

Quality Improvement (QI) Training Helps Leaders Improve Customer Service

Maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of health department programs and services is the goal of quality improvement (QI) training which is helping area QI team leaders become more knowledgeable about QI principles and develop new skills through their experience.

From the beginning, the main objective was to give area and county staff QI tools so that they would have the ability to assess their own clinic processes by collecting information and data, identifying weaknesses, creating an improvement plan based on best practice and evaluating the outcomes. Successful initiatives were then to become standardized. "The focus of the projects has been identifying weaknesses in the clinical 'system' that hinder staff from maximizing their own expertise," Annie Vosel, Director of Title X Family Planning/Plan First commented.

"As we move forward with public health department accreditation, process improvement initiatives will become more important in achieving our goals," Carol Heier, Performance Improvement Manager with the Bureau of Professional and Support Services, said.

"The training helps equip participants to share their knowledge as they engage with others in local QI initiatives to streamline processes, eliminate duplication and address glitches," Ms. Heier said. "The success of this training can be attributed to the staffs' commitment to excellence and willingness to try something new."

The Office of Performance Management (OPM) in the Bureau of Professional and Support Services in collaboration with the Bureau of Family Health Services, the Public Health Foundation, and the CDC-funded National Public Health Improvement Initiative, sponsored the two-part Train-the-Trainer opportunity for staff from nine public health areas and the Cancer Prevention and Control Division from the Central Office. This training builds on a larger QI project related to family planning clinic efficiency that was started by Annie Vosel and supported by Valerie Cochran, Assistant Nursing Director, in 2011.



Training participants engage in the Public Health Area 9 QI Team Teach-Back session about building effective teams.

Jack Moran and Sonja Armbruster of the Public Health Foundation conducted the training sessions Feb. 20-21 and May 9-10 at the Marriott Legends at Capitol Hill in Prattville. Both were pleased with the creativity and knowledge shown by the teams who each developed a training module about a QI tool and a report about their QI project to present to the entire group on May 9 and 10.

Some examples included a mini project to reduce the time it takes to see a nurse practitioner. One public health area succeeded in reducing patient waiting time by 20 minutes by adding an aide on family planning day. Another area used flex time to allow certain staff to start earlier in the morning in order to have clients in the exam room by the time the nurse practitioner arrives. Visit cycle time and nurse practitioner arrival time data were collected prior to and after the mini project in order to measure the outcome.

Another public health area's QI goal was to increase appointment show rates. Some of the techniques they used included a bulletin board thanking patients in both

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Alabama PRAMS Project Monitors Changes in Maternal and Child Health Issues

The Alabama Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS) is a joint surveillance project of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Alabama Department of Public Health. The PRAMS survey collects state-specific, population-based data on maternal attitudes, behaviors and experiences before, during and shortly after pregnancy.

Some topics covered by PRAMS include birth control, breastfeeding, health care system issues and smoking. The goal of the PRAMS project is to improve the health of mothers and babies in Alabama by reducing adverse outcomes such as low birth weight, infant mortality and morbidity and maternal morbidity. Alabama started collecting PRAMS data statewide in February 1993.

The Alabama PRAMS survey is mailed out throughout the year. The PRAMS survey questionnaire is sent to a sample of new mothers randomly selected from birth certificates on file. Each month, approximately 110 Alabama women who have given birth two to four months before the sampling date are selected for the sample.

To maximize participation, women are sent an incentive to participate as well as a reward for completing and returning the confidential questionnaire. Each mother selected may be sent up to five mailings. If no response has been received after the fifth mailing, up to 15 attempts are made to contact the mother by telephone. Final results are weighted to represent the entire population of Alabama women who delivered a live infant during the previous calendar year.

PRAMS data allow the Alabama Department of Public Health and other interested groups to monitor changes in maternal and child health indicators such as unintended pregnancy, prenatal care, breastfeeding, smoking, drinking and infant health. Currently, in Alabama, WIC uses PRAMS breastfeeding data to monitor breastfeeding rates and presents data to hospital staff around the state in order to help them understand the barriers to initiating and

continuing breastfeeding. Alabama's PRAMS data from 2004 and 2009 were analyzed showing the percentage of women who had unintended pregnancies, no health insurance, previous low birth weight births, no contraceptive use among unplanned pregnancies, obesity, smoking, alcohol use, multivitamin intake, physical abuse by partner, and no postpartum birth control.

