

## Investing in Health and Early Learning Systems to Improve Child Outcomes

In 2017 the US Departments of HHS and Education issued a joint policy statement supporting the alignment of health and early learning systems, noting that, “Early learning and health care providers have an integral role to play in ensuring that all children—particularly the most vulnerable children—have access to the healthy environments, caregiving, supports, and services they need to thrive, and that these programs are coordinated and aligned to achieve maximum positive impact.”<sup>1</sup>

“Health equity is the state in which everyone has the opportunity to attain full health potential and no one is disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or any other socially defined circumstance” (p. 2).<sup>2</sup>

Children's health encompasses the physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. These factors are impacted by positive and negative experiences that occur day to day within the child's life and environment. According to Andersen et al. (2003), “Early childhood programs are a critical outlet for fostering the mental and physical development of young children.”<sup>3</sup> These programs provide opportunities for leveraging comprehensive, evidence-based standards and practices to foster healthy behaviors, build social-emotional competence, and promote academic readiness. High quality programs provide an opportunity to support children in attaining their full health potential.

In 2014, the importance of health and safety in quality child care was recognized under the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014. The preamble to the 2016 regulation based on the law included the following:



“All families receiving CCDF assistance, regardless of where they live, should have basic assurances about the safety and quality of services they receive” (81 Fed. Reg. 67,446).

“Health and safety is a necessary foundation for quality child care that supports early learning and development. Research shows that licensing and regulatory requirements for child care affect the quality of care and child development” (81 Fed. Reg. 67,444).

Building an effective state, tribe or territory support network to promote early childhood health and well-being includes utilizing cross-system partnerships to increase promotion and understanding of best practices and resources and to provide a continuum of support for quality of healthy and safe caregiving environments. This brief will help states, territories, and Tribes reflect on the supports child care providers need as they reopen child care that closed during the pandemic. It will also help them come into compliance with health and safety training and standards (section 5 of the 2022–2024 state CCDF Plan). We aim to show how the development or expansion of a network of child care health consultants (CCHC) is one strategy for supporting the health, safety, and well-being of children in child care. With new funding from the American

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, & U.S. Department of Education. (2017). Policy Statement to Support the Alignment of Health and Early Learning Systems. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ecd/health>

<sup>2</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2019). *Vibrant and healthy kids: Aligning science, practice, and policy to advance health equity*. National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/25466>

<sup>3</sup> Anderson, L. M., Shinn, C., Fullilove, M. T., Scrimshaw, S.C., Fielding, J.E., Normand, J., & Task Force on Community Preventive Services. (2003). The effectiveness of early childhood development programs: A systematic review. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 24(3):32–46.

Rescue Plan Act of 2021,<sup>4</sup> states, territories, and Tribes have an opportunity to build strong sustainable systems of child care consultation and build back better.

## Child Care Health Consultation

A CCHC is “a licensed health professional who works with child care programs to promote the health and development of children, families, and staff and to ensure a healthy and safe child care environment.” CCHCs have education and experience in child and community health and early care and education.<sup>5</sup> CCHCs like other consultants specializing in mental health, developmental health, or dental health, bring specialized expertise and act as a trusted resource for programs and providers. The role of the consultant is to promote the health and development of children, families, and staff and to ensure a healthy and safe child care environment.<sup>6</sup>

## Impact of Child Care Health Consultation

Research has demonstrated that health and safety policies and practices improve when child care programs have the services of child care health consultants.<sup>7</sup> These include the following:

- ◆ Advancing health and safety policies to align with state and *Caring for Our Children* standards
- ◆ Improving health practices, such as healthy nutrition, safe food handling, infection control, sanitation, and safe and active play
- ◆ Connecting children and their families to a medical home and resources that are available to support children’s healthy development
- ◆ Providing staff training that will impact the health and safety of all the children in the program
- ◆ Increasing confidence and effectiveness of early childhood providers
- ◆ Linking caregivers to training and resources to support children with special needs

