

THE KEY



ADDRESSING HEALTH DISPARITIES
AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER (AHEC)
OF SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS
BI-MONTHLY E-NEWSLETTER

March 2004

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If you received this newsletter as a forward and you wish to be added to the e-mail list, please contact Heidi Holland, AHEC Program Director, at hholland@hcsn.org or (508) 583-2250 x214

Welcome to the Key

Welcome to *The Key*, the Area Health Education Center (AHEC) of Southeastern Massachusetts' bi-monthly electronic newsletter.

The Key is your resource for regional information on events, news and resources focusing on eliminating health disparities. We encourage you to submit events to our calendar section and to provide input on other sections. To submit a calendar listing or to add your name to our mailing list please contact Heidi Holland, AHEC Program Director, at hholland@hcsn.org or (508) 583-2250 x214

About AHEC of Southeastern Massachusetts

The main focus of the AHEC of Southeastern Massachusetts is to address health disparities impacting the diverse communities of the region. AHEC of Southeastern Massachusetts offers on-site training, continuing education programs and health resource information focusing on cultural competency, youth development and disease prevention.

AHEC of Southeastern Massachusetts Update

The David H. Mulligan Center Training Calendar:

The Spring edition of the Mulligan Center Training Calendar will be released shortly. If you do not think you are currently on our mailing list but would like to receive our Training Calendar, please contact Heidi Holland, Program Director. An advance copy of the calendar will be attached to this e-newsletter.

Needs Assessment:

Key informant interviews and focus groups with providers for the needs assessment are ongoing. This process should be completed in the spring. The full report will include findings from these interviews and focus groups along with local MASS CHIP data. The analysis will help to guide AHEC's work in the coming years.

Medical Interpreter Training-

The 54-hour Comprehensive Advanced Medical Interpreter Training began this month at Caritas Norwood Hospital. Twenty-five students are enrolled with a focus on Portuguese, Spanish, Haitian Creole and Russian as target languages. Maria Mello, Coordinator of Medical Interpreters at Caritas has been a tremendous support in coordination of the training there. In addition to Caritas staff, staff from Brockton Hospital, Caritas Good Samaritan, Health Care of Southeastern Massachusetts, Associação Caboverdeana de Brockton and St. Joseph Manor Hospital are all participating.



A 15-hour introductory training has been set for the month of April and will take place at Greater New Bedford Community Health Center. The registration day will be March 24th, 5:30PM – 8:30PM at the Greater New Bedford Community Health Center. The dates for the trainings will be 4/6, 4/7, 4/20, 4/21, and 4/28 and will held from 5:30PM – 8:30PM. Target languages will be Portuguese, Spanish, and other languages to be determined.

For more information on registering for the MIT training or to host a training in the future contact Lisa Almeida, MIT Consultant, at 401-435-8818 or portugal4@cox.net.

Cape Cod and the Islands AHEC Alliance Update

Career Pathways:

On January 22, we were happy to have the director of the statewide AHEC program, Dr. Saul Torres, join with over 30 others to plan for enhancing career pathways for youth, immigrants and the disadvantaged of Cape Cod and the Islands. The AHEC Alliance for Healthcare Workforce Development, the Economic Self-Sufficiency Working Group (of the Human Condition 2001) and attendees from the Fall Career Pathways Conference came together to develop strategies relative to 1.) awareness and recruitment 2.) education and training and 3.) retention and advancement. The working groups are open to everyone who is interested and are moving forward.

Future Care:

Sarah O'Reilly, Future Care Coordinator, continues to create awareness about the housing support service for students entering or advancing in healthcare careers. Sarah has shifted the focus of her outreach efforts to potential students. She is working with Cape Cod Community College, the regional technical high schools and others to design avenues to get information about Future Care to incoming students. Offering the housing support option to medical school residents serving a rotation on the Cape may be discussed in the near future.