These data were used to create the Alabama Preconception Health Report Card and they were used to help write a grant proposal for an educational program called the GAL – Get a Healthy Life Program.

PRAMS staff is currently finalizing the 2011 PRAMS Surveillance Report and a fact sheet on unintended pregnancy in Alabama.

To view the most recent PRAMS publications, please visit <http://www.adph.org/healthstats/>. For more information about PRAMS or to see if PRAMS data might be useful in your program area, contact Izza Cagle, PRAMS project coordinator, at (334) 206-2689.



Qun Zheng, Yvonne Paul and Izza Cagle (seated) of the Center for Health Statistics are shown with PRAMS materials. The year 2013 is the 20th anniversary of PRAMS in Alabama.

Alabama Department of Public Health

Mission

To serve the people of Alabama by assuring conditions in which they can be healthy.

Value Statement

The purpose of the Alabama Department of Public Health is to provide caring, high quality and professional services for the improvement and protection of the public's health through disease prevention and the assurance of public health services to resident and transient populations of the state regardless of social circumstances or the ability to pay.

The Department of Public Health works closely with the community to preserve and protect the public's health and to provide caring quality services.

Alabama's Health

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- Jim McVay, Dr. P.A..... Director, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease
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- Noelle Ahmann Graphic Designer

ADPH.org Ranks Ninth Nationally in Effective Social Media Use

How will you know if there is a public health emergency in your area? Whether it is an epidemic or a terrorist attack, when serious situations arise the public needs to be informed quickly. Although national outbreaks and disasters are covered by the news media, localized incidents are not publicized so widely.

Social media gives state health departments an easy and fast way to reach the people who are most likely to be affected by the situation. Although many state health departments are using social media platforms to get the word out about public health concerns, Alabama is doing a much

better than average job, as evidenced by its ranking ninth nationally.

The MPHProgramsList.com staff determined the rankings by evaluating the social media presence for 51 health departments (50 states plus the District of Columbia), and ranked them all from best to worst.

The highest possible score was 100, with 40 points for Twitter, 30 for Facebook, and 30 for YouTube. Alabama's overall score was 81.2. Jennifer Sumner, acting director of the Digital Media Branch, noted that among the available social media platforms, "Twitter ranks low in usage



among Alabama citizens. This factor prevented ADPH from being ranked even higher nationally. ADPH ranked fifth in Facebook, 10th in YouTube, and 28th in Twitter."

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English and Spanish for coming to the health department and providing an incentive for on-time arrival. They placed patients' names in a basket for a monthly drawing if they arrived for their appointment on time. Even though the monetary value of the prize was minimal, the data showed an improvement in on-time arrivals.

In advance of both parts of the training, participants were given required reading assignments. Then teams chose and implemented a local QI mini-project as a part of the training. They began implementation, made interim project reports and, finally, gave presentations regarding their project process and outcomes. Each team developed and presented a training module on an assigned QI tool, too. The reading assignments and presentations are available in the Bureau of Professional and Support Services folder in the department's Document Library.

"The team presentations were very engaging and many of the training modules and QI projects could be used in other public health areas successfully," Ms. Heier said. "The QI tools can be used by any health department programs seeking to improve their processes."

Area administrators from Public Health Areas 1-3 and 5-10 selected the area teams to participate in the training. Team members were nursing and clerical staff who were already engaged in the clinic efficiency project. To expand

the reach of this training, a social worker was included on three teams and a Central Office team participated.

Acknowledgement of funding source:

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Disclaimer:

The content of this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of or endorsement by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.



Vonda Buckhault of the Monroe County Health Department stresses the importance of measuring performance.

Environmentalists Offer Site Evaluation Training Course

Public health environmentalists carry out programs to minimize the adverse effects of disposal of sewage and high-strength sewage on human health and the environment. However, recent financial constraints led to programmatic and rule changes which went into effect April 4. Professional engineers now have greater responsibility for the design and installation of engineered onsite sewage systems as defined in the rules.

To aid engineers in assuming this new responsibility, Public Health Areas 5 and 6, in conjunction with the Bureau of Environmental Services, held a training course on April 18 at the Oxford Civic Center in Oxford. Lem Burell, area environmental director, planned the event which offered professional development hours for the 25 engineers who attended along with associated onsite system professionals. A total of 47 people attended.

In addition to Burell, health department environmentalists making presentations were Thad Pittman, David Gray, and Fred Vengrouskie. Pres Allinder, bureau director, commented, "It was a great success and participants gave it high ratings."