### Connecticut Provides CCHC During Pandemic

[CTCARES for Family Child Care](#) is an initiative from the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) that is designed to help licensed family child care home providers during the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) emergency. This program connects providers with an OEC Family Child Care Network to offer supports to help them keep their businesses running. Providers who join a Family Child Care Network in their communities can access various benefits, including health consultation from the [Connecticut Nurses’ Association](#) (CNA). CNA offers free phone support, including information on the following:

- Practices related to reducing the transmission of germs
- Strategies for keeping children and families safe
- Topics such as nutrition, physical activity, and health

Health consultants can play a vital role in providing evidence-based trainings and resources to child care programs, as well as strategies for approaching health policies and procedures within a program.

<sup>4</sup> H.R. 1319, 117th Congress (2021–2022). American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1319/text>

<sup>5</sup> National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. (2020). *CFOC standards online database*. <https://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/1.6.0.1>

<sup>6</sup> Crowley, A. A. (2001). Child care health consultation: An ecological model. *Journal for Specialists in Pediatric Nursing*, 6(4), 170–181.

<sup>7</sup> Maternal and Child Health Bureau. (2006). The influence of child care health consultants in promoting children’s health and well-being: A report on selected resources. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources Services Administration. <https://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/resources/11636>

## Roles of a CCHC to Support Child Care Programs

The responsibilities of a CCHC can vary based on child care providers' needs. Some common functions of CCHCs include the following:



- ◆ Reviewing written health policies, plans, and procedures
  - ◆ Offering training on health and safety topics
  - ◆ Providing resources for caregivers and for distribution to families
  - ◆ Supporting children with disabilities
  - ◆ Consulting in a family child care home or center classroom
- ◆ Reviewing health records of children and staff
  - ◆ Teaching and monitoring medication administration practices
  - ◆ Interpreting standards, regulations, and accreditation requirements related to health and safety

## Partnering for Service Delivery

CCHCs are part of a broader early care and education community, which can be supported through partnerships at both the state and local levels. Infant–Early Childhood Mental Health Consultants (IECMHC) focus on the social-emotional well-being of children in child care. IECMHCs have expertise in early childhood and mental health. They form collaborative partnerships with adults who care for young children. Within that collaboration, professionals build their capacity to support children's healthy social-emotional development and to respond appropriately to mental health needs.<sup>8</sup> Infant/Toddler Specialists can be a key support for state-based professional development systems by collaborating with the extensive training and technical assistance resources of Early Head Start and providing services to the infant/toddler workforce, including education and training, technical assistance, mentoring, and coaching.<sup>9</sup> Building partnerships across services and disciplines increases the quality of safe and healthy environments to increase the health and well-being of children, caregivers, and families.



## Child Care Health Consultation in State Child Care Licensing

A review of states' **child care licensing regulations** found 14 states that require child care centers to work with a CCHC.<sup>10</sup> Four of these states also require home-based child care providers to have a CCHC—two of these states have the requirement for both family child care homes and group child care homes and two have it only for group child care homes.

<sup>8</sup> Center of Excellence for Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation. (n.d.). *Infant and early childhood mental health consultation—Competencies*. [https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs\\_campaigns/IECMHC/infant-early-child-mental-health-consult-competencies.pdf](https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/programs_campaigns/IECMHC/infant-early-child-mental-health-consult-competencies.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> Child Care State Capacity Building Center. (2017). *Developing a statewide network of infant/toddler specialists: Technical assistance guide for states and territories*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care. <https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/infant-toddler-resource-guide/guide-developing-statewide-network-infant-toddler-specialists-revised>

<sup>10</sup> The review of child care licensing requirements was done using regulations posted on the National Database of Child Care Licensing Regulations (<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/licensing>) as of July 15, 2020.

