

Network News

"Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day in and day out." *Robert Collier*

Inside this issue:

Network Works To Improve Chronic Disease Outcomes	2
Area Medical Offices Become Centers for Diabetes Excellence	3
Local Group Gets Grant To Fight Youth Substance Abuse	3
Network Staff Member Selected as Diabetes Delegate, Continued	4
Local Healthy Choices Education Continues Through State Grant	4
Samaritan's Touch Announces New Executive Director	5
Charlotte County Health Department Has New Interim Administrator	5
Tampa General Hospital Reaches Milestone	6
FL Hosp. Utilizes Health Buddy Units	6
Network Receives Winn Dixie Foundation Grant	7
MomCare: A Special Medicaid Program for Pregnant Women	7
Grant Provides Breast Health Education	8

Network Staff Member Selected as Diabetes Delegate: Travels to India to exam diabetes care and treatment

Kathy MacNeill, **Heartland Rural Health Network's** Certified Diabetes Educator and Associate Director of the Diabetes Master Clinician Program joined a number of her peers as a member of the Diabetes Education Delegation that traveled to India in October, 2010. In conjunction with the People to People Citizen Ambassador Program, this delegation fosters one-on-one



Kathy MacNeill (center) and other delegates take a break with their Indian guide.

primary professional objective of this delegation was to seek a better understanding of the practice of diabetes education and the role of diabetes clinicians in India. *Story continued on Page 4*



Delegates had an opportunity to visit Gandhi's final resting place.

dialogue with diabetes care givers overseas. The delegation visited professional and cultural sites in three very different Indian cities – Delhi, Jaipur, and Agra. These cities provided Ms. MacNeill and other delegates with unique views of Indian professional life and cultures from the traditional to the contemporary; the urban to the rural; the elderly to the young. The



Old Delhi: This photo shows that electrical codes are not as strict as they are in the United States, which can pose health hazards to the public.

Network Works To Improve Patient Care & Chronic Health Outcomes In Tri County Area

“A key feature of the DMCP is a registry that provides quality reports by both individual patient and practice.”

The significant increase in the prevalence of diabetes and cardiovascular diseases across the United States, including Highlands, Hardee, and DeSoto Counties has been a source of concern to local health care providers for several years now. Studies have shown that the prevalence of diabetes has increased by 33% over the last decade as a result of an increasingly sedentary lifestyle, the epidemic of obesity, the growth of ethnic groups at risk for the disease and the aging of the population. To help address this issue the **Heartland Rural Health Network, Inc.** received a Small Health Care Provider Quality Improvement grant from the Federal Health Resources & Services Administration, Office of Rural Health Policy. The grant is for a three year period totaling \$300,000. The purpose of this grant is to improve patient care and chronic disease outcomes by assisting rural primary care providers with the implementation of quality improvement initiatives using the chronic care model and electronic patient registries (EPR). EPR's capture information on specific conditions and has a population-based focus.

Over the past two years HRHN has successfully implemented the Florida Academy of Family Physician's Diabetes Master



Dr. Edward Shahady, the DMCP's Medical Director, shares registry data with local providers during a recent meeting held at Inn on the Lakes in Sebring.

Clinician Program (DMCP) with the assistance of the DMCP's Medical Director, Dr. Edward Shahady, at eight medical practices in Highlands, Hardee and DeSoto Counties. A key feature of the DMCP is it's EPR that provides quality assessment reports by both individual patient and practice aggregate indicators of achievement for diabetes and cardiovascular quality goals. Only 30 to 45% of patients with diabetes achieve 1 or more of the American Diabetes Association goals for the quality indicators of hemoglobin A1C, low density lipoprotein cholesterol (LDL), and blood pressure (BP). And only 7% of patients achieve goal levels in all 3 indicators at any given time. The DMCP's EPR provides an opportunity for patients to see how well they are doing in achieving

their diabetes goals through patient "report cards" that use patient oriented language to inform them of their goals and reasons for obtaining tests. The EPR also provides reports that indicate how well a practice is doing in achieving goals compared to all practices utilizing the EPR. HRHN will now have an opportunity to not only focus on diabetes but also work with local providers to address quality improvement strategies relating to cardiovascular disease outcomes. "Being able to use an EPR to track the achievement of quality indicators at a provider and patient level can ultimately reduce health complications and costs," said Kathy MacNeill, the DMCP's Associate Director.

