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Kentucky *Rural Health Update*

Always Something Happening with KRHA



Submitted by Sheri Erwin, President

KRHA has had another busy three months. Tina McCormick's contract has been extended to June 30, 2014. Her new contract will begin 7/1/2014. We appreciate the hard work and her dedication to our association for the past year. Having an Executive Director has taken KRHA to a new level and has presented our association many opportunities we have not had in the past.

I believe these opportunities will continue to increase in the future.

Kentucky Rural Health Association, in partnership with The Kentucky Department for Public Health Adult Viral Hepatitis Prevention Program and Immunization Program will sponsor a one day conference entitled **Kentucky Hepatitis: The Silent**

Epidemic. This conference aims to educate attendees on prevention, diagnosis and treatment of those affected by hepatitis B and hepatitis C. The conference on Viral Hepatitis will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Lexington, Kentucky on July 24, 2014. For more Information, contact Julie Miracle or Kathy Sanders at 1-502-564-4478.

There has been a revitalization of our Student Chapters thanks to Paula Arnett and Lucy Juett and the Student Chapter committee. During our annual conference there will be a student track on the Wednesday the 17th including a pizza party on that night to view the movie **Doc Hollywood** with the real Doc Hollywood, Neil Shulman. All student participants

will be invited to attend the annual conference on Thursday and Friday. These students are our future and I am personally very excited about future possibilities and interactions with this group as we are all mentors.

The annual conference is just 4 months away. The conference agenda will be completed soon and I look forward to seeing you in September for the Rural Health Educator's Conference on September 17th and the Annual Conference on September 18th and 19th.

Be sure and visit the KRHA website KyRHA.org and the Kentucky Rural Health Association Facebook page.

The Second Chance Project

Submitted by Kelsey Adams, Health Careers Coordinator, Southern KY AHEC

Being a recent college graduate myself, I understand the hardships that many college graduates face. They have spent years digging through textbooks, pouring through notes, and drinking that extra cup of coffee to cram just a little bit longer. All of this adds up to countless of hours spent working towards a college degree only to be faced with a slow economy upon graduation.

When I was in college there were maybe 10 of us at a satellite campus. We were all working hard to get our elementary teaching degree. However, in this one small classroom there were more teachers than job openings in the surrounding counties. A couple of people from this group did get jobs, but what about those who don't?

This is where the Second Chance Project idea originated from. There were two groups of people I wanted to target with this program; those who have graduated recently and can't find the right job and those who have been in a certain field for a while, but desire a change. The Second Chance Project is a free opportunity for people who are in these situations to gather in one place to learn about transitional healthcare programs offered at local colleges.

Southern KY AHEC held its first-ever Second Chance Project workshop on March 25, 2014 at Berea College. College representatives from Eastern Kentucky University, Somerset Community College, University of Kentucky, and University of Louisville were on hand, as well as Chasity Frakes, a hairdresser-turned-nurse practitioner who works for Rockcastle Regional Hospital.



Though an untimely spring snow kept away many who had planned to come, 14 turned out to hear from the presenters and explore pathways into health care. After the speakers shared information, a lively question-and-answer session along with informal conversations followed.

The event was an innovative way for the Southern KY AHEC to fulfill its mission of promoting health careers. Typically, these programs are targeted to younger audiences, and we use tools such as health career camps or interactive classroom presentations. This gave us an opportunity to reach out to a different demographic, but the end result was the same – the audience came away with ideas of how to get into the health field.

And there's no better time than now. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, occupations and industries related to healthcare are projected to add the most new jobs between 2012

and 2022, with a projected workforce increase of 10.8 percent.

Another Second Chance Project workshop will be held this fall in the Southern KY AHEC region.

The mission of the Southern KY Area Health Education Center, hosted by Rockcastle Regional Hospital in Mt. Vernon, is to improve health through education in our 15-county region. We do that by promoting health careers, supporting rural clinical rotations, and providing continuing medical education. We also organize and support community health initiatives.

For more information, go to www.soahec.org.

Information, contact Julie Miracle or Kathy Sanders at 1-502-564-4478.

Kentucky Office of Rural Health Hosts Kentucky's First Rural Health Clinic Summit

Submitted by Beth Bowling

More than 100 participants came to Kentucky's first Rural Health Clinic (RHC) Summit, hosted by the Kentucky Office of Rural Health (KORH) on May 16, 2014. Attendees from 28 Kentucky counties, along with a few from Tennessee and North Carolina, traveled to Hazard for a full day of networking and learning at the University of Kentucky Center of Excellence in Rural Health (CERH).

Bill Finerfrock, executive director of the National Association of Rural Health Clinics in Washington D.C., delivered the opening keynote and provided a legislative update. New sequester-related cuts are not expected for Medicare, though the 1.6 percent reduction in provider payment is expected to continue for the foreseeable future, said Finerfrock.

Kentucky's decision to expand Medicaid coverage to the levels identified in the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to 138 percent of

poverty level, new and proposed rules affecting regulatory requirements and independent contractor status of mid-level practitioners, and a delay in the ICD-10 implementation to Oct. 1, 2015, were among Finerfrock's updates.

Robin Rowe, with the Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services Office of Inspector General Division of Health Care, presented on the licensure and certification process for RHCs. Panel presentations and breakout sessions throughout the day offered participants a wide range of educational topics including, patient centered medical home, Medicaid managed care, community health workers, electronic health records, revenue cycle and more.

Kentucky is home to 175 RHCs, which are certified to receive special Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement to help improve access to primary health

care in underserved rural areas. RHCs operate with a team approach of physicians and mid-level providers for staffing.

