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CHAMPS Wins the HHS Office on Women’s Health Reducing Disparities in Breastfeeding Innovation Challenge Award

Mississippi CHAMPS, a program of the Center for Health Equity, Education and Research (CHEER) at Boston Medical Center, has won a national award for reducing racial breastfeeding disparities in Mississippi. CHAMPS (Communities and Hospitals Advancing Maternity Practices) is [one of 15 US programs](#) to receive the *Reducing Disparities in Breastfeeding Innovation Challenge* award, created by the Office on Women’s Health to reward programs with a track record in increasing breastfeeding rates and decreasing disparities. The challenge has three phases. CHAMPS received a prize of \$15,000, and an opportunity to advance to the next phase.



Members of CHAMPS and ROSE with the Merit Health Central hospital team during a site visit in early 2020

Mississippi CHAMPS supports hospital implementation of the WHO’s Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding, and partners with Reaching Our Sisters Everywhere (ROSE), a national organization dedicated to increasing breastfeeding rates in African Americans, to engage the community.

“CHAMPS is honored to receive this award,” says Anne Merewood PhD, MPH, Director of CHAMPS and CHEER. “It represents hard work, vision, and persistence from our partners, the community, and Mississippi’s birthing hospitals.”

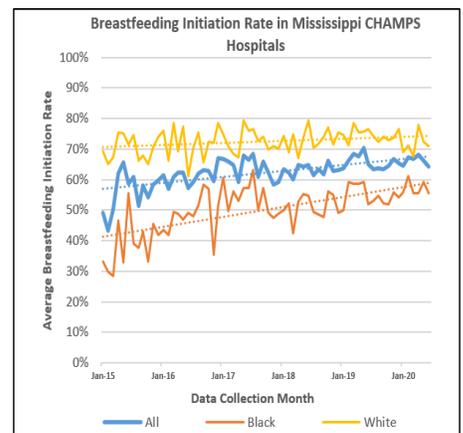


The ROSE team with Community Transformers of Columbus MS

Since MS CHAMPS launched in 2014, 39 of the state’s 41 birthing hospitals have signed up, and breastfeeding initiation at MS CHAMPS hospitals has risen from 56% to 66%. The gap in breastfeeding initiation between Black and White dyads has decreased by 17 percentage points, and the number of Baby-Friendly designated Mississippi hospitals has increased from 0-22. Some 60% of Mississippi’s births now occur in Baby-Friendly facilities.

Mississippi partners include Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Mississippi, Every Mother, the Mississippi Perinatal Quality Improvement Collaborative, and the Mississippi WIC. Mississippi CHAMPS is funded by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation and the Bower Foundation.

*CDC data maps on the next page show the changes in percentage of births occurring at MS designated “Baby-Friendly” hospitals between 2014 and 2020.



About the Office on Women’s Health

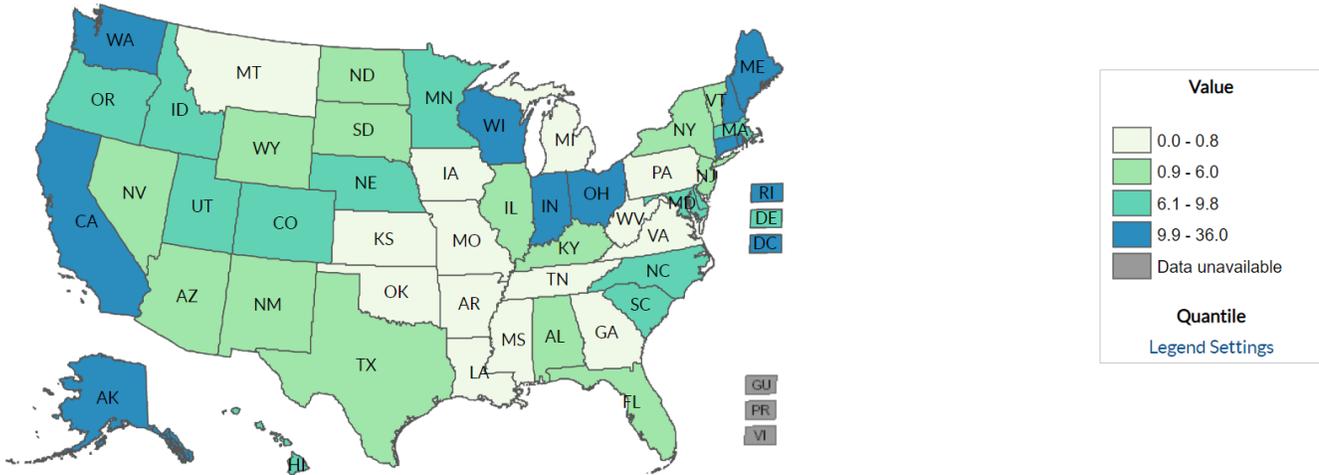
The Office on Women’s Health was established in 1991 within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). OWH coordinates women’s health efforts across HHS and addresses critical women’s health issues by informing and advancing policies, educating health care professionals and consumers, and supporting innovative programs. Learn more at <https://www.womenshealth.gov/>



2014

Percent of live births occurring at facilities designated as "baby friendly" by the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) †

View by: Total

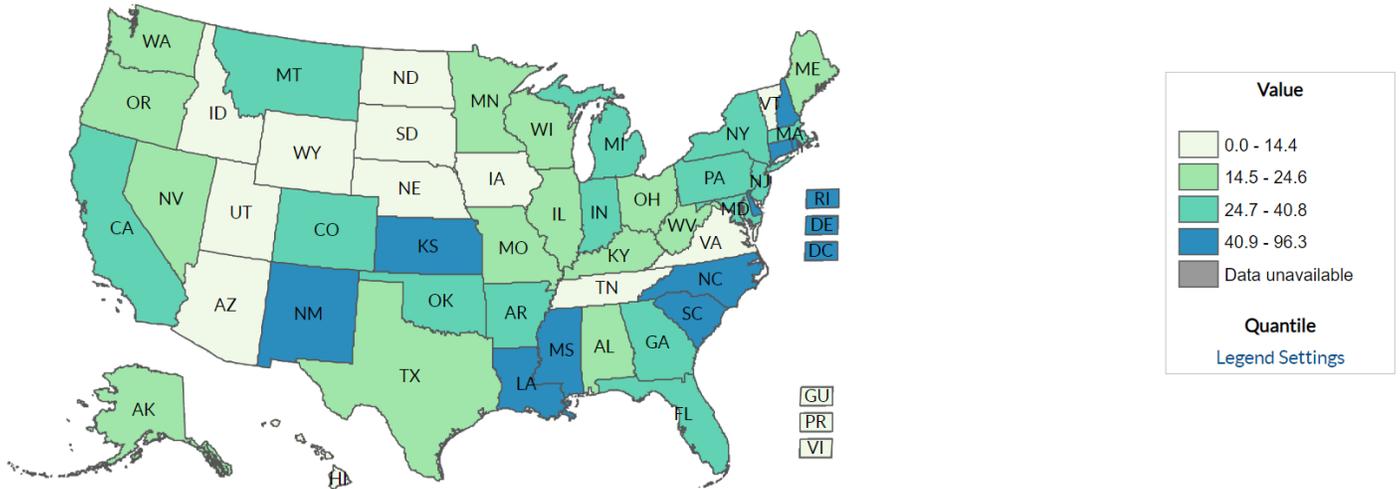


**Mississippi is listed in the lowest quantile for 2014*

2020

Percent of live births occurring at facilities designated as "baby friendly" by the Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative (BFHI) †

View by: Total



**Mississippi is listed in the highest quantile for 2020*

