

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DMHAS, DCF, and Wheeler Health Announce the Launch of the SEPI-CT Family Care Plan Virtual Tool to Support Pregnant Individuals and Families Affected by Substance Use

Hartford, CT (11/22/24) – The Substance Exposed Pregnancy Initiative of Connecticut (SEPI-CT), a state-funded program dedicated to improving outcomes for infants born substance-exposed, has launched the Family Care Plan Virtual Tool, now available on its website. Developed with funding from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Department of Children and Families, and with assistance from Wheeler Health, this innovative resource aims to support the recovery and well-being of pregnant individuals and their families.

The Family Care Plan Virtual Tool, created with input from individuals with lived and living experience and community stakeholders, is designed to streamline the creation of Family Care Plans and enhance knowledge among pregnant individuals, families impacted by substance use, and the healthcare professionals who support them.

"This virtual planning tool represents a significant advancement in our efforts to support pregnant individuals and families affected by substance use," said DMHAS Commissioner Nancy Navarretta. "By providing a reliable and accessible platform for creating personalized care plans, we are empowering families to take proactive steps toward healthier outcomes."

"The Family Care Plan tool supports healthier outcomes for pregnant individuals and their families while ensuring dignity, privacy, and respect," added Sabrina Trocchi, PhD, MPA, president and CEO of Wheeler Health. "This easy-to-use tool connects families to vital resources, making a real difference in their recovery journey."

This user-friendly and dynamic interface allows individuals and providers to create personalized Family Care Plans by pulling resources specific to their zip code. The tool is completely anonymous, does not store or share any identifying information, and is not connected to any state or healthcare systems. Users have the option to create an account using only an email and password, which enables them to save, update, and reference their plans at their convenience. For those who prefer not to create an account, the tool provides options to print, save, or email their completed plans.

"The Family Care Plan virtual tool gives pregnant and birthing people the opportunity to advocate for themselves and their families by selecting support services and programs that meet their needs, both as an individual and as a family." said DCF Commissioner Jodi Hill-

Lilly. "This helps to ensure that families are well connected and set up for success at the time of birth. Moreover, giving families the resources they need as part of early intervention can be itself a preventative measure against future adverse outcomes."

In Connecticut, pregnant individuals using prescribed or non-prescribed substances, including cannabis, are encouraged to complete a Family Care Plan before birth. Having a Family Care Plan available to reference at the hospital can provide clarity and support for families during a critical time. The SEPI-CT Family Care Plan Virtual Tool is an important step forward in ensuring that families have access to the resources they need in a secure and accessible way.

For more information, please visit the SEPI-CT website at <https://www.sepict.org/>.