Tooth Tutoring:

Tooth Tutoring is an oral health initiative designed to prevent dental disease in children. We are pleased to report that the scope of services is expanding, as planned. Now, in addition to educational classes and diagnostic screenings, Tooth Tutoring is preparing to deliver the dental sealant component. Sealants are clear plastic material that is applied to molars to prevent decay. This component will be offered at participating elementary schools, with leadership from Denise Bridges and Sue Box of the Dental Hygiene Program at Cape Cod Community College.

The Tooth Tutoring Program has been very busy this last month. Almost 60 5th graders at the Stony Brook Elementary School in Brewster have been trained as "tooth tutors" in a peer-mentoring program. They are now teaching the 2nd graders about healthy oral hygiene and tooth brushing techniques. A large THANK YOU to Donna Powers at the Cape Cod Tech for teaching these classes, and to her dental assistant students who helped out.

The students at Veteran's Memorial Elementary in Provincetown have also been participating in dental health classes. A dental hygienist student from Cape Cod Community College, Kirsten Wood, helped out with the classes in Provincetown.

Diagnostic screenings continue. Dr. Gerry Kinahan screened children at the Provincetown school last month. Dr. Herbert Kinney will be doing the upcoming screening at Cape Cod Children's Place in Eastham, a screening which is open to any pre-school children of families participating in WIC.

It is the volunteer professionals who make this program work. Thank you to the dentists, hygienists and dental educators who have contributed their time and expertise to help local children have healthier teeth. If you or someone you know has any dental experience and an interest in working with children, we would be delighted to have more volunteers for this program. Contact Katie Jacobus, the Tooth Tutoring Coordinator, at the Coalition.

Contact Information:
B.L Hathaway
Lower/Outer Cape Community Coalition
(508) 255-2163

Upcoming Regional, State and National Events

You are invited to participate in a FREE skills-building seminar!
Learn about outreach and health promotion strategies for keeping women engaged in healthy behaviors before & between pregnancies.

Tuesday, March 9, 2004
9:30am-12:30pm

Health Care of Southeastern MA, Inc.
942 West Chestnut Street, Brockton, MA

TRAINERS: Diana Denning and Dawn Parkin

Continental Breakfast served Participants will receive a Certificate of Attendance.

This program is a collaborative effort of the Massachusetts Community Health Worker Network (MACHW) and Community Health Education Center (CHEC). Funded in part by a grant from the March of Dimes, Massachusetts Chapter, Community Grant Program.

This seminar will assist programs funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health to meet the Community Health Worker training requirement.

REGISTRATION

Fax or e-mail your registration information to Nikki Simpson:

FAX: 617-534-5485; E-MAIL: Nikki_Simpson@bphc.org. For questions, call Nikki 617-534-9684

Taking Charge and Living Well with Lupus

30th Annual Meeting
Lupus Foundation of Massachusetts
Sunday, March 21, 2004
9:30AM – 3:30PM
The Westin Waltham-Boston
Waltham MA

A one-day symposium for people with lupus, their families and friends. Lupus is a very complex disease, which often leaves a person feeling isolated and out of control. Workshops will provide knowledge and skills to take charge and promote healthy choices in the day-to-day management of lupus. Join us for a full day of education and an opportunity to meet again with friends who face similar challenges in their lives.

Clinical Supervision: Counselor Development & Professional Responsibilities

April 1 & 2, 2004
Holiday Inn, Worcester MA

This two day workshop focuses on the role of clinical supervision in the implementation of substance abuse treatment. The areas being covered are Counselor Development and Professional Responsibilities. The presenter, Arthur B. Trundy, M.Ed., CADAC, ACRPS, is Director of Safe Harbor Services, an agency specializing in substance abuse consultation and trainings.

There will also be CEU's available. For more information contact; AdCare Educational Institute, Inc., 5 Northampton St., Worcester MA, 01605.

**Isolation and Quarantine
Satellite Broadcast**

Tuesday March 30, 2004
12:30AM to 3:30PM

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is pleased to announce the date and time of a Massachusetts satellite training broadcast. This is a collaborative project with the Harvard Center for Public Health Preparedness and is a follow-up to the satellite broadcast aired on July 8, 2003.

