

# Heartland Multi-State Teratogen Education Project

Brad Schaefer      Co-PI

Beth Conover      Co-PI

Kathleen Caldwell      Project Coordinator

# Background

- The Heartland Region has limited access to teratogen information and services
- Only one state has a formal Teratology Information Service (TIS)
- National studies have suggested that minorities and women of lower socio-economic status are particularly underserved in receiving appropriate information on exposures in pregnancy and breastfeeding

# Our Goals

- Fill gaps in Heartland services and address currently unmet needs with regard to teratology information
- Target underserved populations
- Implement a project that is sustainable over time and does not overburden the single Heartland Teratology Information Service

# Part 1: Fact sheet notebook

- Produce a loose-leaf notebook of OTIS (Organization of Teratology Information Service) fact sheets that health personnel can consult and/or xerox for their patients. To keep the notebook current, updated fact sheets can be downloaded from the OTIS web site.
- Obtain a list of public health, WIC, and family planning clinics from each Heartland state genetics coordinator
- Send flyers to these clinics advertising the notebook; notebooks mailed as requested. Notebooks are individualized and refer to teratogen services in that state.
- Three months after receipt of notebook, survey recipients as to usefulness of the notebook, and solicit suggestions for improvement

# The notebook

# OTIS FACT SHEETS

[www.otispregnancy.org](http://www.otispregnancy.org)

- OTIS has developed nearly 100 fact sheets on varying topics. Most are translated into **Spanish**.
- The fact sheets are user friendly, and include information on preconception exposures, 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> trimesters, problems in the newborn, breastfeeding, and paternal exposures.
- Examples of topics include:
  - Hyperthermia
  - Methamphetamines
  - Echinacea
  - Influenza Vaccine
  - Accutane
  - Paxil
  - Toxoplasmosis

## Part 2: Increase public knowledge about local teratogen services and OTIS

- Publicize the number of the local TIS (when available) or the genetic services in each state willing to take calls or see patients in consultation regarding teratogen concerns
- Increase visibility of the OTIS web site which includes fact sheets, information on OTIS research studies, and an international list of TIS's. If a state does not have a TIS, OTIS also has a toll-free number that routes calls to a TIS that has volunteered to answer the calls from outside it's own service area.

## Part 3: Update the Heartland web site

- Include information on regional and national teratogen services
- Provide link to OTIS web page for fact sheets and access to research studies

## Part 4: Presentation of model and results

- Update on project at next year's Heartland meeting
- National interest in outcomes of project and consideration of reproducing it on a larger level
- Feedback to OTIS on format and utility of fact sheets

# We need your help!

- Assist with the mailing list for your state. We have several different lists offered by the Heartland Collaborative administration, but are having difficulty generating an accurate and appropriate set of mailing labels.
- Consider whether your genetic center or obstetrical department can be listed on the web site and state-specific notebooks as accepting calls or seeing patients in consultation regarding teratogen concerns.

# Nebraska TIS

## Contact us:

- 402-559-5071
- [bconover@unmc.edu](mailto:bconover@unmc.edu)
- [kcaldwell@unmc.edu](mailto:kcaldwell@unmc.edu)
- Munroe Meyer Institute, UNMC  
985440 Nebraska Medical Center  
Omaha, NE 68198-5440