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Five State Teams to Form Learning Collaborative to Support Healthy Child Development

WASHINGTON, DC, October 2, 2009 – The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) announced today that five state teams were selected through a competitive process to form the Assuring Better Child Health and Development Consortium (ABCD III Consortium). The goal of this Consortium is to develop and test sustainable models for improving care coordination and linkages between pediatric primary care providers and other providers who support children’s healthy development. The states — Arkansas, Illinois, Minnesota, Oklahoma, and Oregon —have committed to work together, with the support of NASHP and The Commonwealth Fund, to improve referral, care coordination, case management and linkages across systems that influence child development.

The ABCD III learning collaborative will launch this month. The states included in the learning collaborative will develop lasting policy and systems improvements and practice improvements that build and strengthen linkages between primary care providers and other child and family service providers, thereby improving the quality of care for children with or at-risk of developmental delay. ABCD III initiatives will be linked to medical home initiatives in each state. Each state will receive funding and in-depth and tailored technical assistance to support their efforts. The technical assistance program will provide opportunities for collaborative members to exchange insights and experience with national experts and their peers through in-person and distance learning.

This is the fourth project in NASHP’s ABCD Initiative. Through this initiative, which is supported by The Commonwealth Fund, NASHP has worked with 25 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico to improve the delivery of developmental services. The work of this new collaborative will build on these earlier efforts, and would not have been possible without the innovation and dedication of these states. For more information about the ABCD initiative, please visit <http://abcd.nashpforums.org>.

The following information highlights some of the ways collaborative members plan to use the funding and technical assistance provided to help develop and strengthen linkages and care coordination in their state.

Arkansas The Medicaid Program will provide technical assistance to primary care providers (PCPs) in four pilot communities through its Quality Improvement Organization (QIO). The project will develop materials for parents, create a quality measurement system for qualifying practices, and establish learning collaboratives to assist PCPs in identifying service providers for follow up services.

Illinois will utilize a statewide provider database that will integrate existing referral resources including Early Intervention, and pilot coordination of child and family service providers with primary care providers at the community level, especially for families whose children do not qualify for early intervention or special education services.

Minnesota will assist designated care coordinators in participating pilot PCP offices to implement standard referral protocols, integrate information provided by child and family service providers into clinic work flow, incorporate practices learned from the Minnesota Medical Home Project, and encourage the co-location of services.

Oklahoma PCPs in four pilot communities will refer to Early Intervention or Oklahoma Department of Health Child Guidance (CG) staff in their area. The grantee, the Oklahoma Health Care Authority, will

contract with CG staff who will work directly with the child's family, make necessary referrals, and track and monitor service delivery and outcome data.

Oregon will leverage Medicaid's quality improvement processes and resources with the aid of an external quality review organization (EQRO). The EQRO will create an improvement model that integrates care coordination with standardized screening and referrals at the clinical level, with supporting payment systems and metrics.

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The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) is an independent academy of state health policy makers working together to identify emerging issues, develop policy solutions, and improve state health policy and practice. As a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to helping states achieve excellence in health policy and practice, NASHP provides a forum on critical health issues across branches and agencies of state government. For more information about NASHP, please visit www.nashp.org

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