TOPIC: ISOLATION AND QUARANTINE

This broadcast will prepare participants to respond to infectious disease emergencies by understanding the legal basis of isolation and quarantine and implementing and enforcing the required measures. Emphasis will be placed on the legal background and the steps that can be taken at the local level to prepare potential players for a public health emergency involving infectious agents, whether intentional or naturally occurring.

Audience: local health department employees; board of health members; law enforcement community; public safety professionals; hospital staff and administrators; community healthcare providers; municipal, public health, and other attorneys; mental health and substance abuse professionals; school nurses, physicians, and administrators; and other interested parties.

Questions that will be answered include:

- What do isolation and quarantine mean?
- When are isolation and quarantine used?
- What happens when someone refuses a quarantine?
- Can police detain someone who is quarantined?
- What is the role of local law enforcement?
- What is the role of local health in isolation and quarantine?

This event will be broadcast at 15 to 20 sites across the state. Each site will have a facilitator who will lead an exercise. The event is FREE, but pre-registration is required.

Information about continuing education credit, registration, locations, and training objectives will be available in the next 2 weeks at:

www.mass.gov/dph/broadcast

SAVE THE DATE!

Health Care of Southeastern Massachusetts, Inc. - serving families since 1977

Monday, September 13, 2004
1:00PM Tee-off

PLAYING FORE FAMILIES

Inaugural Golf Tournament to benefit families and children in need of emergency, health, and education services.



Thank you...

Waverly Oaks Golf Club
444 Long Pond Road
Plymouth, MA 02360
508-224-6700
A championship golf course
www.waverlyoaksgolfclub.com



Thank you...

For more information contact 508-583-3005, ext. 219.
To learn more about HCSM visit our website www.hcsm.org.

National News Items

Working-Age Minorities Face Prescription Drug Affordability Problems

Working-age African Americans and Latinos--particularly those with chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease--are much more likely than white Americans to report they cannot afford all of their prescription drugs. [HSC Update, 1-29-04] Issue brief:

<http://www.hschange.org/CONTENT/637/>

Health Disparities among Older Immigrants in the United States

Melonie Heron, Robert F. Schoeni, Leo Morales. PSC Research Report 03-548, December 2003.

In light of increased immigration to the U.S., our objective is to examine the unique patterns of health status among immigrants aged 55 and over across a wide array of racial and ethnic groups. We explore health disparities within the immigrant population and between immigrants and natives of the same racial/ethnic group. Logistic regression is used to analyze data from the 1992-1995 National Health Interview Survey. Immigrants are less likely than natives to report an activity limitation or to be obese, but more likely than natives to report themselves in poor or fair general health. There are significant differences among immigrants arriving from different countries and between immigrants and natives who are of the same

race/ethnicity. For some groups and health measures, a large share of the differences are explained by disparities in socioeconomic status. Older immigrants are not a large enough share of the population, nor do they have distinct enough health status, to substantially alter the aggregate prevalence of health conditions in the total population. However, the diversity in health status within the immigrant population is enormous. These estimates can be used to target populations with especially high rates of obesity and limitations.

<http://www.psc.isr.umich.edu/pubs/papers/rr03-548.pdf>

Frist, Landrieu Unveil Health Disparities Bill

Prominent Health Organizations including Meharry Medical College Voice Support

February 12th, 2004 - WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R-TN) and Senators Mary Landrieu (D-LA), Thad Cochran (R-Miss) and Mike Dewine (R-OH) today introduced comprehensive legislation to reduce and eliminate health disparities for racial and ethnic minorities and other underserved populations. The “Closing the Health Care Gap Act” was announced at a news conference today with prominent health professionals and advocates from minority health organizations, including Dr. John Maupin Jr., president of the Meharry Medical College in Nashville, TN, and the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools.