Burell wanted to recognize the Alabama Home Builders Association for sponsoring the lunch; Billy Grizzard, who

secured the training site at no charge, provided breaks and paid other expenses, and the Oxford City Parks and Recreation Department who were very helpful at the site with audiovisual media assistance. Several engineers from outside the area also attended.

Because of the success of this course, James Congleton, Environmental Director of Area 1, scheduled the course for engineers in Northwest Alabama. It was held June 11 at A.W. Todd Agri-Business Centre in Russellville.

Jamie Medley, Area 1 environmental supervisor, coordinated the event making all arrangements. He said, "Environmental Services Central Office staff did a fantastic job of presenting the information. The training was very positive and a success drawing around 35 engineers/surveyors and a geologist."

Medley credited the City of Russellville for the use of the A.W. Todd Centre, Larry Black for the break refreshments, and Dixie Catering for the lunch. The total attendance was around 48 participants.

On July 18, another course will be held at the Poarch Creek Indian Reservation in Atmore. Public Health Area 3 also plans a similar course.

Annual Alabama Employee Health and Fitness Day Walk Draws Sizable Crowd

The Annual Alabama Employee Health and Fitness Day held May 17 at the State Capitol once again was a success. The noncompetitive and free event is designed



A stirring set of warm-up exercises set to music helped get participants ready for the walk.

to encourage walking during the work day as part of a health and fitness routine.

Laurie Eldridge-Auffant, public health education manager with the Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity, said, "The walk is aimed at promoting awareness of the benefits of physical activity and improving overall employee health and wellness."

Participants set their own pace, and all walkers completing a one-mile walk were eligible to win a door prize. Vendors shared health and fitness information, and healthy snacks and drinks were available at the finish line.

The event is sponsored by the Alabama Department of Public Health, the Governor's Commission on Physical Fitness and Sports, and the Alabama State Employees Insurance Board (SEIB).

"The Governor's Commission on Physical Fitness and Sports is excited to continue to be a sponsor of this

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Landmark Cancer Study Seeks Participants

How many of you have watched someone - a friend, coworker or family member - battle cancer and wished there were something that you could do to prevent this scenario from being repeated? A positive action you can take to make a difference in fighting this dreaded disease is to participate in the American Cancer Society's Cancer Prevention Study-3, called CPS-3.

At a news conference in Montgomery June 25, the American Cancer Society launched CPS-3 enrollment in the River Region. Community enrollment initiatives are also being conducted in other areas of Alabama.

State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson said, "I am excited to see what discoveries will come from this study. I am proud to say the Alabama Department of Public Health has made it a priority, invites our employees to enroll and do their part to beat cancer as we advance our mission of supporting our community and saving lives."

Organizers need volunteers to take part in this historic research study. Their contributions will help researchers improve understanding of cancer and its causes and identify any new risk factors. This study will potentially change the way cancer is prevented, detected, treated and ultimately cured.

Researchers are seeking:

- Men and women from the general public between the ages of 30 and 65 years. Volunteers from various racial and ethnic backgrounds are needed.
- Persons who have no personal history of cancer, with the exception of non-melanoma skin cancer.
- Volunteers who are willing to make a 20- to 30-year commitment to the study.

The ultimate goal is to enroll at least 300,000 adults nationally. During the past 50 years, more than 2 million participants have joined the American Cancer Society's Cancer Prevention studies in order to make a difference. The results of these studies have helped researchers understand much of what we know about how cancer

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worthwhile event," Mike Vest, acting executive director of the commission, said. "It's great to see so many state employees come do their part and walk to promote physical fitness within their respective offices."

"Promoting wellness is certainly something the SEIB has always encouraged," Tonya Campbell, SEIB marketing director, said. "And this event is a great way to provide

develops. Participants will be making an invaluable contribution to future generations.

For example, an early study substantiated the link between smoking and lung cancer. Another study discovered the link between hormone replacement therapy and various gynecologic cancers, such as breast and ovarian cancer. Participants' contributions have helped researchers understand the cause of cancer and ways to prevent it.

While this is a long-term study that requires commitment, participation is not overly time-consuming. Twenty to 30-minute appointments are now being scheduled online. In Montgomery, six local enrollment events will be held during mid- to late August. On the morning of Aug. 21, an event will be held in the RSA Tower Training Room. Montgomery area volunteers must make appointments at cps3montgomery.org.

