



New England Rural Health RoundTable Newsletter

August 2, 2009

Message from the Executive Director

Dear Round Table Members:

There is Still Time to Register for the 4th Rural Oral Health Conference

Note the change of venue: The Conference will take place at the New England Center, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH.

Reason for the change: the Sheraton Harborside in Portsmouth "double-booked" and we lost our meeting space **BUT** the new location will have ample room for attendees and the program is stellar – you won't want to miss it. Special guest speaker Dr. Edwin Smith will tell of his experiences in traveling with a mobile dental van through Appalachia, bringing dental treatment to those who have no access to care. Keynote speaker is Tricia Brooks, senior fellow at the Center for Children and Families (CCF) and an assistant research professor at the Georgetown University Health Policy Institute.

The next big item on our calendar is the Annual Symposium

Friday, October 30 – the RoundTable's 12th Annual Symposium will convene at the Portland Marriott at Sable Oaks, Portland, ME. This year's theme – Workforce – is on everyone's mind at this critical juncture in health care. Tom Morris, Associate Administrator for Rural Health Policy, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and Dr. Cathy Morrow, co-director of the Dartmouth Rural Scholars Program, are heading the program.

Thursday, October 29 – One day prior to the Annual Symposium, the Boston HRSA field office is partnering with the RoundTable to hold a NE Rural Strategic Partnership session at the Portland Marriott at Sable Oaks, to which all HRSA grantees (and other interested groups) will be invited.

Exciting News From Great Barrington, MA; CHP Acquires Property for Consolidating Programs

On July 1, Community Health Programs (CHP), Great Barrington, MA announced it had closed on a 7.79 acre property at 440 Stockbridge Road which will eventually serve as its new home after renovations are complete. With this purchase, the federally qualified community health agency will be able to consolidate a number of its programs in one location, to the benefit of staff, volunteers, clients and patients. Marcia Savage, Executive Director, said "Our agency is growing at an unprecedented rate, and to say we have been challenged by issues of space would be a gross understatement."

At present, CHP operates its eleven programs from six locations in Great Barrington and one facility in Pittsfield. Purchase of the property was made possible by a large number of gifts and grants, the first of which was a donation of over \$300,000 in June 2007 from the Southern Berkshire Visiting Nurse Foundations as a result of its dissolution two years earlier. The CHP received \$463,185 in stimulus funds from HRSA and in February 2009, Congressman John Olver's office announced that



CHP would receive \$570,000 in omnibus appropriations from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. For more about CHP, visit their [website](#).

HealthReach Celebrates \$1.3M U.S. Aid

from the Kennebec Journal 7-3-09

BY COLIN HICKEY

Staff Writer

HealthReach Community Health Centers learned in March of more than \$350,000 in economic stimulus money headed its way.

This week the funding news got nearly four times better.

HealthReach, which has its headquarters in Waterville, learned Monday that it will receive more than \$1.3 million in economic stimulus money from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"It is very good news," HealthReach President Connie Coggins said Thursday. "It will help us further our mission in the communities."

The nonprofit organization, operator of 11 rural health centers in central Maine, is not the only rural health agency to benefit from the latest round of money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Sebasticook Family Doctors, which has administrative offices in Newport, will get \$439,348 from the federal initiative. The nonprofit runs clinics in six communities, including Newport, Hartland, Canaan and Pittsfield.

Coggins, who also is HealthReach's chief executive officer, said the grant money must be used for capital improvement needs.

Coggins said HealthReach will use most of the funds to establish an integrated electronic medical record system at its 11 clinics.

HealthReach currently has four clinics, including Lovejoy Health Center in Albion and Belgrade Regional Health Center, that have completed the conversion to an electronic medical record system.

"(This) will allow us to complete the initial implementation for sure," Coggins said.

Coggins said electronic record keeping requires substantial investments in computers, servers, scanners and telecommunication equipment.

Such a system, she said, helps to improve efficiency and reduce mistakes.

Money from the grant became available Wednesday, Coggins said, and the funding is good through June 30, 2011.

The \$1.3 million for HealthReach is part of \$10.2 million in federal Community Health Center funding for 18 community health centers in Maine.

Colin Hickey -- 861-9205 chickey@centralmaine.com

Health Reach Community Health Centers – Hudson Grant



Release Date: July 1, 2009
HRCHC Contact: Communications Department
Telephone: (207) 861-3400
Email: hrchc@HealthReach.org

Hudson Foundation bestows grant to HealthReach Community Health Centers

HealthReach Community Health Centers recently received a \$2,000 grant from The Hudson Foundation to assist with the HealthReach Medication Initiative. The Hudson Foundation, a private foundation incorporated under the laws of the State of Maine on August 2, 1993, makes grants and contributions to charitable organizations.

Patients frequently have difficulty affording prescribed medications and may be eligible for reduced drug pricing for generic drugs through retail chain stores and a Patient Assistance Program through which patients enroll in pharmaceutical company programs that provide no-cost supplies of medications to those who meet income guidelines.

In 2006, HealthReach received funding through a contract with CarePartners of MaineGeneral Health from the Maine Health Access Foundation. Through this support, we were able to purchase access to DataNet, a computerized system of enrolling, managing and tracking applications for free medications. Over the past two years, we facilitated 1,958 prescriptions for health center patients valued at \$821,076.

Support from The Hudson Foundation will assist HealthReach in continuing this important program by ensuring that patients can obtain their prescribed medications to improve their health status and quality of life.

HealthReach Community Health Centers is a system of eleven federally qualified health centers in central and western Maine. Dedicated providers deliver high quality health care to citizens in over 80 rural communities. To ensure access for everyone, HealthReach accepts Medicare, MaineCare and major insurances. In addition, we offer an Affordable Care Program to uninsured and underinsured residents and assist with applications for other programs that help with the cost of health care and medications. A private, non-profit organization with a 30-year history, HealthReach is funded by patient fees, grants and individual donations.

Essay by Dr. Wayne Myers

If you have time for only one article from the recent RACOnline, [read this compelling essay](#) by Dr. Wayne Myers, pediatrician and former NRHA president. He reports that although he's been doing "health-related stuff" for 50 years, he's now *learning health policy* from his neighbors in Waldoboro, ME.

Thanks,

Marion Pawlek, Executive Director
New England Rural Health RoundTable
mjpawlek@joimail.com
603-643-2800



To subscribe to the e-mail version of our online newsletter, please send e-mail to lwillis@tss-cpa.com and request that your name be added to the New England Rural Health RoundTable mailing list.

The RoundTable's online newsletter is published approximately once a month. Current issues are available in HTML format, with links to additional information. Previous issues are available in printer-friendly Adobe Acrobat format.