"The many recent changes in health care have created significant challenges for RHCs from a number of angles," said Ernie Scott, director of the KORH. "We surveyed attendees to ask what they would like to see happen as a result of the RHC Summit. Establishing an RHC network, concern about the future of RHCs, patient centered medical homes, and rural health access and growth were among the excellent feedback we can use to chart our course for a stronger future for rural health," Scott said.

"We are thrilled with the level of participation and interest at this inaugural RHC Summit. An RHC Advisory Board is in the process of being developed and KORH is optimistic about the potential of the RHC Summit continuing as an annual event," said Scott.

Shelia Bowling, billing supervisor at Primary Care Centers of Eastern Kentucky attended the summit and said it was "informative and helpful in topics that we are currently facing."

The UK CERH serves as the federally designated Kentucky Office of Rural Health (KORH), which was established in 1991 as a framework to link small rural communities with local, state and federal resources while working toward long-term solutions to rural health issues. The KORH assists clinicians, administrators and



The National Association of Rural Health Clinics was among the 20 exhibitors, 46 organizations and 18 speakers participating in Kentucky's first Rural Health Clinic Summit.

Executive Director's Report

Submitted by Tina McCormick



As I am preparing this article, I am reminded of this time last year when I had attended a Memorial Day Service honoring our veterans expressed my hope that the Kentucky Rural Health Association Board and myself would be able move the association into the future by showing just a fraction of the loyalty and dedication that our veterans have shown to our nation.

As your Executive Director, one of my focuses this year has been on developing and building

upon relationships with other organizations. Some of those include KVH (Kentucky Voices for Health), KPHA (Kentucky Public Health Association), Foundation for Healthy Kentucky, Smoke Free Kentucky, Tobacco Free Kids, State and Federal Legislators, KACo (Kentucky Association of County Officials), KMCA (Kentucky Magistrates & Commissions Association), NRHA (National Rural Health Association), SAC (State Association Council), Governor's Office, AHA (American Health Association), Health Departments and Fiscal courts throughout the state.

We have been involved in several activities this year, such as a One Day Cost Reporting Workshop 101, Smoke Free Kentucky and just recently contracted with the State

Primary Care Office to promote National Health Service Corp.

We are on the way to becoming an even louder voice/face in Frankfort. The Legislators are getting used to seeing me and don't seem as opposed to listening when I have an issue to discuss. Kentucky Rural Health Association was even recognized on the House Floor.

I have also focused on obtaining additional sponsorships. We have at least doubled sponsorships since I started. I work diligently to answer questions promptly to attempt and provide our members with a return for their investment in the association.

As always, please feel free to contact me if you need assistance. You can reach me by phone (270) 577-1707 or email: krha@twc.com

SAVE THE DATE

Kentucky Rural Health Association, in partnership with Kentucky Department for Public Health's Adult Viral Hepatitis Prevention Program and Kentucky Immunization Program, is proud to present Hepatitis: The Silent Epidemic in Kentucky

July 24, 2014

Hyatt Regency in Lexington, KY – Registration begins at 7:30 am
Contact Tina McCormick at krha@twc.com for more information

**HEPATITIS:
THE SILENT
EPIDEMIC IN
KENTUCKY**
Lexington, KY

Sponsored by KRHA and
Kentucky Department for
Public Health's Adult Viral
Hepatitis Prevention Program

**2014 KRHA
ANNUAL
CONFERENCE**

Sept. 17-18, 2014

Bowling Green, KY

Watch your email or check out our webpage at www.kyrha.org for more information.

consumers to find ways to improve communications, finances and access to quality health care while insuring that funding agencies and policy makers are made aware of the needs of rural communities.

Some of the programs available at the KORH include Kentucky's Rural Hospital Flexibility Program (Flex), a grant established to assist rural hospitals and improve access through critical access hospital (CAH) designation. Since the majority of CAHs have been converted, the Flex grant has evolved to support quality and performance improvement activities, financial improvement activities and the integration of emergency medical services (EMS) into rural healthcare systems.

Other services of the KORH include the Small Rural Hospital Improvement Grant (SHIP), which provides funding to support quality improvement initiatives in small hospitals, and the Kentucky State Loan Repayment Program, which is a 50/50 matching program that increases availability of primary health care services through repayment of education loans to eligible health professionals practicing in health professional shortage areas.

To learn more about KORH services and technical assistance, visit www.kyruralhealth.org, or call 606-439-3557, or toll-free 855-859-2374.



The KORH team includes Rural Project Managers (from left) Ronald Jent, Marcus Pigman and Kayla Combs and Director Ernie Scott. Unavailable for photo Alice Combs.

Looking for more ways to become involved in KRHA? Join a committee! The Communications Committee is seeking individuals with a communications or marketing background or just an individual who is willing to assist with KRHA's communications endeavors! Contact Andrew Bledsoe at 606-824-0484 or at a.bledsoe@nekyrhio.org for more information.

4th Annual Newspaper Reporting Contest

4 Winners

Daily Series

Daily Single Story

Non-Daily Series

Non-Daily Single

***Now accepting
articles through July
15, 2014***

*Winners receive a
plaque and \$100
prize.*

No Entry Fee!!

***Winners will be
announced at
KRHA's Annual
Conference
September 17-18 in
Bowling Green, KY***

***Contact Andrew
Bledsoe to submit
entries or for more
information at
a.bledsoe@nekyrhio.org
or at 606-824-0484***