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Washington County Receives Grant for Health Center

Through the facilitation of the Center for Community Health Development at the Texas A&M Health Science Center School of Rural Public Health, Trinity Medical Center, Faith Mission and Washington County, have collaborated to form the Washington County Health Center Coalition.

This coalition has been working to develop the Washington County Health Center. The health center will house local public health entities including Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Medical Assistance Program of Washington County, State Health Services and Faith Mission Case Management Services in one facility making it a one stop shop for Washington County Residents. Also, within this health center will be a clinic that offers primary medical care to uninsured individuals who are residents of Washington County and that have a household income with 200% of the federal poverty level. The health center facility will be located at 101 S Chappell Hill St. in Brenham, Texas. This building is the former Brenham police station and has ample room to create a nice health center facility. Ashleigh Dozier, a Master of Health Administration student at the Texas A&M Health Science Center School of Rural Public Health, was hired in October 2007 to oversee this development process and coordinate all project activities at the direction



Ashleigh Dozier

of the Washington County Health Center Coalition. Since her hire, Ashleigh has been facilitating the project implementation and procurement of renovation funding. In late November 2008, Ashleigh, on behalf of Washington County, submitted a proposal to the Rural Health Demonstration Pilot Project sponsored by the Office of Rural Community Affairs for Texas Community Development Block Grant Program funding. On January 31, 2009, Washington County was informed that it would be awarded its request for \$235,500 for facility renovations. This award will provide the needed funding to move forward with the project and allow renovations to begin immediately. The facility renovations are estimated to be finished in late 2009 and the facility will open soon afterwards. Ashleigh will continue to work as a graduate assistant for the Center for Community Health Development where she will facilitate the Washington County Health Center development until her graduation in May 2009. She then plans to continue her career in health administration as the administrative fellow at Moore County Hospital District in Dumas, Texas.

Student Impact

Since its inception in 2001, graduate assistants and doctoral students have been an integral part of the Center's infrastructure. With the addition of the award from the Office of Rural Community Affairs for Texas Community Development Block Grant Program, the students employed by CCHD have obtained more than 2.5 million dollars in grants and contracts. Our students have published at least 13 journal articles, 10 conference papers, and one book. They have also

presented five conference posters and over 30 scientific presentations at conferences such as the American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting, the CDC Diabetes Translation Conference, and the Texas Rural Health Association. Currently, there are nine graduate assistants, four student workers, and three doctoral students employed by CCHD.

Mental Health in Crisis: Creative Solutions in the Brazos Valley

In the 2006 Brazos Valley Health Status Assessment, 20 percent of respondents across the seven-county region of the Brazos Valley reported that they had been diagnosed with depression, and one-half of residents said that they were concerned about their mental health. While these statistics are not necessarily out of line with communities across the U.S., the mental health situation in the Brazos Valley is complicated by an utter lack of mental health service providers.

For rural residents—even those with insurance that covers mental health services—access remains an issue because there are no local services. This translates to long drives and time off work to obtain needed care, which poses a significant barrier. Leon County has developed a strategy for addressing this need by partnering with CCHD and the Counseling and Assessment Clinic (CAC) run by the Counseling Psychology Program at Texas A&M University. The Leon Health Resource Center in Centerville has been connected by T-1 to the Texas A&M Health Science Center, and soon the CAC will be connected as well. Guided by rigorous protocols for treatment and patient privacy and confidentiality, advanced doctoral students in the Counseling Psychology Program will conduct mental health assessments and provide counseling for Leon County residents via a televideo connection. While this strategy promises to meet some of the local need, some residents' issues require more intensive treatment.

The Mental Health Mental Retardation Authority of the Brazos Valley (MHMR) tries to fill that gap, but there is so much need and so little funding for mental health in Texas, that this task is almost impossible. MHMR receives funding from the state and from several Brazos Valley counties, but their capacity to provide mental health services is limited to people with

severe needs or who are in crisis. "With the fact that the State of Texas is ranked 48th through 50th, depending on who you ask, in Mental Health funding in the United States, this project is a great opportunity to evaluate the mental health crisis intervention services provided in collaboration by the Brazos County Sheriff's Office and the MHMR Authority of Brazos Valley. These types of partnerships between community-based clinical services/ settings and research institutions will help inform mental health services research science, service delivery, program dissemination and implementation, and mental health policy. Hats off to the CCHD for their continual efforts in the Brazos Valley to address local healthcare needs." – Bill Kelly.

