



Horse Pasture, Lexington, Kentucky



Highlights

By working with Market Decisions Research, the Kentucky Department for Public Health, Division of Maternal and Child Health, experienced:

- Painless PRAMS implementation process
- Support for all operational aspects of PRAMS and more
- Benefits of MDR's strong PRAMS experience
- Ongoing communication, cooperation, and guidance
- Robust security including background checks and training

Smooth Implementation in Kentucky:

Supporting a State That's New to the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)

Kentucky is predominantly rural with the bluegrass pastures of horse country in the central part of the state and Appalachia in the east. The total population is more than 4 million. The majority of people are white; most minorities reside in the major cities of Lexington and Louisville.

Kentucky's birthing population is smaller than most other states. There are 53,000 to 55,000 live births annually. In recent years, the state has seen an increase in both maternal and sudden unexplained infant deaths. The Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services, Department for Public Health, Division of Maternal and Child Health, wanted to participate in the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) to learn more about these increases, as well as how to help mothers with perinatal health, such as breastfeeding, prenatal dental care, and sleep safety.

In 2017 the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funded Kentucky to participate in PRAMS.

"Our leadership has wanted PRAMS and supports its overall purpose to determine why some babies are born healthy and others are not," said Tracey D. Jewell, MPH, BS, Epidemiologist, Division of Maternal and Child Health, Kentucky Department for Public Health.

The Division put out an RFP for a contractor to support all operational aspects of PRAMS, including managing mail and telephone interviewing in English and Spanish.

Market Decisions Research (MDR) completely met the RFP criteria and was awarded the initial contract in 2017, based on a strong background in PRAMS and other large-scale mail and survey management.

Undertaking PRAMS can be daunting with strict requirements for adherence to many CDC and state policies, procedures, and protocols; use of the PRAMS Integrated Data Collection System (PIDS); training in Human Subjects Research; and high standards for the collection of quality scientific data.

MDR began by doing a lot of upfront work, such as configuring and testing the project in PIDS. MDR's extensive experience made this and other implementation processes go smoothly, because MDR anticipated the Division's needs and already knew how to handle many of the problems that could arise.





PRAMS is logistically complex with successive 90-day cycles with multiple steps with mailings and telephone surveying in each cycle. MDR stayed on top of coordinating the intricacies of PRAMS, particularly through the efforts of Jennifer Oliver, MDR Vice President of Operations, who manages all aspects of the contract, and Christine Allen, MDR Field Services Manager, who conducts training and oversees the call center. MDR also developed special materials and tools to support the project.

"We appreciate how closely MDR's staff worked with us," said Jewell. "They were very responsive and timely."

A highlight of the work that MDR did for the Division involved providing support in applying for supplemental funding from the CDC to support additional survey questions related to substance abuse. Like many other states, Kentucky is struggling with substance abuse challenges, such as increased emergency room visits and death rates due to overdoses. With a turnaround for submissions of only a month, MDR was there to provide insights and support and help Kentucky prepare a well-designed application for submission in a timely manner.

"It's extremely helpful to have a strong leadership group when you're undertaking PRAMS," concluded Jewell. MDR is now contracted with Kentucky through 2020.

About Market Decisions Research

Since 1977, Market Decisions Research has provided survey research and program evaluation for government agencies, nonprofits, and businesses in more than twenty-eight states.

We collect data in-house using a comprehensive set of tools—high-speed scanning of paper and mail surveys, a telephone interviewing center, and sophisticated software for online surveys. Adept at qualitative research, we offer a team of trained focus-group moderators and interviewers for executive and key informant interviews.

Our research team gets the most out of data with skillful question development, advanced analytics, and clear reporting. Our evaluation team works collaboratively with clients and stakeholders to assess needs and ensure that all are prepared to act on the information developed.

With a strong background in large-scale mail and survey management, Market Decisions Research is a national leader in data collection services for public health agencies. We have been conducting PRAMS surveys since 2013.

Market Decisions Research: Better Data • Better Insights • Better Outcomes

For more information, contact Market Decisions Research at 800-293-1538 or research@marketdecisions.com.

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