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LEGACY REPORT: UNDERSTANDING AND ADDRESSING HEALTH DISPARITIES AMONG AFRICAN AMERICAN INFANTS IN SAN FRANCISCO

KEY WORDS

birth outcome disparities, African Americans, breastfeeding

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Assess the needs of a community or population of interest and develop appropriate interventions in an evidence-based way.
- Foster relationships in the community and bring together individuals from different disciplines.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of a program/intervention.
- Gain experience applying for funding.

PROJECTS

1. Partnership between Black Infant Health (BIH) and StoryCorps

a. Objectives:

- Characterize birth disparities by eliciting the life stories of African American mothers who are clients of San Francisco BIH.
- Bring awareness about these disparities to the general population.
- Empower the mothers involved through self-advocacy.
- Promote BIH San Francisco.
- Form a partnership with a community organization.

b. Activities:

- Conducted a literature review on birth outcome disparities and the life course perspective.
- Facilitated collaboration between BIH and StoryCorps.
- Met regularly with members of BIH staff.
- Helped coordinate a day of Door-to-Door interviews at BIH conducted by StoryCorps.

c. Outcomes:

- A series of voice recordings telling the life stories of mothers who are clients of BIH San Francisco. The interviews occurred between pairs that included BIH clients, their family members, and BIH staff. These interviews will be published on the BIH website and later archived in the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History & Culture.
- Developed a relationship with BIH, which enabled further smaller collaborations and opportunities.

- d. Lessons in Implementation
 - Building a relationship with a community organization takes time.
 - Meeting the needs of your community partner is key to a successful project.

2. MilkMoney Study

- a. Project Objectives:
 - Develop an incentive intervention program to encourage breastfeeding among low-income African American mothers who are clients of the Supplemental Nutrition program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
 - Conduct a pilot randomized controlled trial.
 - Assess the acceptability of the intervention.
- b. Activities:
 - Conducted a literature review on barriers to breastfeeding among African American mothers and researched WIC policies around breastfeeding support and food packages.
 - Conducted mini-focus groups to gauge interest in the incentive program at BIH and consulted with BIH staff.
 - Created a study protocol and obtained IRB approval.
 - Applied for multiple sources of funding.
- c. Outcomes: Subject enrollment began May 2014.
- d. Lessons in Implementation: To be determined.

FUTURE POTENTIAL PLANS

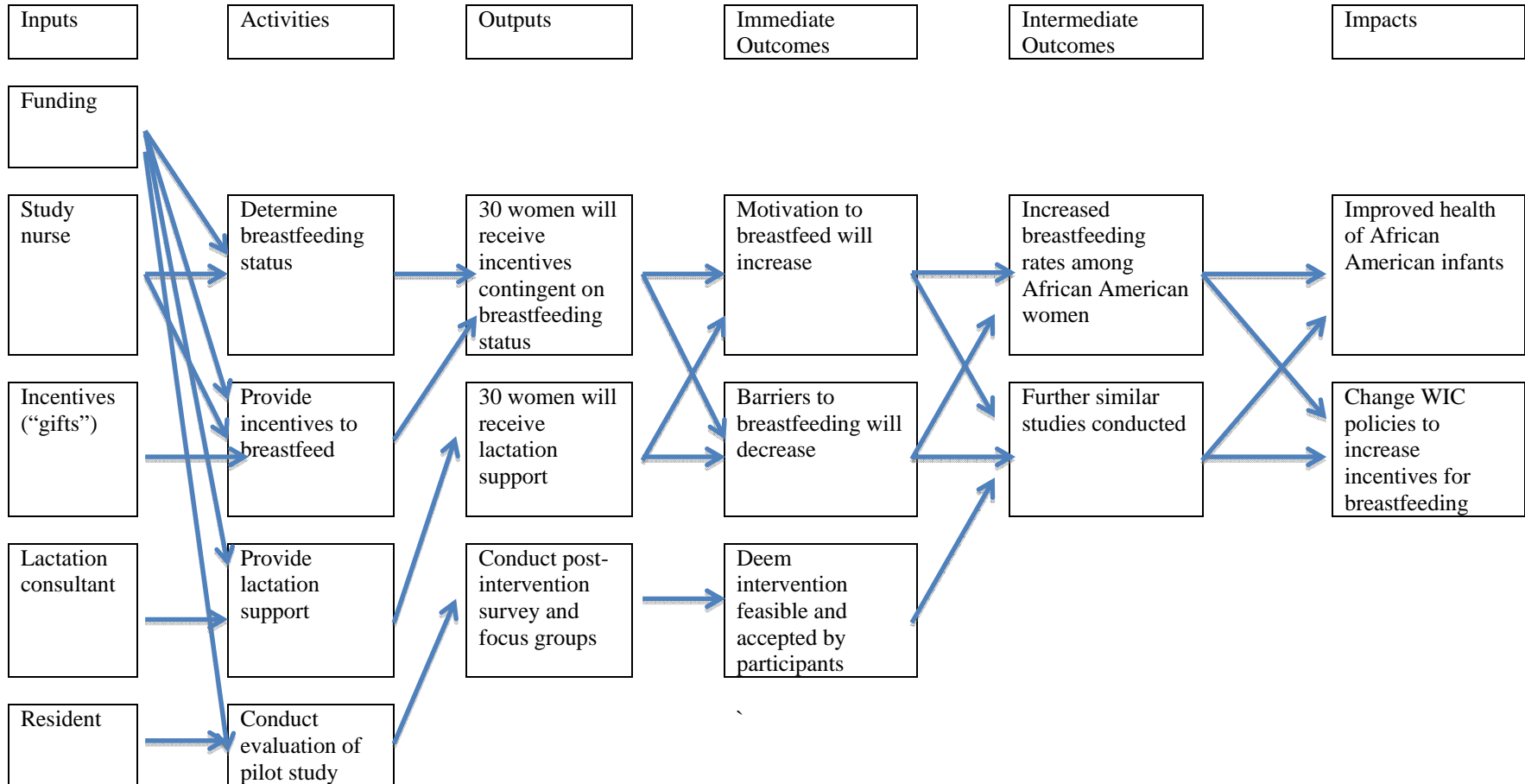
- Complete the MilkMoney study and conduct post-intervention focus groups.
- Present the findings of the MilkMoney study at an academic meeting and/or submit a paper for publication.
- Conduct a larger randomized control trial to assess the effect of the incentive intervention on breastfeeding during the first 6 months of life.
- Develop other interventions aimed at reducing health disparities in infancy and early childhood.

RESOURCES

- *Key Individuals/Contacts:* Jenee Johnson, Natalia Fidelholtz, Carol Miller, Paula Braveman, Maya Vasquez, Valerie Flaherman, Ana Delgado
- *Key Organizations:* Black Infant Health, StoryCorps
- *Funding Sources:* CTSI Resident Research Program

PLUS Legacy Report

Problem: Breastfeeding rates are much lower among low-income African Americans as compared to other ethnicities and socioeconomic groups. These infants are at higher risk for health morbidities and thus could particularly benefit from the health advantages offered by six months of exclusive breastfeeding. While the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program provides breastfeeding support, it also issues free formula to its participants, which may contribute to low breastfeeding rates in this population.



MilkMoney Study Protocol