HRHN would like to welcome Michael Carr, PA & Family Practice Center of Avon Park as the newest Network member!

Area Medical Offices Become Centers for Diabetes Excellence

Complete Family Medical Center, Samaritan's Touch Care Center and Pioneer Medical Center were named Centers for Diabetes Excellence and their clinicians were awarded certification as Diabetes Master Clinicians by the Florida Academy of Family Physicians, in conjunction with the **Heartland Rural Health Network** for their quality work in diabetes. Dr. Edward Shahady, founder and director of the Diabetes Master Clinician Program (DMCP) and Kathy MacNeill, Associate Director of the DMCP, presented certificates to the offices, clinicians and staff who helped achieve the goals of the program. The DMCP was initiated in 2003 by the Florida Academy of Family Physicians Foundation to help clinicians ensure excellence in their care of diabetes. The program uses an internet based disease registry to produce patient and practice report cards. These three practices achieved well above the registry averages for many of the quality

criteria, and had overall improvement of 10% or more in the measured areas. The diabetes criteria scores include: Hemoglobin A1c less than 7, Blood pressure less than 130/80, and LDL Cholesterol less than 100. Other significant criteria include documentation of yearly foot exams, yearly urine micro albumin testing, and yearly eye exams. The certified Diabetes Master Clinicians include: **Kendra Hall, DO; Luis Pena, MD; Edwin C. Pigman, MD; William J. Gill PA-C; Lauren Canary, PA-C; and Keith Coker, PAD-C.** The staff at the centers awarded certificates as **Diabetes Master Clinician Associates** were **Susan Hall, RN; Angela Long, LPM; Angie Greene; Brianne Morrow; Francine Whitman, RN; Tamara Cruz, MA; Diana Furr; Tammy Hellein, MA; Tawnya Massey, MA; Sylvia Belmares, LPN; Paula Hartley, LPN; April Lozano and Tammy Brown.** Kathy



Dr. Edward Shahady awards Kathy MacNeill with a Diabetes Master Clinician Trainer certificate.



Staff from Hardee County Complete Family Medical Center, proudly display their certificates of achievement.

MacNeill was also awarded the title of Diabetes Master

Clinician Trainer by Dr. Shahady.

Local Groups Gets Grant To Fight Youth Substance Abuse

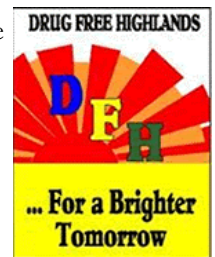
The Heartland Rural Health Network, Inc. and Drug Free Highlands (DFH) received a \$625,000 grant to fight substance abuse among the youth in Highlands County. The Substance Abuse & Mental Health Administration awarded the five year Drug

Free Communities Support program grant. These program grants help drug free community coalitions strengthen collaboration among community partners and help prevent and reduce substance abuse. It's based on the fundamental concept that local problems need local

solutions. DFH is comprised of community leaders, parents, youth, teachers, religious and fraternal organizations, health care and business professionals, law enforcement and media. "We will now have an opportunity to provide more community awareness and sup-

port to ensure a drug free Highlands," said Jacqueline Rawlings, DFH Chair.

For more information contact Amanda Sherley, Coordinator, at 863-382-2138 or visit drugfreehighlands.org



Network Staff Selected As Diabetes Delegate, continued

As delegates traveled through India meeting clinicians and people with diabetes, they were impressed that their goals and many challenges for diabetes care were the same – improving the lives of those with the disease.