The requirements about CCHCs vary from state to state, but they often say that the child care provider must have an agreement with a CCHC who can do one or more of these tasks:

- ◆ Provide consultation a specific number of times (for example, once a month), including onsite visits
- ◆ Review program health care policies
- ◆ Approve program procedures for the administration of medication
- ◆ Assist in developing care plans for children with special health care needs
- ◆ Provide training to staff on health and safety topics
- ◆ Serve as a contact for advice during a medical emergency
- ◆ Observe and advise center staff who care for infants and toddlers

Below is a section with [examples of states with licensing requirements about CCHCs](#).

## Child Care Health Consultation in Quality Rating and Improvement Systems

Some **quality rating and improvement systems** (QRIS) include standards about health and safety. A review of QRIS standards found seven states that have standards for early care and education programs about working with CCHCs or nurses to support the use of high-quality health and safety practices.

The states vary in how they incorporate health consultants into the standards for achieving specific levels of quality within their QRIS frameworks. Some examples of how programs can demonstrate meeting standards in health and safety include the following:

- ◆ Documenting an annual visit from a CCHC
- ◆ Conducting a health and safety assessment with a CCHC
- ◆ Reviewing children's health records with a CCHC
- ◆ Establishing health and safety policies for the program with support from a CCHC

In states where their QRIS rating framework is based on early points, working with a CCHC is sometimes an option under the category of health and safety. Also, states may make access to a CCHC a benefit of participating in the QRIS.

Below is a section with [examples of states with QRIS standards about CCHCs](#) that include the availability of CCHCs to QRIS participants or the option to work with a CCHC to earn points on the rating scale.

## CCHC Systems

Several models for providing and financing child care health consultation exist. These consultation services may be funded by the state or may be fee-for-service, either through a parent agency or independent contractors. Models include the provision of consultation by independent consultants, telephone consultation helplines, or a network of consultants.

For technical assistance, contact the National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance at [QualityAssuranceCenter@ecetta.info](mailto:QualityAssuranceCenter@ecetta.info).

One option is a Child Care Health Consultant Network, which is a statewide network of health consultants who can work directly with the child care workforce or state agencies to increase knowledge and implementation of best practices in health, safety, and wellness. This network may be housed within public health departments, child care resource and referral agencies, or a statewide registry.

**Strategies that can be employed to create a CCHC system include the following:**

- ◆ Conducting an environmental scan of existing health and safety needs and resources
- ◆ Creating strategies for workforce development
- ◆ Developing a vision for a CCHC model that works for your state
- ◆ Developing an equitable action plan for the implementation of your vision
- ◆ Using an evaluation for continuous quality improvement

## State Child Care Health Consultant Initiatives

### Table of State Child Care Health Consultant Initiatives

The following table highlights several state initiatives that support health consultation for child care providers. The table notes the states that

- ◆ have a child care licensing requirement about the use of CCHCs,
- ◆ embed health consultation in QRISs, and
- ◆ provide resources for child care providers and health consultants.

The states included here are a sample of efforts from across the United States found mentioned in

- ◆ Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Plans,
- ◆ licensing regulations,
- ◆ QRIS standards, and on
- ◆ public websites.

Below the table is a section of [descriptions of state CCHC initiatives](#) that provides more details and links to specific aspects of the states' activities.

# The Role of Child Care Health Consultants



State Initiative	Licensing Requirement for CCHC	QRIS Standard for CCHC	Online CCHC Directory	Resources for Providers	Resources for CCHCs
<p><b>Alabama</b></p> <p><a href="#">Healthy Child Care Alabama</a> supports child care centers, homes, and relative care providers with visits and telephone consultation from Nurse Health Consultants.</p>	n/a	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Visits and telephone consultation</li> <li>◆ Training</li> </ul>	n/a
<p><b>Arizona</b></p> <p><a href="#">Quality First</a> is a quality improvement program that assigns a Child Care Health Consultant to participants after they are officially enrolled. Providers in Indigenous communities who are enrolled in Quality First program also have access to health consultants. At the county level—for example, <a href="#">Pima County</a> and <a href="#">Maricopa County</a>—Quality First participants are connected with child care health consultants and provide resources and training on health and safety topics.</p>	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ All participants are assigned a health consultant</li> </ul>	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Visits, email, and telephone consultation</li> <li>◆ Resource list on website</li> <li>◆ Training</li> </ul>	n/a
<p><b>Arkansas</b></p> <p><a href="#">Healthy Child Care Arkansas</a> provides live and web-based trainings; free of charge consultations to child care professionals and Child Care Aware agencies on issues related to children's health through a full-time CCHC available Monday through Friday; and relevant and current health-related information on their website.</p>	n/a	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Telephone and email consultation</li> <li>◆ Training</li> <li>◆ Resource list on website</li> </ul>	n/a



