their 2nd or 3rd trimesters.

Through the Title V funded Maternal and Child Health services, VNS of Iowa partners with local public health departments, community-based organizations, statewide organizations, and private providers to assure that quality health services are provided to mothers, children and families in Iowa. The major focus areas of Title V that address the promotion of child wellness include 1) Promoting the health of mothers and children by ensuring access to quality maternal health and child health preventive health services, especially for low-income families or families with limited availability of health services, including those living in rural areas; 2) Providing care coordination services to assist families to access appropriate medical and dental homes for preventive and specialty care; 3) Reducing infant mortality and the incidence of preventable diseases and disabling conditions; 4) Increasing the number of children appropriately immunized against disease.

3. B. IMPACT HEALTH OF URBAN AND RURAL IOWANS

In October 2010, VNS of Iowa was awarded the Title V Maternal and Child Health grant in Polk County as well as the surrounding counties of Jasper, Mahaska and Poweshiek, in addition to Jackson and Clinton Counties in eastern Iowa. The AmeriCorps HealthCorps member will focus on building local partnerships in these surrounding counties to implement community based infrastructures for outreach and public education in these rural areas.

4. DATA COLLECTION

4.A. NUMBERS REACHED THROUGH AMERICORPS MEMBER

The AmeriCorps member will collect statistics on the number of unduplicated Iowans reached by local public education efforts. Efforts will focus on 2 main areas: 1) prenatal care, and 2) medical and dental homes. These efforts will include activities that concentrate on reducing the risk of preventable chronic disease and obesity. The first focus, pre-natal services, will provide nutrition education, identify high-risk health indicators, and implement needed interventions. The second focus, securing a medical and dental home, will provide on-going health maintenance, nutrition education, and promotion of child wellness. Research indicates good prenatal care and access to medical/dental homes has a positive impact on childhood wellness and helps to alleviate and/or prevent obesity and chronic health disease.. A tracking system will be developed that will document the date and location of public education activities as well as the numbers in attendance. A sign-up sheet will typically be made available for group meetings or activities. At a minimum, 300 unduplicated Iowans will be served through activities over a 12-month period.

4.B. INCREASE IN LITERACY, WELLNESS KNOWLEDGE & INCREASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The AmeriCorps HealthCorps member at VNS of Iowa will collect statistics on the number of unduplicated Iowans reached by local public education efforts, and will seek the following performance measures: 1) 60% of Iowans who attend or participate in a local health education meeting or event will indicate an increased knowledge on the importance of prenatal care; and 2) 60% of Iowans who attend or participate in a local health education meeting or event will indicate an increased knowledge of the need for children to have a medical home and/or an increased knowledge about accessing medical and dental care and medical and dental homes.

The AmeriCorps HealthCorps member will achieve these outcomes by increasing the capacity of VNS of Iowa's Maternal and Child Health nurses and outreach workers. The AmeriCorps HealthCorps member will seek to increase VNS of Iowa's partnerships with local community social service organizations, pregnancy centers, schools, faith based organizations, businesses and medical and dental providers. Through these partnerships, the AmeriCorps HealthCorps member will organize local public education meetings and events to achieve the anticipated outcomes of increased knowledge and/or access to prenatal care and medical homes.

The AmeriCorps HealthCorps member will design pre and post knowledge surveys—guided by the Site Supervisor at VNS of Iowa—which will measure the impact of the coordination of local outreach for public health education that promotes childhood wellness within the defined focus areas. At a minimum, the member will seek knowledge survey results from 300 unduplicated Iowans over a 12 month period.

5. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

Through coordination of outreach and public education efforts for VNS of Iowa Title V Community Block Grant for Maternal and Child Health, the AmeriCorps HealthCorps member will seek to create local, community-level infrastructures by identifying and approaching healthcare providers, local boards of health, faith-based entities, schools, community organizations and businesses who will continue to partner with the VNS of Iowa Maternal and Child Health Program to implement community outreach and public education that promotes childhood immunizations, prenatal care and preventative care provided by medical and dental homes.

6. EXPERIENCE WITH DIVERSE POPULATIONS AND FAITH BASED COMMUNITIES

VNS of Iowa was founded in 1908 and for over 100 years has been dedicated to serving uninsured and underinsured residents in Polk County. The agency provides public health and social service needs of vulnerable children and families in Polk County and nearby communities.