At the enrollment site, volunteers will be asked to do the following:

- Read and sign an informed consent form
- Complete a brief written survey
- Provide some physical measurements
- Give a small blood sample which will be drawn by a trained, certified phlebotomist

The second step takes place at home where enrollees will complete a more detailed survey that will serve as a comprehensive baseline. This survey will ask volunteers about their lifestyle, behavioral and other factors related to their health. Then every couple of years for the next 20 to 30 years participants will receive a survey at home to update that information and annual newsletters at no charge.

Every effort is being made to protect the privacy of study participants through multiple procedures. Results will not be shared with the enrollee's family, doctor, employer, any insurance companies or other third parties.

Community enrollment events will be held in the coming months in Birmingham, Cullman, Huntsville, Marshall County as well as Montgomery. To schedule an appointment visit cancer.org or call toll free 888-604-5888.

both incentives and education on how to live healthier. And it just keeps getting better every year."

In addition to festivities at the Capitol, about 30 employees participated in an event at the Bureau of Clinical Laboratories in Montgomery. Worksites in other areas of the state, including Birmingham, also planned events throughout May, Global Employee Health and Fitness Month.

Division of Food, Milk and Lodging Plays Important Role in World Trade

What is a “certificate of free sale?” This is a document required for export of some items manufactured in the United States to other countries. The Division of Food, Milk and Lodging within the Bureau of Environmental Services issues these certificates for food products, excluding meat and poultry, that are manufactured in Alabama and will be sold worldwide.

The certificate states that

- The food has been manufactured in a facility that is inspected by ADPH.
- The facility meets sanitary standards and, if required, follows specialized production processes.
- The food package is properly labeled.
- The product is allowed to be sold in Alabama and the United States

With this certification, the company can expand its sales to overseas markets.

Allen Staib, export representative for Bud’s Best Cookies in Birmingham, provided the following information on how the certificates came to be a requirement for exports:

“In recent years there have been many very serious food safety issues around the world. These incidents have really weakened confidence in the quality of internationally sourced food products. In several cases, it was discovered that products being exported did not even meet the food safety standards in their own country. In order to give the authorities in importing countries a reason to have confidence in the quality and safety of foods being imported, the certificate of free sale was devised as an internationally recognized certification of food safety.

“The certificate of free sale certifies that the goods being exported from a country conform to all the applicable food safety standards of the exporting country, and that the goods are allowed by the exporting country authorities to be freely sold, without restriction, within the exporting country markets. In order to have confidence in this certification, the governmental body responsible for monitoring food safety in a country has the responsibility for issuing this certificate of free sale.”

Within the past year the division has issued certificates for foods including the following products:

- Ice cream

- Artificial sweetener
- Cookies
- Peanuts and other nuts
- Peanut butter
- Dry seasonings
- Vinegar
- Mayonnaise

These products have been sold in Central and South America, the Middle East, Australia, Indonesia, Ireland and the Caribbean. Products shipped to countries contiguous to the U.S. usually are delivered by ground carrier or air carrier if the shipment is not very large. Overseas shipments that are large orders in terms of weight or volume will generally be exported by container ships that leave from one of the ports in the southeast.

From this point forward, a certificate of free sale must accompany each order for transport to the port authority of the importing country.

Staib added, “For manufacturers in good standing with the ADPH, this certification of free sale becomes a valuable asset in international marketing efforts. It is, in fact, the key that opens the door to exports to many countries. I’ve had the need for this certificate of free sale several times in the last year.”

Tom Lunsford, quality assurance manager at Mayfield Dairy Farms in Birmingham, said, “The certificates of free sale provided by the ADPH have opened up our markets to worldwide distribution.”

The documentation of meeting sanitary standards is important to Alabama-based food processing companies in helping them maintain and increase their export business. Preparation and issuance of the certificates of free sale requests are handled on a priority basis. The companies need this documentation on file for the receiving country to allow product entry and the division tries to make the process as smooth as possible.

For more information on the certificate of free sale process, sanitary standards, specialized inspection processes, and labeling requirements for food manufacturing establishments, contact Mitzi Waldo, Food Processing Specialist, Bureau of Environmental Services, at (334) 206-5789.

By MITZI WALDO

MASA Honors State Health Officer with Burleson Award

State Health Officer Dr. Donald W. Williamson recently received special recognition from the Medical Association of the State of Alabama (MASA) for his outstanding service to Alabama's physicians and medical community.