“This legislation is the most comprehensive national initiative to address disparities in health care access and quality,” said Frist. “A gap does exist in health care today. While we’ve made great progress in recent years, there are additional steps we can take to improve, expand, and enhance quality care for all Americans. This legislation builds on our past work, capitalizing on the innovative ideas of health care professionals and researchers today. Together we can ensure that barriers to care are removed, health care access and research is improved and more health professionals dedicated to the needs of minority and underserved communities are entering the workforce.”

“Unfortunately, the gap in the quality and availability of health care is real, but it can be closed with good planning, effective targeting and adequate funding. In my own state of Louisiana, we have communities that are addressing their own needs through innovative programs that increase access to quality health care for everyone. This legislation builds on efforts like those,” Landrieu said. “Senator Daschle has also introduced legislation to address this issue, and I support that effort. Hopefully, we can come together to close the gap.”

“The Closing the Health Care Gap Act, being introduced today by Senator Frist and others, will enable those institutions which have a historical commitment to training individuals to serve minority and medically underserved communities to continue that mission which is critical to the national interest,” said Maupin. “I, along with my colleagues at the other minority health professions schools, look forward to working shoulder to shoulder with Senator Frist and his colleagues to pass this important legislation.”

On average, African Americans and American Indians/Alaska Natives have higher overall rates of death than any other racial or ethnic group. American Indians/Alaska Natives, African Americans and Hispanics are more likely to report poor health. Infant mortality rates, which are one of the most sensitive indicators of health and well being of a population, are significantly higher in African Americans, American Indians, and Alaska Natives.

The “Closing the Health Care Gap Act” builds on successful legislation authored by Frist and others, the “Minority Health and Health Disparities Research Education Act,” which was signed into law in November of 2000. This new legislation aims to further reduce and eliminate health disparities in racial, ethnic and other underserved populations.

This legislation will address several key areas necessary to close the health disparity gap for racial and ethnic minorities and other underserved populations in America. The legislation will improve the overall quality of care, expand access to care, enhance research opportunities, and foster innovative outreach programs to address health care disparities. It also strengthens leadership at the local and national level, and promotes programs to increase the diversity of the nation's health care workforce.

The bill has garnered the support of many prominent health organizations, including the National Medical Association, the Interamerican College of Physicians and Surgeons, the Association of Minority Health Professional Schools, the National Hispanic Medical Association, the National Conference for Community Justice, the National Urban League and others. Additionally, health professionals including the former U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary and Morehouse School of Medicine President Emeritus Dr. Louis W. Sullivan, former Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher, and Morehouse School of Medicine President Dr. James R. Gavin III and Meharry Medical School President Dr. John Maupin have voiced their support.

The introduction of this legislation falls within Black History Month, which is celebrated every February. It also marks one day before a bipartisan Civil Rights Pilgrimage led by Frist and Congressman John Lewis (D-GA), which is scheduled from February 13 to 15. The three-day event is sponsored by the Faith and Politics Institute. It will include visits to historic sites in Selma, Birmingham and Montgomery, Alabama, and Nashville, Tennessee.

Thompson: Editing Health Report Was Wrong

By MARK SHERMAN, Associated Press Writer

Tue Feb 10, 6:23 PM ET

WASHINGTON - Health and Human Services (news - web sites) Secretary Tommy Thompson said Tuesday that his department was wrong to edit a report about health care for minorities to downplay serious problems and emphasize improvements.

Responding to criticism from Democratic lawmakers, Thompson said the report, issued in December, would be released in its original form calling health care disparities pervasive "national problems."

"There was a mistake made and it's going to be rectified," Thompson said at a hearing of the House Ways and Means Committee on the president's 2005 budget proposal.

Democrats protested the changes to Thompson after they obtained the original draft report. The final version eliminated the conclusion that unequal care for minorities is a national problem, the Democrats said in a letter to Thompson.

The word "disparity" was used more than 30 times in the "key findings" section of the draft's executive summary, they said. It appeared just twice in the final version.

The department conducted the study as part of a congressional requirement to review health care treatment provided to women, children, minorities and the poor.

The report found a higher death rate for cancer among blacks and low-income Americans in its review of the nation's health care system. It also said those groups are less likely to be screened for certain cancers and less likely to avail themselves of other preventive services.