They have recently partnered with the Brazos County Sheriff's Department and the College Station Police Department to coordinate their approach to crisis intervention. Through this partnership, the Crisis Intervention Team is helping those in mental health crisis get timely, appropriate help and saving the community money by diverting cases from the jail and the emergency room when possible. "Crisis Intervention is one of the key components to combating mental health crisis in communities around the world. We have had a unique opportunity locally to partner with MHMR and other organizations to improve the continuity of care for mental health consumers." – Jason Lyday

As communities across the U.S. seek to develop solutions to similar issues, the Brazos Valley stands to serve as a model of a variety of innovative strategies implemented and evaluated through strong relationships between the community and researchers in the Center for Community Health Development.

Dr. Jim Burdine Appointed to State Advisory Committee on Primary Care Case Management



Dr. Jim Burdine has been appointed by the Texas Health and Human Service Commission to serve on its Primary Care Case Management (PCCM) Advisory Committee. The committee is comprised of representatives from Texas Medical Association (TMA), Texas Hospital Association (THA), Medicaid primary care providers, and the Texas Medicaid and Healthcare Partnership. The mission of the committee is "To provide information and recommendations to HHSC intended to guide improvements in the PCCM program."

According to the Texas Health and Human Service Commission*, the Primary Care Case Management (PCCM) program provides health

care services for most people with Medicaid in 202 Texas counties. People with PCCM coverage choose a primary care provider for health-care services. The primary care provider is the person or health-care center that will provide most of a client's health-care services.

PCCM covers all Medicaid benefits including:

- Choice of doctors (clients can choose a primary care provider).
- Prescription drugs and medical supplies.
- Access to medical specialists when needed.
- Hospital care and services.
- X-rays and lab tests.
- Mental health care.
- Coverage for pre-existing conditions.
- Family planning services and supplies.
- OB/GYN (doctor for women's health) services.
- Outpatient surgery.
- Home health agency services (health care at home).
- Eye exams and glasses.
- Shots for children and teenagers.
- Chiropractic (back doctor) services.
- Podiatry (foot doctor) services.

*see references on page 4

Multishare Conference

On November 7, the Center for Community Health Development and the University of Texas Medical Branch co-sponsored a conference put on by the TexHealth Coalition, of which the Brazos Valley is a member. This one-day conference focused on health care access in Texas, current legislation, and information sharing

among communities in the process of developing coverage strategies for their working uninsured. The keynote speaker, State Senator Kirk Watson, encouraged the group to continue their efforts and stressed the importance of health for citizens to have the ability to be productive and successful.

New Employee



Ashley Wilson, M.P.H., is a recent graduate from Texas A&M School of Rural Public Health. Her major activity is to coordinate the Diabetes Prevention and Management Program which is a core research program in the Centers for Disease Control Prevention Research Center within the school. This is a community-based participatory research project aimed at translating evidence based chronic disease management best practice guidelines into rural communities and underserved populations. Previously she worked as a GA for the Core Research Project as well as a "Community Champion" for Active Options, an online resource guide that assists adults in finding local physical activity programs and facilities that fit their needs. Her professional interests include continuing to work in the public health field while focusing on obesity prevention and physical activity and possibly pursuing a degree in the clinical sector of healthcare. Her personal interests include working out, traveling, reading, and spending time with her friends, family, and her dog.

Cynthia Robertson Named National Community Committee Representative

At their August 2008 meeting, the Brazos Valley Health Partnership Board of Directors appointed fellow board member Cynthia Robertson as the Center for Community Health Development's representative on the National Community Committee (NCC). In her role as an NCC member, Cynthia will work with community members representing thirty-two other Prevention Research Centers across the nation to identify

community health priorities and communicate those priorities back to researchers in an effort to shape prevention research agendas. Mrs. Robertson attended her first NCC Annual Program meeting at West Virginia University in October. She states, "I have long been a proponent of research that is responsive to the needs of the community. It is an honor to represent the BVHP and the CCHD as the CDC works to develop a true

partnership of community and researchers through the Prevention Research Centers." In addition to their fall and spring meetings, the NCC works through monthly conference calls to advance their efforts. The Brazos Valley Health Partnership Board of Directors serves as the local community advisory board for the Center for Community Health Development.

Community Highlight

Madison County Residents Giving Year Round



The holidays are a time for giving and caring, but a handful of Madison County residents do this year round. On Tuesday, December 9th, the Madison County Health Resource Commission held an appreciation event for the Madison Health Resource Center's volunteer drivers. Over thirty people, including van riders, attended the reception to recognize the hard work of twelve volunteer drivers.

All year, these individuals give their time to Madison County residents in need of transportation to health related appointments. During the last year, the drivers volunteered over 820 hours to deliver 858 rides and drove 13,970 miles. Rides were given to destinations in Madison County as well as in Bryan/College Station. Drivers were given certificates from the Brazos Valley Area Agency on Aging and a gift from the Madison County Health Resource Commission. Several local businesses also donated door prizes that were handed out at the event.



