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# Kentucky

## *Rural Health Update*

### “Time Flies When You Are Having Fun”



Submitted by Sheri Erwin, President

It is hard to believe the annual conference is less than two weeks away and my year as president is nearly over. Time certainly flies when you are having fun! The KRHA Board of Directors have been busy this year working on behalf of the association and I truly appreciate their dedication and commitment. A special thanks to Executive Director, Tina McCormick, for her assistance, guidance and support this year, as a result of her leadership, KRHA is a stronger association.

It has truly been an honor to serve this association as a board of director and an officer and I have done my best to "leave it better than I found it". I have no doubt that KRHA will continue to be a leader and voice for the citizens of Kentucky and rural health service

providers regarding rural health issues and challenges. I urge each of you to join me in supporting KRHA, to be a part of an organization that can make a difference in the lives of rural residents. If we fail to be step up, then who else will? I encourage you to be a mentor for a student or health care professional, because we all have expertise and knowledge we can be share.

Although we are each a small piece of the organization, together we are a powerful voice.....don't be silent. Thanks to the previous presidents, officers, board of directors, committee chairmen and members for without them we would not be where we are today. I am extremely excited about the future of KRHA and urge

all members to join a committee or find a way to serve the association and your rural communities.

Thank you again for the honor of serving as your President for the 2013-2014.

Be sure and visit the KRHA website [KyRHA.org](http://KyRHA.org) and the Kentucky Rural Health Association Facebook page.



# NE AHEC's SHIP Program Receives National Attention

Submitted by David Gross, NE AHEC

In May 2013 the Northeast Kentucky Health Education Center (NE AHEC) launched the Summer Health Internship Program (SHIP). This program provides undergraduate health professions students from northeastern Kentucky with paid internships in local health-focused organizations where they focus on projects that address community or public health issues.

Studies indicate that such "homegrown" approaches might be most effective in alleviating rural areas' health professional shortages, and the hope is that SHIP will increase the likelihood that these interns ultimately decide to work in the NE AHEC's 17-county service area. During its first two years SHIP has linked undergraduate students with county and district health departments, regional and critical-access hospitals, a regional health information organization, and a primary care clinic, among other sites.

Projects vary widely to suit interns' interests and abilities, as well as local program needs. Examples have included "Development of a Web-based

Intervention to Reduce Substance Abuse in Montgomery County, Kentucky;" "The Patient-Centered Medical Home: Using Health Information Technologies to Improve Care at St. Claire Family Medicine Clinic"; and development of a "Women's Health: Cervical Cancer and HPV" brochure and patient awareness campaign.

On-site mentors provide supervision and technical support as they help interns gain an applied understanding and appreciation of the broad range of community and public health activities undertaken at the local level. The program would not be possible without the dedication and commitment of these community health professionals, who enrich the educational experience for SHIP participants. In turn, there is also a benefit to the communities where interns are placed.

During the program's first year, internships were four weeks in length, but due to the positive

Morehead State University pre-med student Sarah McClanahan completed a SHIP internship with the Montgomery Health Department during summer 2014



feedback received from both host sites and interns, it was extended to six weeks during 2014. Students from a wide range of health professions programs have been selected to participate, ranging from nursing to radiology to pre-med.

Though only recently completing its second year, SHIP has received national attention, as NE AHEC Director David A. Gross, MPA, has given presentations about the program at the National Rural Health Association's annual conference (Las Vegas, April 2014) and the National AHEC Organization conference (Charlotte, July 2014).

The NE AHEC is currently in the planning stages for year 3 of SHIP and hopes to continue to see the program grow.

## ADAM EDELEN TO CONDUCT FINAL PUBLIC HEARING AT THE KRHA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Following the public hearings around the state will be the final public hearing to learn about the challenges facing small, community hospitals that provide health care to 45 percent of Kentuckians and are key economic drivers in affected communities.

This will be the close out to the KRHA Annual Conference and is open to the general public for free. Individuals coming to the public hearing will not need to register with KRHA.

**DATE:** SEPTEMBER 19, 2014

**TIME:** 11:00AM (CST)

**LOCATION:** UNIVERSITY PLAZA-HOLIDAY INN, BOWLING GREEN, KY

**OPEN TO GENERAL PUBLIC**

# In Times of Need, Kentucky Helps!

Submitted by Robert L. McLellan Jr.

With a myriad of volunteer organizations to serve with, which one do you devote your “free” time to? Medical professionals put in long hours, shift after shift. So, when there is time away from work, most wouldn’t choose to continue the grind off the clock. Why not consider the Medical Reserve Corps as your volunteer organization?

The Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is suited for medical and non-medical volunteers to prepare and respond to natural disasters and other emergencies affecting public health. With a strong, pre-credentialed volunteer base in the U.S and its territories, the MRC boasts of 207,783 serving in 993 community MRC Units (DCVMRC, 2014). In those units we are strengthening public health, improving emergency response capabilities and building community resiliency. Additionally, the MRC may be

called on to help spread the word during community health education events as well as recruiting additional members.

