

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jessica Schlimme- 231-735-4243
jschlimme@marchofdimes.org

Munson Healthcare and March of Dimes Partner to Reduce Pre-term Birth Rate

Traverse City, Michigan – Munson Hospital in partnership with March of Dimes is implementing a new program to directly address pregnant Moms who smoke. The March of Dimes has identified reducing smoking among Moms and Moms-to-be as being a top, manageable priority to reduce the pre-term birth rate in Michigan. Michigan has one of the highest rates of smoking among women of childbearing age (18 – 44) at 23.6% compared to 19.2% of women overall in the U.S.

Smoking is a major public health problem because not only can smoking harm a man's or woman's health, but smoking during pregnancy can lead to serious health problems in newborns and is a leading cause of premature birth.

The March of Dimes, in collaboration with the Northern Michigan Perinatal Collaborative and the Inter-Tribal Council has chosen the SOPHE Smoking Cessation and Reduction in Pregnancy Treatment (SCRIPT) Program for our smoking cessation intervention. Implementation of the program in all 21 counties of lower northern Michigan will include training, implementation and evaluation with widespread multidisciplinary coverage. SCRIPT is an evidence-based program shown to be effective in helping thousands of pregnant women quit smoking. It is designed to be a component of a patient education program for prenatal care providers.

On June 23rd, March of Dimes SCRIPT "Train-the-Trainer," funded by ColIN (Collaborative Improvement and Innovation Network), hosted a training for 20 health care providers including; public health nurses, home visitors, social workers and OB/Gyn. Following this initial training, these attendees will execute 40 trainings for approximately 10 participants each. As a result of this ColIN sponsored training, northern Michigan will produce 400 healthcare professionals trained to implement the SCRIPT program.



"The March of Dimes is committed to reducing premature birth, birth defects and infant mortality in Michigan," said Kara Hamilton-McGraw, March of Dimes Michigan's Maternal Child Health Director. "Reducing the number of women who smoke before, during and after their pregnancy is a key component of our strategy

and will ultimately have a direct impact on delivering the healthiest beginnings so every baby has a bright future."

About March of Dimes

The March of Dimes is the leading nonprofit organization for pregnancy and baby health. For more than 75 years, moms and babies have benefited from March of Dimes research, education, vaccines, and breakthroughs. For the latest resources and health information, visit marchofdimes.org and nacersano.org. You can also find us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/marchofdimes) or follow us on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/marchofdimes) and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/marchofdimes).