Dr. Williamson received MASA's Paul W. Burleson Award, which is presented for distinguished service to physician organizations recognizing a career encompassing high ethical and professional standards in patient care and extraordinary service to physician organizations at the county, state and national levels.

"Dr. Williamson is a valuable asset to Alabama's citizens as an advocate for the health of our citizens and the delivery of high-quality health care," said MASA President Dr. Michael T. Flanagan.

Dr. Williamson has served the public health community for more than 30 years, first in his home state of Mississippi, and in Alabama since 1986. In 1992 he was appointed Alabama State Health Officer. He currently serves on the Region IV Federal Emergency Management Agency Advisory Council, as the ASTHO (Association of State and Territorial Health Officials) representative to the Influenza Summit and as an ASTHO representative to the American Medical Association. He serves on the Executive Committee of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials and was President of the Association from 1997 to 1998.

Among others, he served as a member of the National Vaccine Advisory Committee, the Board of Directors of the Public Health Foundation, and the Steering Committee



Pictured: Dr. Williamson, right, received his award in April from MASA Immediate Past President T. Michael Harrington, M.D., and Chairman of the Board of Censors George "Buddy" Smith, M.D.

on Access for the Uninsured of the National Academy for State Health Policy. He serves on numerous boards and commissions at the state level. In 2012 he stepped in as chair of the Alabama Medicaid Advisory Commission and continues to fight for federal and state funds for Medicaid and to find new ways of making Medicaid work for its patients and the physicians who treat them.

MASA, the oldest and largest organization representing physicians and medicine in Alabama, exists to serve, lead and unite physicians in promoting the highest quality of health care for the people of Alabama through advocacy, information and education.

Breastfeeding Awareness Month Highlights Importance of Peer Counseling

The month of August will be recognized as Breastfeeding Awareness Month in the Alabama WIC Program. This year's theme established by the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA) is "Breastfeeding Support: Close to Mothers." The theme highlights the importance of breastfeeding peer counseling and the importance of providing support to families.

Breastfeeding peer counselors add to WIC's efforts to help women initiate and continue breastfeeding because of their shared personal

backgrounds. Peer counselors are WIC mothers who have successful personal experience breastfeeding and are trained to provide basic breastfeeding information, support to new mothers, and help to mothers in achieving their own breastfeeding goals. Mothers are contacted regularly during their pregnancy, during the early days of breastfeeding and at least monthly throughout their breastfeeding journey.

Alexis Aday, state breastfeeding peer counseling coordinator, said, "The Breastfeeding Peer Counseling Program

provides moms with the information and support they need to have a successful breastfeeding experience. It is exciting to see increases in breastfeeding rates where peer counselors are present. We look forward to continued expansion of the program."

Currently, there are 24 WIC peer counseling sites in Alabama and expansion continues.

For information on breastfeeding, contact the State Lactation Coordinator, Michell Grainger, MSN, RNC, IBCLC, WIC Program, (334) 206-2921.

Commendations

If you would like to praise employees for their accomplishments, send letters of commendation to the State Health Officer or the employee's supervisor and a copy by e-mail to Arrol.Sheehan@adph.state.al.us for inclusion in this list. Four items are needed: the employee's name, work unit, name of the person making the commendation, and his or her city and state.

Glenda Adams
Center for Health Statistics
from *Lucy Sellers*
Monroe, Mass.

Tonya Appleyard
Office of Radiation Control
from *Chuck Ray*
Somerville, Ala.

Folashadé Ayanwale, M.A.
Richard Burleson
Bureau of Health Promotion
and Chronic Disease
from *Col. Trent H. Edwards*
Maxwell AFB, Ala.

Linda Bolding
Center for Health Statistics
from *James Shoulders*
Boston, Mass.

Thomas Hicks
Public Health Area 6
from *Dawn Harris*
Anniston, Ala.

Julie James
Houston County Health
Department
from *Wendy Chancey*
Ashford, Ala.

James L. McNees, CHP
Office of Radiation Control
from *Jimmy C. Tomberlin*
Enterprise, Ala.

Reginald Strickland
Center for Health
Statistics Staff
from *Laurie Jean Weil, D.V.M.*
Montgomery, Ala.



Coworkers at the Center for Health Statistics honored Mable G. Jordan with a reception upon her retirement, effective April 1, after more than 42 years of service. She is shown with State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson.