State Initiative	Licensing Requirement for CCHC	QRIS Standard for CCHC	Online CCHC Directory	Resources for Providers	Resources for CCHCs
<p><b>California</b></p> <p>The <a href="#">California Childcare Health Program</a> is a community-based program that trains early care and education professionals on health and safety issues, supports a statewide child care health consultation network, and conducts research. It is based at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) School of Nursing, Department of Family Health Care Nursing.</p>	n/a	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Resource list on website</li> <li>◆ Training curricula</li> <li>◆ Factsheets for families</li> <li>◆ Posters</li> <li>◆ Sample forms, checklists, policies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Training curricula</li> <li>◆ Newsletter</li> <li>◆ Resource list on website</li> <li>◆ Sample forms, checklists, policies</li> </ul>
<p><b>Colorado</b></p> <p><a href="#">“Healthy Child Care Colorado</a> provides ongoing support, training, and resources for health consultants working in early childhood programs. There is a <a href="#">search tool</a> on the Healthy Child Care Colorado website for child care programs to find a health consultant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Required for centers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Option to earn QRIS points</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Online search</li> </ul>	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Competencies</li> <li>◆ Mentoring</li> <li>◆ Health Huddle</li> <li>◆ Training</li> <li>◆ Health Hub</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hawaii</b></p> <p><a href="#">Healthy Child Care Hawaii Project</a> supports child care providers, health consultants, and other agencies and programs with information and resource materials about child development and health and safety standards and policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Required for centers and homes</li> </ul>	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Resource list on website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Training</li> <li>◆ Resource list on website</li> </ul>
<p><b>Idaho</b></p> <p><a href="#">Idaho STARS Child Care Health Consultant Program</a> supports child care programs with implementation of recommended health, safety, and nutrition practices.</p>	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Criteria for Step 5 is annual visit from CCHC</li> </ul>	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Resource list on website</li> </ul>	n/a
<p><b>Illinois</b></p> <p><a href="#">Child Care Nurse Consultant Directory</a> is a list of child care nurse consultants available across the state.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Required for centers</li> </ul>	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ List on website</li> </ul>	n/a	n/a

State Initiative	Licensing Requirement for CCHC	QRIS Standard for CCHC	Online CCHC Directory	Resources for Providers	Resources for CCHCs
<p><b>Indiana</b></p> <p><a href="#">Child Care Health Consultant Program</a> is supported by the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration and available to all out-of-home child care providers in Indiana. Health professionals are available by email or phone as a resource for multiple health and nutrition issues.</p>	◆ Required for centers	n/a	◆ Map and list on website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Telephone and email consultation</li> <li>◆ Educational fact sheets</li> <li>◆ Policy templates</li> <li>◆ Training</li> </ul>	n/a
<p><b>Iowa</b></p> <p><a href="#">Child Care Nurse Consultants</a> (CCNC) provide on-site consultation, training, and technical assistance to early care and education providers. Providers can call or send questions to a CCNC about specific child health or safety issues. A <a href="#">directory</a> of CCNCs is available on the Iowa Department of Public Health website.</p>	n/a	n/a	◆ List on website	◆ Sample agreement form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Role guidance</li> <li>◆ Training</li> </ul>
<p><b>Kentucky</b></p> <p><a href="#">Kentucky Child Care Health Consultants</a>, which include Registered Nurses and Health Educators, are available to child care providers and their families by telephone, email, or on-site. A telephone helpline and a <a href="#">map with a list</a> of available consultants is on the <a href="#">Kentucky Child Care Health Consultation</a> website.</p>	n/a	n/a	◆ Map and list on website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Toll-free helpline</li> <li>◆ Technical assistance</li> <li>◆ Posters and handouts</li> <li>◆ Videos</li> <li>◆ Sample policies and parent letters</li> </ul>	n/a
<p><b>Louisiana</b></p> <p><a href="#">Louisiana Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC) Program</a> supports child care centers with completing the required three clock hours of training in health and safety topics. A <a href="#">directory</a> of available health consultants is on the program's website.</p>	n/a	n/a	◆ List on website	◆ Training	◆ Online training program