India is the second most populous country in the world with over 1.18 billion people more than a sixth of the world's population. Since diabetes is a relatively new disease to the population, often the diagnosis of diabetes in India is made at the discovery of complications and screening with early identification being limited. With an extensive and variable geography, more than two thousand ethnic groups, every major religion, and over 1400 lan-

guages, many challenges exist to developing a national health policy for addressing the burgeoning diabetes epidemic. The Indian clinicians discussed this openly and talked about some of the national efforts to address this problem. In addition, to embracing many of the Western approaches to chronic disease, Indian clinicians and patients are incorporating traditional Indian practices such as yoga, acupuncture, and Ayurveda practices. As they gained understanding of the use of these additional tools, delegates had discussions about how some of these practices could be useful in their own diabetes education practices. They concluded that globally the goals of India's and Western treatment of



Delegates have opportunities to speak with medical professionals practicing in India on various diabetes topics.

diabetes are the same – helping people with diabetes find the strategies to manage their diabetes effectively so that they can achieve the quality of life that is most important to them. Delegates also had an opportunity to do some sight seeing. When asked to sum-

marize her trip, Ms. MacNeill stated, “We hear about different cultures, but to truly see one up close and personal was an amazing experience. Diabetes is the same all over the world, but the way we treat it differs greatly. We can all learn from each other.”

Local Healthy Choices Education Continues Through State Grant

The Heartland Rural Health Network, Inc. was one of 13 organizations in Florida recently awarded a grant from the Florida Department of Health to provide community-based abstinence education program services to local teenagers in Highlands and Polk Counties. A total of \$1.95 million in statewide funding was made available for awarded grant programs through federal Title V funds. HRHN received \$ 150,000.00 per year for four years to implement several local initiatives in close partnership with the

Highlands and Polk County Teen Pregnancy Prevention Alliances, the **Healthy Start Coalition of Hardee, Highlands, & Polk Counties, Avon Park Youth Academy, Walker Memorial Academy, Heartland Christian School, Highlands County Schools, PACE Center for Girls, and New Beginnings High School.** Grant funds must be matched 1:1 with in kind contributions. Staff will use the Making A Difference! curriculum reaching at least 500 unduplicated students; provide an after school Go Girls club; and



Highlands County Go Girls participate in the YMCA Healthy Kids Day to share a variety of health education messages.

provide outreach and educational opportunities for parents and the community to educate them on the benefits of absti-

nence and keeping communication lines open with youth. Programs will start in August, 2011.

Samaritan's Touch Announces New Executive Director

Samaritan's Touch Care Center announced that Rachel Nawrocki is the organization's new executive director. Founder Diana Furr recently retired. The center provides Highlands County's uninsured, needy families access to medical care. "Rachel Nawrocki is a highly qualified leader that will take STCC into the future," said Kim Schlosser, president of the STCC Board of Directors. "Rachel has actively stepped into her new role as executive director. We will certainly miss Diana who served since its inception. We all wish Diana the very best in her decision to retire and travel

with her husband Bud. We would also like to thank Bud Furr for his many years of legal leadership donated to STCC." Nawrocki has a master's degree in management and a bachelor's in organizational management. She lives in Sebring with her husband and three children. Her husband, Zbigniew Nawrocki, is the ancillary services director at Florida Hospital Heartland Medical Center. Rachel Nawrocki also volunteers as a court appointed guardian ad litem, and devotes much of her time volunteering as a sports coach at the Highlands County YMCA. Samaritan's Touch

Care Center is a 501 c 3 Christian humanitarian organization that provides primary medical care to anyone who is without medical insurance, with an income below 200% of federal poverty guidelines. Since its inception in May 2007, STCC has provided donated medical care estimated at over \$10 million. For more information about services or volunteering please call 863-471-1870.



Rachel Nawrocki has taken on the role of Executive Director of Samaritan's Touch Care Center.

**Information extracted from Highlands Today and News Sun Press Releases*

Charlotte County Health Department Has New Interim Administrator



Mary Kay Burns is serving as Interim Administrator of the Charlotte County Health Department.