Retirees

The following departmental employees have retired recently.

May

Bobbie Bailey
Bureau of Family
Health Services

Martha Bradley
Conecuh County
Health Department

Rhonda Clark
Public Health Area 2

Jeffery Cowen
Crenshaw County
Health Department

Linda Green
Center for
Health Statistics

Maudie Hall
Escambia County
Health Department

Heidi Hataway
Bureau of Health
Promotion and
Chronic Disease

Constance Irby
Public Health Area 1

Mildred Jones
Madison County
Health Department

Bobbie Parker
Marion County
Health Department

Glenda White
Lauderdale County
Health Department

June

Shelia Burkett
Butler County
Health Department

Marsha Carr
Lamar County
Health Department

Sandra Gallops
Bureau of
Health Promotion
and Chronic Disease

Glenda Mainor
Barbour County
Health Department

Ella Mason
Clarke County
Health Department

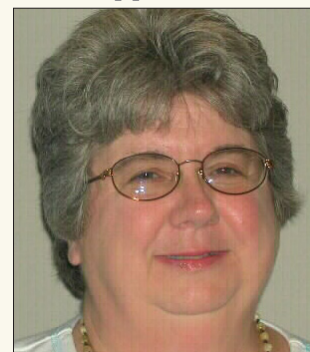
Patricia Murphy
Bureau of Health
Care Facilities

Braden Pace
Bureau of Information
Technology

Debra Peterson
Bureau of Home and
Community Services

Alva Phifer
Talladega County
Health Department

Maury West
Bureau of Professional
and Support Services



Coworkers honored Patricia Murphy, licensure and certification surveyor, who retired effective June 1 from the Bureau of Health Provider Standards.

Stacy Roberts Promotes Public Health on Older Americans Day

The Houston County Health Department participated in Older Americans Day, an annual event hosted by South Alabama Regional Council on Aging (SARCOA) serving the seniors of Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Dale, Geneva, Henry and Houston counties.

Stacy Roberts, PHA 10 home care services outreach coordinator, represented the agency. Area 10 Administrator Peggy Blakeney praised Ms. Roberts for doing “an outstanding job with limited resources for funding” during her tenure with the department.

This year’s theme for the event was “I Went Around the World, May 1, 2013,” and participants as well as vendors were asked to dress for the theme and participate in the costume contest for prizes. Ms. Roberts played a stewardess and carried out the theme of “pack your bags and get your passport, we are going around the world.” She borrowed old-style luggage, globes, and other items from co-workers to pull it all together. Karl Bryant of the Communications and Marketing Division specially designed a brochure to follow the passport theme and created a banner that read “Your Passport to Great Home Care.” Ms. Roberts and her husband painted the sign post pointing to the different countries.

For this day, seniors were bused in to Eastgate Park in Dothan from all seven counties for a fun-filled day and

an opportunity to learn about all the services available to them from the vendors/sponsors who participate. The celebration included entertainment, food, prizes and sponsor booths. The attendees had the opportunity to fish at the park as well.

Southern Alabama Regional Council on Aging (SARCOA) is one of 13 area agencies on aging in Alabama operating under the framework of the Older Americans Act. As an area agency on aging, SARCOA works to bring together funding sources and service providers to deliver services that assist senior citizens and disabled individuals, helping them maintain their dignity, independence and quality of life.



‘Stewardess’ Stacy Roberts promotes home health at senior event in Dothan.

NASHP Spotlight Shines on Dr. McIntyre

The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) Member Spotlight for May 21 featured Mary G. McIntyre, MD, MPH, Acting State Epidemiologist and Assistant State Health Officer for Disease Control and Prevention.

The article stated that Dr. McIntyre engages with other NASHP Academy members to learn what is working in their states as they face similar challenges. “As a result of engaging with other NASHP members and participation in meetings, I have tried to take lessons learned from other states to implement changes in disease control efforts in Alabama.”

Dr. McIntyre is also working to institute pilot programs that will provide capacity to offset reductions in public health staffing due to cuts in federal and state budgets, and train individuals who specialize in one area, to assist in other areas. NASHP is an independent academy of state health policy makers dedicated to helping states achieve excellence in health policy and practice.

OWH Hosts Region IV Annual Meeting

Alabama’s Office of Women’s Health hosted the HHS Region IV Office on Women’s Health Annual Meeting June 13 and 15 in Montgomery. The picture below shows delegates attending that represented the eight states of the southeast: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee.