Locally, public health events could require staffing first-aid stations at a box-car derby, athletic events like a 5K, or as in the picture shown here, a community low-cost rabies vaccination clinic. This is a RN member of the Christian/Todd MRC checking for certificate completeness at the Hopkinsville Rabies clinic sponsored by the Christian County Health Department. Emergency shelters for functional access needs clients, health fair booths and back-to-school events to promote healthy eating choices are all part of the variety of opportunities to serve your community not to mention the potential for unexpected disasters. Whatever the event, real-world or planned, the Medical Reserve Corps needs you to be ready to



respond.

For more information on the MRC you can log on to: <https://www.medicalreservecorps.gov/> . Then, make the decision to be the difference. Join your local MRC Unit. To sign up go to <https://kentuckyhelps.com/> and your local unit leader will contact you with information on how to get started.

## National Health Service Corps Update

Submitted by Tina McCormick

The Kentucky Rural Health Association has contracted with CHS DPH Resource Management Branch to provide educational information individually, group settings and well as other modes educating regarding NHSC. You will see me presenting at some of the sites and schools. If you would like to request a presentation regarding NHSC, please contact Tina McCormick at (270) 577-1707 or [krha@twc.com](mailto:krha@twc.com) Each issue of the Rural Health Update will have information for our members:

Some information you can share with your contacts or you might find useful:

### 1. Scholarships:

The next Scholarship application is scheduled to open in March or April.

**You can apply to the Scholarship Program if you are committed to primary care and accepted to or enrolled in a fully accredited training program for**

- Physicians (MD or DO)
- Dentists
- Nurse Practitioners
- Certified Nurse-Midwives
- Physician Assistants

The scholarship pays **tuition, fees, other educational costs, and**

**provides a living stipend** in return for a **commitment to work at least 2 years** at an approved outpatient facility in a medically underserved community.

The scholarship can be awarded for as many as 4 years. With each year (or partial year) of support beyond the first year, the student agrees to provide one additional year of service, with a maximum of four years.

Service begins upon graduation (and completion of primary care residency training for doctors and dentists). The NHSC helps scholars find a practice site that's right for them among the



# Executive Director's Report

Submitted by Tina McCormick

Activities for the Executive Director of a state-wide association vary from day to day which requires quick task shifting. Some days I could have more than one conversation going on at a time and both with equal importance. With that being said, we are starting to get busy with recruiting for the annual conference. This year we will have three conferences starting with the Student Rural Health Conference on September 17-18, Rural Medical Educators 17-18 and The 16<sup>th</sup> KRHA Annual conference September 18-19. We will have Governor Breshear "Getting Serious about Better Health" and Auditor Adam Edelen will share an unofficial report of the findings from the recently attended forums across the state. We will also have Neil Shulman, "the real doc Hollywood" as our keynote speaker as well as Lana Dennis representative from CMS.

I am daily looking for ways to obtain new sponsorships, memberships, and involvements. It is this time of year that I can reach out even farther to introduce us across state. The upcoming conference only adds to that effort and remains one of our best marketing tools.

I have numerous conference calls with possible contacts, members, sponsors, etc. I am receiving calls all the time to request meetings. We actually have some individuals who travel to meet with me to discuss opportunities and how they can work with KRHA to improve the health outcomes for Rural Kentuckians. I try to screen those requests to be sure that it is not a waste of time for them or us. KRHA's voice is being heard! I am getting more inquiry calls than ever.

I was proud to be asked by NRHA to represent Kentucky by presenting at the National Rural Health Association Leadership Conference in Atlanta. I was able to share with the attendees things learned the past year, how we are looking for ways to obtain funding, our contract with NHSC, and plans to obtain the 501c3 status. President-Elect Dr. Brent Wright and Legislative Chair Denise Bingham were also in attendance to the conference.

I recently visited with Ernie Scott at the Kentucky Office of Rural Health and learned more about how we can do things to work together for the betterment of both organizations.

I will be attending the Kentucky Rural Behavioral Health Symposium in Morehead. We will have an exhibit there as well.

I'm also actively working on the NHSC activities through a contract that KRHA was granted starting July 1, 2014. You will see me throughout the state promoting NHSC with primary focus in Western and South Central Kentucky. I will still be addressing this initiative state wide. Some upcoming events include a presentation for Community Corp Day at UK's College of Dentistry on October 22. I have also been

involved in the national call in to address ways to improve NHSC communication.

We were able to provide conference support for the Hepatitis Conference on July 24, which proved to a success for all partners. We partnered with the Kentucky Immunization Program and the Kentucky Viral Hepatitis Program. We not only assisted our partners, but promoted KRHA at the same time.

Most recently, I represented KRHA and NHSC at the Purchase AHEC meeting in Murray hosted by Loretta Maldaner and will be attending future meetings as invited. I continue each day to look for ways to move us forward and with the development of our new strategic plan; we will all have a guide for the future of KRHA.

If you have any suggestions for ways that I can increase that effort, please let me know. Also, if any of you hear of an activity that I should be involved in or attending, please let me know and I will be sure KRHA is represented.

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](mailto:krha@twc.com)

Tina McCormick shares experience as Executive Director for a State Rural Health Association at NRHA's Leadership Conference in Atlanta.