The Charlotte County Health Department announced that Mary Kay Burns, R.N., B.S.N.,

M.B.A. is serving as the interim Administrator as a result of the resignation of Administrator Steven Mitnick, M.S., A.R.N.P., M.B.A., who had been serving as Administrator of the CHHD since October, 2006. Ms. Burns' appointment as interim Administrator at CHDD started November 15, 2010. Ms. Burns also continues to serve as the Administrator of the DeSoto County Health Department. She brings a

career spanning many phases of leadership including a strong background in quality and goal achievement in health care. Ms. Burns began her role at the DCHD with a vision to build the local partnerships in this rural community where a lack of services and service duplications existed. She utilizes a participative management style and staff have an opportunity to share their opinions and contribute to an employee/customer driven organization. In the most recent FL Department of Health Employee Satisfac-

tion Survey, DeSoto was at the top for satisfaction results of the small counties designation. Throughout her diverse career, the commitment to enhance customer satisfaction and service has been the core principle and which still continues to driver her personal mission and success. Ms. Burns has the spirit of community commitment and is a member of many local organizations, including the Heartland Rural Health Network, Inc.

**Information extracted from the Charlotte County Health Department's website*

Tampa General Hospital Reaches Milestone: Transition from paper to electronic medical records goes smoothly

On May 2, **Tampa General Hospital** reached a milestone when the Family Care Center-Kennedy and Outpatient Rehabilitation Services at Tampa General's South Armenia Clinic were the first to go live with Epic, the new Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system. Overall, the switch from paper records to electronic medical records went smoothly, and despite a short power outage at the Kennedy location, the Epic system did not lose any data. During the initial weeks of the transition to the EMR system, teams of

Epic and Information Technologies staff are monitoring the system in a Command Center nearby. They'll be able to talk to staff through live video conferencing and investigate and correct any glitches that may occur with the system. Patient registration time has also been reduced since they only have to fill out one to two forms during each visit. "It is always amazing to watch the profession of users during an Epic go-live," said Scott Arnold, vice president of Information Technologies. "By day three

of our go-live, the speed of patient flow, from registration through discharge improved nearly 400% from the first day. Within a few days, nearly all Epic users demonstrated speed and accuracy with the system." Having the "one-patient one chart" will help improve efficiency and patient satisfaction.

**Article submitted by David Robbins, Vice-President, TGH*



TGH medical staff are able to use the Electronic Medical Records to document daily progress notes and discharge documentation, helping to improve efficiency.

Florida Hospital Utilizes Health Buddy Units in Telehealth Program

Florida Hospital's Telehealth program is designed to help reduce visits to physician's offices upon release from the hospital. The Health Buddy



The Health Buddy hooks up to a phone line and remits vital information back to the hospital. This helps reduce office visits after a patient is released from the hospital.

—an electronic device about the size of a book—gives doctors critical updates on health status indicators without the patients ever having to leave home. The Health Buddy hooks up to the patient's telephone line to transmit data. The unit is equipped to take vital signs, oxygen saturation levels, blood sugar levels, and asks the patient 12 questions via a screen that are based on the patient's specific disease program. The Health Buddy then remits the collected

information back to hospital staff. The disease programs supported by this unit include heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, hypertension, and diabetes. So far at least 100 patients who visited Florida Hospital have benefitted from this program which began over a year ago. Most patients have the units in their home for 60 days and most of them are used for the elderly population. Information collected is sent on a secure phone line. The

patient isn't required to use the phone at all and the unit doesn't increase the phone bill. Patients using a Health Buddy unit are more apt to meet their health care goals through better compliance and a reduction in the number of ER visits and hospitalizations since health care providers are able to catch symptoms quicker.

**Information extracted from article published in Highlands Today, November 12, 2010*

Network Receives Winn Dixie Foundation Grant

Heartland Rural Health Network, Inc. is proud to announce the Winn-Dixie Foundation has donated \$4,500 to help support their Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Outreach Program. The purpose of this outreach program is to assist low income seniors in Highlands, Hardee, and DeSoto Counties apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, more commonly known as food stamps. According to the Florida Department of Elder Affairs, nearly 67% of potentially eligible seniors in the tri county area are currently not accessing SNAP benefits. Although there are many reasons why participation rates are lower for seniors, the most common factor that

program staff hear from individuals is the difficulty and confusion with the application process. Through the Network's SNAP Outreach Program staff is available to assist seniors in Highlands, Hardee, and DeSoto Counties through the application process and teach them how to utilize the online application and steps for recertification. "The Winn-Dixie Foundation realizes the importance of giving back to the communities we serve, especially in times of need," said Mary Kellmanson, president of Winn-Dixie Foundation. "For more than 85 years, Winn-Dixie has been known as the company with a heart. We continue that tradition by donating funds from our

Foundation to worthy organizations, such as Heartland Rural Health Network, that share our goal of helping to improve the lives of families in each neighborhood we serve." To learn more about the Winn-Dixie Foundation, please visit www.winndixie.com. To contact the Network's SNAP specialist please call 863-452-0638.