Life Care Manager Beverly Perea and Others Make a Difference in Patients' Lives

Julie Stevenson, biomonitoring nurse care manager with the Shelby County Health Department, recently related a compliment about a coworker who helped see to it that a patient's living conditions improved through coordinated efforts.

Ms. Stevenson has been seeing a patient with a plethora of health problems - hypertension, diabetes, congestive heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, hepatitis and others - for about 18 months.

A couple of months ago, Beverly Perea, Life Care Manager for Area 5, was speaking to him on a day she was on call and he told her that he didn't feel well because it had rained the night before, his roof was leaking, and he had mold on his ceiling and walls. This situation was confirmed after speaking to his home health nurse.

This patient did not have a Patient First care coordinator at that time. His previous care coordinator had closed his case after making several attempts to get him to fill out the paperwork for public housing. Ms. Stevenson then spoke with the patient about his living conditions and the effects they could be having on his health. She then referred him to the Department of Human Resources who made a visit within two days. The social worker was able to assist him in the paperwork process and secure him an apartment in public housing.

Ms. Stevenson then contacted the Community Action Agency in DeKalb County, and staff members were able to assist him with getting his power deposit paid and connected. The patient picked up cans on the roadside to sell to obtain the money needed to pay his water deposit so it could be turned on. He moved into his apartment this

month and has since been assigned to a Patient First care coordinator, who helped him get a window air conditioner for his apartment unit.

"This was definitely a collaboration of love for this patient," Ms. Stevenson said. "It all started with Beverly, who didn't just say 'oh well, the rain is coming in his house.' We did all that we could, and succeeded at making his life better, and hopefully he will be healthier also."

When Ms. Stevenson spoke with the patient recently, he said, "You know, I have been able to breathe a lot better since moving into this apartment."

"Wow. That brought a tear to my eye!" Ms. Stevenson exclaimed. "Sometimes if we slow down long enough to take a true interest in our patients, sometimes we do make a difference... and that feels really good!"

ADN Recognizes Diabetes and Cardiovascular Prevention Leaders

The Alabama Diabetes Network (ADN) presented the Diabetes and Cardiovascular Prevention and Self-Management Award to two deserving recipients May 15 in Montgomery.

Lilly B. Hall, R.N., B.S.N., Diabetes Prevention and Control Advocate of Greenwood Missionary Baptist Church, Tuskegee, was honored for starting a diabetes support group in February 2011. The group involves 26 churches and 24 volunteers in Macon County. She was also recognized for collaborating with Tuskegee University, Auburn University and East Alabama Medical Center in Opelika to provide and host access to Diabetes Self-Management Education.

Dana Herazo, M.E., R.D., L.D., C.D.E., is a senior nutritionist with Nutrition Services, Mobile County Health Department Diabetes Today Site. She was recognized for teaching referred patients from health care providers in self-management of their diabetes from 2012 to 2013.

The certificates of appreciation for both recipients gratefully acknowledge their contributions: "The selflessness, sacrifice

and leadership displayed enabled patients to climb the stairs of health care self-management one step at a time" in their respective areas.



Shown are, left to right, Melanie Rightmyer, Lilly B. Hall, LaMont Pack, Dana Herazo and Debra Griffin.

Southern Health Association Recognizes ADPH Employees

Three of the five awards presented by the Southern Health Association at its annual conference May 22 in Myrtle Beach, S.C., went to recipients from Alabama. Tim Hatch, Samarria Dunson and Valerie Cochran each received the regional awards.

Carolyn O'Bryan-Miller, Alabama delegate, stated, "There are only five awards given, so for Alabama to receive three is significant. It says so much about the caliber of staff at the Alabama Department of Public Health as well as the Alabama Public Health Association."

Each recipient had been presented awards at the ALPHA conference in 2012. A description of the Southern Health Association awards and recipients from Alabama follows.

Tim Hatch, MPA, REHS: Howell Special Meritorious Service to Public Health Award

This award is presented to an individual, a group of individuals or organization to honor outstanding and continuous service to, involvement with, and support of public health particularly in the field of prevention. This award is named in memory of a past president of the Southern Health Association.

Hatch works for the Center for Emergency Preparedness, but began his public health service career almost 18 years ago as an environmentalist at the Montgomery County Health Department. As a veteran of environmental health, Hatch has made it his goal to learn everything possible about the environmental impacts on human health. Even though his latest career position has taken him out of the environmental health field, he is learning the value of environmental health as related to disaster preparedness and response.