The infrastructure of the agency includes an Outreach and Recruitment Team who have primary responsibility for providing education to the community and identify referrals for services. The Outreach team works with agency staff to remove barriers, and provide education to staff on cultural competence. The Outreach team has established trusted relationships with the community and with targeted populations. The programs at VNS of Iowa serve the expanding refugee and immigrant populations in Polk County and employ Hispanic, Vietnamese, Sudanese interpreters as well as other languages. The agency maintains numerous relationships with a variety of churches in the neighborhoods where clientele reside.

7. COMMITMENT & EXPERIENCE OF STAFF PROVIDING SUPERVISION

The staff designated to supervise the AmeriCorps member is Zoe Prevette, BSN. Ms. Prevette has been employed with VNS of Iowa for approximately a year and a half, as the Maternal/Child Health Manager. She currently supervises a total of 19 staff through the various services she manages, i.e. Nurse Family Partnership, I-Smile™, and others. Ms. Prevette has a unique background of labor/delivery and triage nurse, public health educator, and humanitarian aid work and obstetric/perinatal consultant in Sudan and Jordan. Her experience with diverse populations and community outreach will lend itself well to supervision of the AmeriCorps member. Due to Ms. Prevette's experience in foreign aid work, she is familiar with federal regulations and requirements as well as well trained in the delivery of Title V Maternal and Child Health Services.

8. AGENCY'S EXPERIENCE WITH IOWA COMMISSION OF VOLUNTEER SERVICES, AMERICORPS OR OTHER NATIONAL PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMS

The agency has experience in volunteer management as evidenced by implementation of the Senior Companion Program (SCP) and the Foster Grandparent Program (FGP). Both of these programs are funded through the Corporation for National and Community Services.

During FY 08, VNS of Iowa hosted an AmeriCorps member through a partnership with Prevent Child Abuse, the state-wide applicant for a 10 site AmeriCorps project that partnered with communities to develop and lead strategies to prevent child abuse. In addition, during FY 10 the agency hosted a VISTA volunteer, who assisted with resource development and volunteer recruitment. The VISTA volunteer is now employed by the agency as Development/Grants Assistant, following completion of their assignment.

Iowa Public Health Association for AmeriCorps HealthCorps Site
Addendum to Application for Visiting Nurse Services of Iowa

Section 4 DATA COLLECTION

4.A. NUMBERS REACHED THROUGH AMERICORPS MEMBER

The AmeriCorps member will collect statistics on the number of unduplicated individuals reached by local public education efforts. These efforts will focus on one main area: nutrition education during prenatal care home visits and education activities. The education efforts will include activities that concentrate on reducing the risk of preventable chronic disease and obesity. Pre-natal services will provide nutritional education, identify high-risk indicators, and implement needed interventions. Within the home visits, the education will focus on prevention or alleviating obesity in children before the child is born with proper nutrition education for the infant, and then later for toddlers. Mother will also have the benefit of improved dental care as would the child. A tracking system will be developed that will document the date and location of public education activities or home visits as well as the numbers in attendance.

A sign-up sheet will typically be made available for group meetings or activities. At a minimum, the member will seek knowledge survey results from 300 unduplicated individuals over a 12 month period.

4.B. INCREASE IN LITERACY, WELLNESS KNOWLEDGE & INCREASED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The AmeriCorps HealthCorps member at VNS of Iowa will collect statistics on the number of unduplicated individuals reached by local public education efforts, and will seek the following performance measure: 1) 60% of the participants will indicate an increased knowledge on wellness and nutrition, as provided through prenatal visits and education meetings.

The AmeriCorps HealthCorps member will achieve these outcomes by increasing the capacity of VNS of Iowa's Maternal and Child Health nurses and outreach workers. The AmeriCorps member will seek to increase VNS of Iowa's partnerships with local community social service organizations, pregnancy centers, schools, faith based organizations, businesses and medical and dental providers.

The AmeriCorps HealthCorps member will design pre and post knowledge surveys – guided by the Site Supervisor at VNS of Iowa – which will measure the impact of the coordination of local outreach for public health education that promotes childhood wellness within the defined focus area.