State Initiative	Licensing Requirement for CCHC	QRIS Standard for CCHC	Online CCHC Directory	Resources for Providers	Resources for CCHCs
<p><b>Nevada</b></p> <p><a href="#">The Children's Cabinet</a> offers a <a href="#">two-day training</a> for health professionals to become CCHCs. This is done in collaboration with the Washoe County and Southern Nevada Health Districts and a statewide CCHC workgroup.</p>	n/a	◆ Optional indicator for QRIS standards	n/a	◆ Resource list on website	◆ Training ◆ Resource list on website
<p><b>North Carolina</b></p> <p><a href="#">Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center</a> has information, resources, referrals, technical assistance, and ongoing support available to the child health and child care communities. The Resource Center website has a <a href="#">directory</a> of health consultants available in each county. The <a href="#">Resource Center's Library</a> has documents for child care health consultants and child care programs working with a health consultant, including an orientation guide, factsheets, and sample plans.</p>	◆ Required for centers	n/a	◆ List on website	◆ Training ◆ Resource list on website ◆ Newsletter ◆ Sample policies ◆ Posters and factsheets	◆ Training ◆ Professional certification and endorsement ◆ Resource library ◆ Professional association
<p><b>North Dakota</b></p> <p><a href="#">Child Care Aware of North Dakota</a> Health and Safety consultants provide information and training for child care providers about safe and healthy environments for children.</p>	n/a	n/a	n/a	◆ Telephone and email consultation ◆ Training ◆ Sample health forms and plan documents ◆ Resource list on website ◆ Posters ◆ Videos	n/a

State Initiative	Licensing Requirement for CCHC	QRIS Standard for CCHC	Online CCHC Directory	Resources for Providers	Resources for CCHCs
<p><b>Oklahoma</b></p> <p>The Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) offers free telephone consultation through the <a href="#">Warmline for Oklahoma Child Care Providers</a>. The Warmline provides access to CCHCs and employs a Registered Nurse and a child guidance specialist who are available to providers across the state, including providers from Indigenous communities. OSDH also published a <a href="#">health handbook</a> for families and providers.</p>	n/a	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Telephone and email consultation</li> <li>◆ Health handbook</li> </ul>	n/a
<p><b>Pennsylvania</b></p> <p><a href="#">Early Childhood Education Linkage System (ECELS)</a> recruits and mentors health professionals to work as CCHCs. ECELS also supports these child care health consultants as they provide advice and professional development services to improve health and safety practices in child care programs that serve infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children.</p>	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Option to earn QRIS points</li> </ul>	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Training</li> <li>◆ Resource list on website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Recruitment and mentoring</li> <li>◆ Toolkits and resources</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tennessee</b></p> <p><a href="#">Tennessee Child Care Resource &amp; Referral Network (TNCCRR)</a> employs a statewide group of Health, Safety and Well-Being Coaches to work with child care providers on health and safety practices, developmental monitoring and screening, and social and emotional development of children. The TNCCRR website includes a <a href="#">directory</a> of the coaches, newsletters, and a page of <a href="#">resources</a> for educators, owners, and families.</p>	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ List on website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Resource list on website</li> <li>◆ Newsletter</li> </ul>	n/a
<p><b>Virginia</b></p> <p><a href="#">Healthy Child Care Virginia</a> in the Virginia Department of Health supports CCHCs who are trained professionals (for example, physicians, nurses, and nurse practitioners) to provide guidance and technical assistance to child care providers on a range of health and safety topics.</p>	n/a	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Training</li> <li>◆ Resource list on website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Curriculum and course materials</li> </ul>

