



CaCoon: Public Health Care Coordination



CACOON PROGRAM

The focus of the CaCoon Program is on the child, birth through age 20, with complex health conditions that result in the need for specialized medical, educational, vocational, and social services, as well as the impact of those needs on the family. The primary service of the program is care coordination. Registered nurses, with education in public health and working in local county health departments, provide community-based CaCoon services. Their practice demands a wide range of communication skills and a broad knowledge base including the ability to identify health problems, provide nursing interventions among culturally diverse populations, and refer individuals and families for needed services. CaCoon services are provided primarily in the home, but may also occur at local health departments, in the hospital or by phone.

CaCoon services are not dependent upon family income.

CARE COORDINATION

Children with complex conditions are often cared for by a variety of health providers, programs and services. Communication among providers and across agencies is challenging and fragmentation or duplication of services can occur. The ability to coordinate care and services saves the family time, energy and resources and improves child health outcomes. Public health nurses can assist families with information they need to access and coordinate services for their child or they can assist families with developing these skills, if needed. Nurses conduct assessments, identify strengths and resource needs and develop a mutually agreed upon plan for addressing issues based on family priorities. They collaborate with other disciplines when required and advocate or “troubleshoot” to remove barriers to care and services.

Children who qualify for services include (but are not limited to):

- Children with **congenital conditions** such as spina bifida, cleft lip and/or palate and heart defects
- Children with **genetic disorders** such as Down Syndrome, Fragile X and PKU
- Children with **conditions resulting from prematurity** such as Cerebral Palsy, seizure disorders, and feeding disorders
- Children with **chronic conditions** such as asthma and juvenile rheumatoid arthritis, Autism and ADHD, hearing and vision impairments

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you want more information about the CaCoon program, please call:

(503) 494-4219 in Portland, or
1-877-307-7070 ext 44219 (statewide)

You can make referrals for CaCoon services by calling your local county health department.

Diane Smith, MA, RD, LD
Manager, Community-Based Services

James Ledbetter, MD
Director, Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Needs

CACOON PROGRAM SERVICES

Family and child health assessment:

Having a special health or developmental condition often leads to other complex health and emotional issues that must be monitored over a child's lifetime. Accurate assessment of the full scope of the child's health and its impact on the family is an important piece of the CaCoon plan of intervention for each family.

Monitoring child health and development:

The goal of health and developmental monitoring is to prevent secondary conditions and to maximize the child's developmental potential. Nurses use a variety of tools to assess progress made through interventions and to teach families about health and development. These tools help parents to understand their child's condition, help them prepare their child to manage their own healthcare, and encourage them to seek early treatment for identified problems.

Linking families to specialty health care and community resources: Children with special healthcare needs often require specialized services throughout the child's lifetime. Public health nurses help families locate specialty resources including financial services for which their child may qualify.

Support and counseling: The physical, emotional and financial stress faced by families of children with special healthcare needs can be challenging. Nurses acknowledge these challenges and help families problem solve, which is an important part of family care. Referral to services such as counseling and respite care can preserve energy and increase a family's ability to function to their potential.

Advocacy: Families sometimes need assistance navigating the maze of health and social services. Nurses use their knowledge of specialty health care, education services, and community resources to advocate for children with special healthcare needs. Public health nurses also work to inform community leaders of the needs of this population and to increase the availability of services.

Service Coordination and Community

Consultation: Public health nurses coordinate services by collaborating with the child's primary care physician, specialty care providers and community providers. Public health nurses also consult on councils, such as Local Interagency Coordinating Councils, to support interagency collaboration among groups serving children with special healthcare needs.



The Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Needs (OCCYSHN) is funded by the Maternal and Child Health Bureau and administers its programs through Oregon Health and Science University, Child Development and Rehabilitation Center (CDRC).

Visit the website at:

<http://www.ohsu.edu/outreach/cdrc/oscsn/community/nursing1.php>