Winn-Dixie
FOUNDATION

"...Nearly 67% of potentially eligible seniors in the tri county area are currently not accessing SNAP benefits."

MomCare: A Special Medicaid Program for Pregnant Women

The MomCare program's goal is to improve birth outcomes and reduce infant mortality by increasing access to care for pregnant women through a simplified Medicaid application. Once pregnancy is determined, women may qualify for this special health insurance program. The family's income must be within 185% of the federal poverty guidelines, which is slightly above the

standard Medicaid guidelines. They can apply for this program, even if they or other family members are working. Once enrolled, the program covers medical care and hospitalization during the pregnancy. It may also cover



health care bills up to three months before enrollment. There is no cost for this coverage. Additionally, the infant may also be eligible for free insurance after they are born. For more information please contact the **Healthy Start Coalition of Hardee, Highlands, and Polk Counties MomCare** staff at 863-298-4481.

***Article submitted by Mary Jo Plews, HSC Executive Director*

TEXT4BABY



A free mobile information service that provides pregnant women and new moms with information to help them care for their health & give babies the best possible start in life.

Visit text4baby.org for more information!



1200 W. Avon Blvd.
Suite 109
Avon Park, FL 33825

Phone: 863-452-6530
Fax: 863-452-6882

Email: rudy.reinhardt@hrhn.org
Email: kelly.johnson@hrhn.org
Email: kathy.macneill@hrhn.org

Visit Us On The Web!
www.hrhn.org



Help Us Spread
The Network News!
After reading the
newsletter pass it along for
your colleagues to enjoy!

Board of Directors 2011-2012

- David K. Robbins II, President**
- Blake Warren, Vice President**
- Robert Palussek, Secretary/
Treasurer**
- Linda Adler, Past-President**
- Warren L. Santander, Director**
- Mary Kay Burns, Director**
- Dr. Stephen L. Gordon, Director**
- David Duke, Director**
- Lauren M. Canary, Director**
- Gaye Williams, Director**
- Robert C. Rihn, Director**
- Vincent A. Sica, Director**
- J. Rudy Reinhardt, Network
Executive Director**

Congratulations!

Central Florida Health Care, Inc. proudly announced the openings of their new Winter Haven Clinic for Adults & Pediatric services and Lake Wales Dental Clinic! The Winter Haven Clinic is located at 1514 1st St. North and the Lake Wales Clinic is located at 225 Lincoln Ave.

Grant Provides Breast Health Education

Many low-income, under-served women in rural communities do not have *regular* access to primary care physicians and therefore may not be receiving consistent, valuable messages on the importance of being pro-active in their breast health. Through a \$10,000 Florida Breast Cancer Research Foundation Grant, **Heartland Rural Health Network** will utilize three strategies to provide breast health education to women in Highlands and Hardee Counties. Activities planned include implementing “Shop Talk” whereby the Network’s Community Health Workers (CHW) identify local



merchants, health providers, and community venues where constituents visit and provide them with culturally and linguistically appropriate educational materials and displays that are strategically placed near cash registers or waiting areas that encourages conversations with the shop owners/staff and customers and family

members on breast health topics. CHWs will also use a culturally and linguistically appropriate facilitation guide from the Prevent Cancer Foundation to provide one hour educational sessions to women and their family members on the value of mammography screening, clinical breast exams, and breast self exams as well as general information on breast health topics during home visits. Lastly, CHWs will participate in multiple health fairs to distribute educational materials and resource guides to community members. The grant starts in September, 2011 and will support activities for one year.