

**Southwest Health Equity Research Collaborative
PILOT PROJECT PROGRAM**

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Project Title: “*Characterization of populations linked to Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome: Infants with NAS and their mothers*”

Proposal Abstract:

Opioid utilization during pregnancy can result in newborn infants experiencing drug withdrawal symptoms, called Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), within 24-48 hours of birth. In 2012, hospital costs associated with NAS births were approximately \$1.5 billion, and 81% of these charges were paid by Medicaid. We estimate that the current NAS incidence in Arizona is 10 per 1,000 births, which is quite high, considering that the nationwide incidence in 2013 was 6 per 1,000 births. Despite this worrisome statistic, little is known about the population characteristics of these infants and their mothers, which is partially due to lack of reporting. However, Governor Ducey released the Declaration of Emergency and Notification of Enhanced Surveillance Advisory – Opioid Overdose Epidemic, and NAS reporting is now required, across the state, within 24 hours of an event. We propose to use these new data to accomplish the overarching goal of better understanding which groups of infants disproportionately experience NAS, during the reporting time frame of June 15, 2017- June 15, 2018. To achieve this goal, we propose to carry out the following aims: 1) To characterize the population of infants born with neonatal abstinence syndrome, 2) To characterize the population of mothers who used opioids while pregnant, and 3) To describe differences in the populations of infants born with neonatal abstinence syndrome from exposure to different opioids. Given the dearth of information on this topic, we anticipate the proposed research will pave the way for local interventions while having national, and even global, implications.