State Initiative	Licensing Requirement for CCHC	QRIS Standard for CCHC	Online CCHC Directory	Resources for Providers	Resources for CCHCs
<p><b>Washington</b></p> <p><a href="#">Child Care Health Consultants</a> in the Washington Department of Children, Youth, and Families provide services to child care centers in Washington State through monthly onsite nurse visits in infant rooms, as well as by phone or email consultation, as needed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Required for centers</li> </ul>	n/a	n/a	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Sample reporting form</li> <li>◆ Sample contract</li> </ul>
<p><b>West Virginia</b></p> <p><a href="#">West Virginia Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources (WVECTCR)</a>, a statewide program designed to provide professional development opportunities for the early care and education community, has six CCHCs available to assist child care providers. The WVECTCR website has a <a href="#">directory</a> of the consultants available in each child care resource and referral region of the state.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Required for centers</li> </ul>	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ List on website</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Sample forms and health care plans</li> <li>◆ Child care health educators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Newsletter</li> </ul>

Note: "n/a" stands for "not applicable."

## Descriptions of State Child Care Health Consultant Initiatives

To further illustrate state efforts to implement the use of child care health consultants, this section has detailed descriptions of state policies, initiatives, and resources. As with the [Table of State Initiatives](#), the examples included here are a sample of efforts from across the United States we found on public websites. They do not include all states with activities to support CCHCs, as many states have not made information about child care health consultation available to the public.

## Examples of States with Licensing Requirements About CCHCs

The following are excerpts from child care licensing regulations from states that have requirements for child care providers about the use of CCHCs in their program. These excerpts were found in a review of child care licensing regulations posted on the [National Database of Child Care Licensing Regulations](#).

### Indiana

- ◆ *470 IAC 3-4.7 Rule 4.7 Child Care Centers; Licensing* (July 2013)  
<https://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/files/Rule4.7.pdf>

#### **470 IAC 3-4.7-1 General definitions ...**

(13) “Child care health consultant” means a physician, a certified pediatric or family nurse practitioner, or a registered nurse with pediatric or out of home child care experience and shall be knowledgeable about out of home child care, community child care licensing requirements, and available health resources ...  
(p. 37)

#### **470 IAC 3-4.7-84 Health program**

Sec. 84. (a) Prior to initial licensure, the center shall submit a written, dated health program for review and approval to the division on forms provided for that purpose.

(b) The center shall make specific arrangements for a health consultant to provide guidance to the staff to maintain an adequate health program, policies, and procedures for the children and staff in the child care center.

(c) The written health program shall be reviewed by the center and the health consultant and submitted to the division for review and approval each time any of the following occurs:

- (1) A change in the health consultant.
- (2) A change in the health program practices.
- (3) A change in licensee.
- (4) The center requests a change in licensure to include the care of children not previously cared for, such as diapered children, infants, or toddlers. (p. 71)

## Washington

- ◆ Chapter 110-300 WAC Foundational Quality Standards for Early Learning Programs (December 2020)  
<https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=110-300>