Mary McVey was awarded "volunteer of the year", recognized for driving over 350 hours in the last twelve months. Ms. McVey was honored by the reading of two letters written by clients she has faithfully driven over the last year and given a framed certificate. These selfless individuals are the driving force behind the work that is done at the Madison Health Resource Center.

Have you moved?

We are continuously making efforts to keep our distribution list up to date. If you have a new email address or mailing address please send it to Missy Mouton at smmouton@srph.tamhsc.edu so that we may update your contact information in our mail out list.

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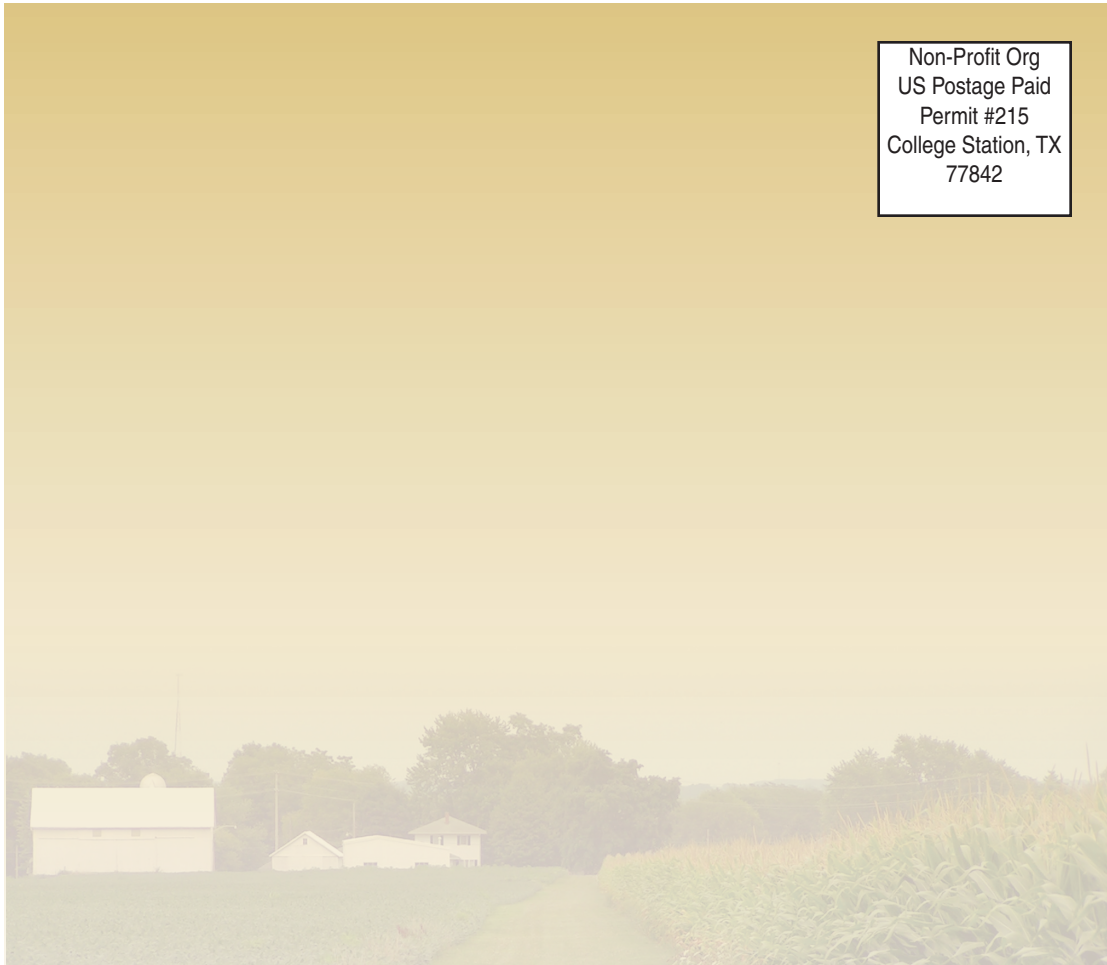
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Resources

The following resources are available for more information on the articles in this edition of *Communitas*:

Rural Health Grants

<http://www.orca.state.tx.us/index.php/Home/Grants>

Mental Health

<http://www.mhmrabv.org/>

Primary Care Case Management

http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/medicaid/care_case_program.html

National Community Committee

<http://www.hdpd.unc.edu/ncc/>

Services

The Center for Community Health Development can be contracted to provide services, training, or technical assistance in the following areas:

- Strategic Planning
- Operational Planning
- Leadership Development
- Research Design
- Survey Construction
- Coalition Development
- Assessment
- Evaluation