In addition to his work at the health department, Hatch served as the president of the Alabama Environmental Health Association in 2007-2008 and served on the board for eight years. Currently, he gives of his time to serve as an adjunct instructor for FEMA's Center for Domestic Preparedness. He received the Frederick S. Wolf Award of ALPHA and currently is president elect of the association.

Samarria Dunson: Charles G. Jordan Memorial Award

The recipient must be engaged professionally or voluntarily in the pursuit of activities contributing directly to the health and well-being of the people within the southern region, have demonstrated a potential for achievement in the field of public health above and beyond the usual

requirement or voluntary activities, and have been employed in a public health capacity for not more than 10 years.

This year's recipient, Samarria Dunson, has had a substantial impact on the health and safety of Alabama's citizens as she carries out her duties in the Office of General Counsel. In her current position, she serves as the HIPAA privacy officer for the department as well as managing cases for certified nursing assistants, unlicensed facilities, vital statistics and home health. She was presented the Guy M. Tate Award by ALPHA in 2012.

Ms. Dunson is not only a dedicated ADPH employee, but she is also dedicated to helping others by supporting multiple organizations focusing on the improvement of the citizens of Alabama. She assisted the Montgomery County Bar Association with raising \$37,500 for One Place Family Justice Center, a comprehensive service and support center which provides safety, access to services, and confidentiality for victims of domestic violence. She is also involved in numerous professional and civic organizations.

Valerie Cochran, MSN, RN, NE-BC: Ficquett-Holley Award

The Ficquett-Holley Award honors the memory of two nurses and past presidents of the Southern Health Association. To be eligible for this award, the nominee must be a nurse and have made outstanding contributions in the field of public health.

Those working closely with this year's award recipient, Valerie Cochran, feel that she exemplifies this mission and serves as an excellent example of public health nursing. Ms. Cochran, assistant state nursing director and former performance improvement manager, has been a public health nurse for 25 years and demonstrates the characteristics of a nurse leader every day. She is known nationally for her nursing expertise and exhibits not only knowledge, but caring concern for both patients and staff. Her colleagues describe her as passionate about nursing and nursing education. She is also innovative in her support and participation in public health services and has the ability to "focus on the task at hand without losing sight of the big picture."

Ms. Cochran is involved in numerous organizations and has served on the board of ALPHA since 2007. She was honored as the 2012 Distinguished Alumni from the Auburn University Montgomery School of Nursing and was presented the Anne M. Smith Public Health Nurse of the Year Award in 2012.



Calendar of Events



July 16

Sexually Transmitted Infections and the Law in Alabama: Examining the Legal Responsibilities and Supportive Services for Persons Living with STIs/HIV, noon-1:30 p.m.

For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



July 17

Safety in the Clinical Setting, 9-10 a.m.

For more information contact Thresa Dix, (334) 206-3377.



July 22

Emergency Preparedness Planning to Address ADA Requirements: Top 10 Lessons Learned, 11-12:30 p.m.

For more information contact Mim Gaines, (334) 206-5649.



July 23

Improving Access to HIV/AIDS Care in the Rural South: Alleviating Structural Barriers Using Telemedicine, 2-4 p.m.

For more information contact Rainey Campbell, (205) 918-8230.



July 24

Implications of the Affordable Care Act: Effective Strategies for Outreach and Enrollment, noon-1:30 p.m.

For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



July 24

ADPH Statewide Staff Meeting, 3-4 p.m.

For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



August 14

Caring for Bedbound Patients in Home Care, 2-4 p.m.

For more information contact Becky Leavins, (334) 206-3867.



August 27

Changing American Beliefs About Death: It's OK to Die, 1-3 p.m.

For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



September 11

TB Update and Protocol Review, 8-9:30 a.m.

For more information contact Thresa Dix, (334) 206-3377.



September 18

Infection Control Update for Home Health Aides and Home Attendants, 2-4 p.m.

For more information contact Becky Leavins, (334) 206-3867.



October 3

ADPH Statewide Staff Meeting, 3-4 p.m.

For more information contact Video Communications, (334) 206-5618.



October 9

Arthritis and Home Health, 2-4 p.m.

For more information contact Shirley Offutt, (334) 206-2481.



October 16

Minority Health, 2-4 p.m.

For more information contact Elana Parker Merriweather, (334) 206-7980.