Thompson issued a statement upon the report's December release, saying it shows areas in which the nation has improved health care, "but more importantly, it shows us where we have more work to do and how we can make sure that all Americans benefit from scientific advances and technological innovations."

Thompson said he did not rewrite the edited portions, assigning the blame to unnamed officials who "took it upon themselves that felt they were doing the right thing."

The Democrats said political appointees cleared the edited version.

Featured Resources

MS/MPH Dual Degree Program now ONLINE at UMASS Amherst!

The University of Massachusetts Amherst announces the new online dual degree program, MS/MPH, which can be completed wherever the student lives or works without traveling to the Amherst campus. This program has attracted nurses with baccalaureate degrees from all over the US and boasts of nationally regarded faculty and interdisciplinary classmates in many of the courses. Building on the strength of the MPH program which has been ranked among the top three online MPH programs according to US NEWS & WORLD REPORT, the new dual degree offers nurses the best of both disciplinary worlds while working in their communities. Nurses have the advantage of working with their interdisciplinary colleagues in online class projects and teams. Each brings their best leadership thinking to understand and resolve public health problems while discovering the contribution each discipline makes to assure healthy communities. Students have the opportunity to develop networks and collegiality with public health and nursing professionals that defy geographic boundaries.

If you are interested in more detail and course information about the program please visit the website <http://www.umass.edu/nursing> and then access the MS/MPH program information and application. You are also invited to contact Ann Cary, PhD MPH RN A-CCC, the MS/MPH Project Director at 413 545 6630 or cary@nursing.umass.edu for any additional questions or professional coaching. UMass Amherst is pleased to address the needs of the Public Health workforce through the unique MS/MPH dual degree program, now available regardless of venue!

Health Care For Homeless Women: Unmet Needs and Barriers to Care

Homelessness is a significant and growing problem in the United States. Women and families are the fastest growing segments of the homeless population. Homelessness increases the risk of having health problems and encountering barriers to care. This study determines how much perceived unmet need for medical care there is among homeless women, what homeless women perceive to be barriers to health care, and how barriers and other factors are associated with unmet needs. [Journal of General Internal Medicine 18(11) 2003 referenced by Medscape Weekly, 1-14-04] Article:

<http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/465912>

Election 2004 Issue Spotlight

Kaisernetwork.org, the Kaiser Family Foundation's health policy news and information website, introduces a new online resource that provides easy access to the candidates' positions on critical health policy issues, as well as election-related news and analysis.

Access the Election 2004 Issue Spotlight at
<http://www.kaisernetwork.org/spotlight/election2004>.

Features include:

- Candidate profiles, including issue statements, speeches, audio/video interviews and transcripts, news coverage, and additional resources on all major candidates.
- A searchable archive of public opinion questions on health issues related to the election.
- A reference library of election websites and publications.
- Multimedia resources, including webcasts of interviews, discussions, and debates.
- Election-related health news headlines.

The Election 2004 Issue Spotlight will be updated regularly to include new information and developments throughout the campaign cycle.

If you have any questions about this or any of the Foundation's resources, please call (202)347-5270 or send an email to webmaster@kff.org.

Release on the Institute of Medicine's just-released report

Community Catalyst's Physician Diversity Project, Health Care For All, and Citizen Action of New York today put out this release on the Institute of Medicine's just-released report, "In the Nation's Compelling Interest: Ensuring Diversity in the Health Care Workforce."

<http://www.communitycatalyst.org/acrobat/IOMrls.pdf>

Be Part of AHEC news

To contribute an item to the calendar, your submission must be received by the 15th of the month prior to when you would like it to appear. Your submission must be about an event, meeting, conference, or resource relevant to community health, and must include the date of the event, the sponsor, and contact information.

We reserve the right to check or edit items as needed.

Submit your news to: hholland@hcsnm.org

Contact Information

Area Health Education Center

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Brockton, MA 02301
(508) 583-2250

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<http://www.hcsm.org/ahec/htm>