### WAC 110-300-0275 Infant and Toddler Care ...

- (4) A center early learning provider licensed to care for any infant must employ or contract with a child care health consultant to provide health consultation to support the practices of staff working with infants and to support the needs of individual infants.
- (5) A center early learning provider must enter into a department approved written agreement for services with a child care health consultant.
- (a) The child care health consultant must be a currently licensed registered nurse who:
- (i) Has worked in pediatrics or public health in the past five years or has taken or taught classes in pediatric nursing at the college level in the past five years;
  - (ii) Has experience with state licensing and public health requirements; and
  - (iii) Attests in writing to knowledge and experience sufficient to provide service consistent with the health consultant competencies described in the most current version of *Caring for Our Children*.
- (b) The child care health consultant must be available, or make available a designee who meets the requirements of (a) of this subsection, for consultation by phone as needed.
- (6) A center early learning provider must ensure that the child care health consultant:
- (a) Conducts at least one on-site visit monthly, if an infant is enrolled, during which the consultant:
- (i) Observes and assesses staff knowledge of infant health, development, and safety and offers support through training, consultation, or referral;
  - (ii) Observes and assesses classroom health practices including, but not limited to, infection control including cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting, and provides technical assistance to correct any practices of concern;
  - (iii) Observes and assesses behavior, development, and health status of individual infants in care and makes recommendations to staff or parents or guardians including if further assessment is recommended, as requested or otherwise determined appropriate.
- (b) Provides a dated, signed, written summary to the early learning provider for each visit that includes topics discussed with parents or staff, any areas of concern related to discussion, observation, assessment, or screening outcomes; and
- (c) Reports each visit to the department.
- (7) A center early learning provider must keep on-site a copy of the child care health consultant's written reports along with any notes, recommended follow up, and any actions taken to address concerns identified.
- (8) If a center early learning provider is unable to independently employ or contract with a child care health consultant within thirty calendar days of enrolling an infant, the provider must contact the

department for assistance. The department will assist the provider in obtaining the services of a child care health consultant or may grant a waiver until the services can be secured.

## Examples of States with QRIS Standards About CCHCs

Below are excerpts from state quality rating and improvement system (QRIS) standards that include the availability of CCHCs to QRIS participants or the option to work with a CCHC to earn points on the rating scale. These examples were identified from a review program standards documents on state QRIS websites.

### Arizona

#### [Quality First](#)

◆ *Participant Guide: Fiscal Year 2020*

<https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/FY20-Participant-Guide.pdf>

Child Care Health Consultation Policy: To support high quality health and safety practices, each full participation model Quality First participant will be assigned a Child Care Health Consultant once officially enrolled. Participants have the option of requesting the level of service needed from Tier 1 – phone and email consultation as needed, Tier 2 – responsive consultation based on an outstanding critical health need, or Tier 3 – regular consultation on a set schedule to support health and safety practices. All Rising Star or Progressing Star must receive a Health and Safety Checklist assessment annually as part of their Quality First participation. (p. 52, emphasis original)

### Pennsylvania

#### [Keystone STARS](#)

◆ *Keystone STARS Program Performance Standards (2018)*

<https://secureservercdn.net/198.71.233.197/69d.231.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Keystone-STARS-Performance-Standards-07-01-2018.pdf>

**Option to earn 3 points:**

LM.3.4.10 Program utilizes a licensed or certified health professional or health care consultant to establish and maintain health policies above those required by certification (p. 13).

## Examples of States with Training and Other Resources for Child Care Health Consultants

The states described below support the professional development of CCHCs by offering training and resource materials to help health consultants in their work with child care providers.

### California

The First Edition of the [California Training Institute Curriculum for Child Care Health Consultants](#) is a 6-day training for health professionals to become Child Care Health Consultants. There are 17 modules of content that are based on materials from the [National Training Institute for Child Care Health Consultants](#) and include information on California regulations, staff health, cultural competence, and other health-related topics.

## Colorado

[Healthy Child Care Colorado](#) developed a set of [competencies](#) for the practice of child care health consultation in Colorado. Healthy Child Care Colorado also offers a variety of [professional development](#) opportunities for health consultants, including a mentoring program, monthly peer video calls, quarterly seminars, and Child Care Health Consultation 101 and Child Care Health Consultation 201 training courses.

## Iowa

The [Iowa Department of Public Health](#) and Healthy Child Care Iowa published [Child Care Nurse Consultant \(CCNC\) Role Guidance: To Achieve Performance Measures and Annual Performance Standards](#) (2021) to help local agencies define the role and responsibilities of Child Care Nurse Consultants. Nurses who want to be child CCNCs are required to complete the [Iowa Training Project for Child Care Nurse Consultants](#) (ITPCCNC) to expand their knowledge and skills to work with early care and education providers.

## Louisiana

The Louisiana [Child Care Health Consultant](#) program [trains health professionals](#) to become a child care health consultant. Eligible applicants for the training must be a nurse, physician, registered dietitian, or social worker. The training covers the key elements of the consultation process, including the roles and responsibilities of a child care health consultant, policy development and medication administration training, the Louisiana Department of Health Sanitary Code, and food safety in the child care environment.

## North Carolina

The [North Carolina Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center](#) has several opportunities and resources for child care health consultants. The [North Carolina Child Care Health Consultant Training Course](#) prepares health professionals to acquire the skills of child care health consultation and coaching. The [NC Child Care Health Consultant Certification and Technical Assistance Endorsement](#) verifies that a CCHC has met the education, training, and experience requirements established by the NC Child Care Health Consultant Association and the NC Institute for Child Development Professionals. Qualified CCHCs provide health and safety technical assistance, consultation, coaching, and training to early educators and staff working in early care and education facilities. The [North Carolina Child Care Health Consultant Association](#) is a membership association of health professionals who provide consultation services for early care and education programs. The [Resource Center's Library](#) has documents for child care health consultants and for child care programs working with a health consultant including an orientation guide, fact sheets, and sample plans.

## Examples of States with Resources for Child Care Providers

In addition to consultation services, these states include a variety of resource materials about health and safety topics for child care providers on their health consultation websites.

## Kentucky

[Kentucky Child Care Health Consultation](#), with support from the Kentucky Department for Public Health, provides free technical assistance to child care centers, including answering questions and providing information about health, safety, and nutrition for children. Kentucky established a telephone helpline to assist child care providers and other child care consultants across the state. The website also has links to [resources](#) for providers and families, including posters, handouts, videos, and sample parent letters and policies on various health and safety topics.



## West Virginia

WV Early Childhood Training Connections and Resources (WVECTCR), has six [Child Care Nurse Health Consultants](#) who provide technical assistance on variety of health and safety topics. The WVECTCR [website](#) has sample care plans, a sample log and other information for administration of medication, and Healthy Kids WV [newsletter](#).

## Available resources from the National Center on Health, Behavioral Health and Safety

Visit the [Child Care Health Consultants page](#) on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) for resources related to child care health consultation, including tips for working with a CCHC, CCHC competencies, interactive skill-building modules, and more.

### [Child Care Health Consultant Competencies](#)

The Child Care Health Competencies were developed for consultants working with early care and education (ECE) programs serving infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-aged children and their families. The competencies include specialized knowledge and skills to improve health, safety, and wellness outcomes. Explore [Child Care Health Consultant Competencies At-a-Glance](#) for an overview.

### [Child Care Health Consultation: Skill-Building Modules](#)

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### Child Care Health Consultants

Child care health consultants (CCHCs) are health professionals who know about child health, child development, and health and safety in child care settings. CCHCs and the child care staff work together to promote healthy and safe environments for young children. CCHCs have expert information, resources, and referrals to offer. Through onsite and telephone consultation, CCHCs work with individual child care facilities to help create environments that best support the healthy growth and development of young children.

The resources in this section are designed to assist CCHCs as they work with local programs to plan, implement, and evaluate health services.

[Give us feedback](#)

“Child care health consultants (CCHCs) can use these modules to explore six interactive, realistic scenarios to build and enhance consultation skills in the following areas:”

- ◆ “Creating collaborative relationships with programs”
- ◆ “Using cultural competence to solve problems”
- ◆ “Applying consultation skills to oral health promotion”
- ◆ “Identifying and resolving concerns”

- ◆ “Improving communication skills”
- ◆ “Building trust with programs”

“For more about how to use these modules, [read the Q and A.](#)”

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### National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance

9300 Lee Highway  
Fairfax, VA 22031

Phone: 877-296-2250  
Email: [QualityAssuranceCenter@ecetta.info](mailto:QualityAssuranceCenter@ecetta.info)

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