# Upcoming Flex Projects

Submitted by Kayla Combs

Through the use of funding from the Rural Hospital Flexibility Grant, the Kentucky Hospital Association (KHA) is providing a rural hospital-focused collaborative improvement project with the goal to improve pneumonia delivery and outcomes for rural Kentuckians. KHA and the KORH recognize that rural hospitals care for populations with unique challenges related to overall health status, health care access, poverty and transportation. National data indicates that pneumonia outcomes for rural hospitals lag behind outcomes when compared to those in urban areas. This collaborative improvement project will tailor resources to meet the unique challenges rural providers face and work to ensure rural Kentuckians

receive evidence-based health care.

The meeting on September 17<sup>th</sup> kicks off the statewide improvement collaborative to support Kentucky's rural hospitals in their work to provide best practices in treating pneumonia patients. The goal is to improve the overall health of patients while reducing hospital readmissions. The program will offer data benchmarking as well as targeted improvement resources to hospitals. This training will work towards the flex core objective to improve quality in Kentucky's small rural and critical access hospitals.

The September 17<sup>th</sup> pneumonia collaborative meeting will be followed by the Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Program (MBQIP) Phase 3 Training and Data Abstraction training on September 18<sup>th</sup>, which is also funded through flex in partnership with the Kentucky

Hospital Association. Mary Guyot, with Stroudwater Associates, will be conducting the training. Mary has over 40 years' experience in the healthcare industry and has spent the last 12 years working as a consultant for Stroudwater Associates.

MBQIP was created by the Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP) under the flex grant program as an activity within the core area of quality improvement. The primary goal of the project is for Critical Access Hospitals (CAHs) to implement quality improvement initiatives to improve their patient care and operations. This program provides training on data abstraction for MBQIP Phase 3 which consists of two components: pharmacists review of new medication within 24 hours, and the Emergency Department Transfer Communication measure.

# KRHA's Student Chapter Re-energized

Submitted by Paula Arnett, DrPH, MBA

KRHA educates providers and public leaders on rural health issues and advocates actions by private and public leaders to assure equitable access to health care for rural Kentuckians. This education and advocacy should not focus solely on current providers and public leaders, but also our future providers and public leaders in the Commonwealth. This year, KRHA is increasing its focus on our future providers and leaders. The first **Student Conference on Rural Health** will be held September 18 prior to the Annual KRHA Conference in Bowling Green. Planning and recruitment for the event has been ongoing all summer, and committee members are very excited about the interest from students all across the state.

One of the goals of the Student Conference is to network

with students that are interested in continuing their work with the KRHA through Student Rural Health Chapters at their respective schools. The goal of the KRHA Student Chapters is to foster an appreciation of needs, resources, and strategies for improving health status and health care for all rural Kentuckians.

This goal will be accomplished by:

- Defining the membership of KRHA Student Chapters as **interprofessional** in terms of the students who participate;
- Providing **leadership opportunities** through the student organization and through special projects they choose to conduct.
- Providing **community service or service learning opportunities**
- Expanding their knowledge through

various **educational opportunities** including speakers, field trips, conferences, etc.;

- Expanding their knowledge about the **legislative process** and how it impacts rural health and the most effective ways to influence the legislative process;
- Encouraging involvement in **research opportunities**; (this could be poster sessions at KRHA)
- **Promoting professionalism** as representatives of the KRHA Student Chapters and their respective sponsoring agencies.

Any interested in joining the Student Conference Committee or being involved with the Student Organizations can contact Paula Arnett, DrPH at [paula.arnett@uky.edu](mailto:paula.arnett@uky.edu).



# Rural Health Professionals Get a Course in Grant Writing from Federal and Local Experts

Submitted by Chris Salyers

The Kentucky Office of Rural Health (KORH), the Center for Excellence in Rural Health, and the Community and Economic Development Initiative of Kentucky (CEDIK), partnered to offer the Federal Office of Rural Health Policy Grant Workshop on September 4, 2014.

Forty-two rural health professionals from Kentucky, Indiana, Tennessee, and Illinois attended the event which was held at the Clark County Cooperative Extension Office in Winchester, Kentucky.

Presenters at the event included Katherine Lloyd and Natassja Manzanero of the national Office of Rural Health Policy (ORHP), a branch of the Health and Resource Service Administration (HRSA) within the Health and Human Services administration (HHS).

Two local health professionals, John Isfort of Marcum and Wallace Hospital and Jan Chamness of the Montgomery County Health Department, also spoke on their experience with writing and carrying out ORHP grants they have received.

The day concluded providing small group roundtable discussion with each of the presenters and Alison Davis, Director of CEDIK and Director of Undergraduate Studies in the



Above: Katy Lloyd and Natassja Manzanero from HRSA's ORHP provide information about upcoming grant opportunities at the September 4 grant writing workshop.

Department of Agricultural Economics at the University of Kentucky. The experts spent time answering specific questions from the participants and providing technical assistance on future grant writing opportunities.



## New Face at the Kentucky Office of Rural Health

Submitted by Ernie Scott

The Kentucky Office of Rural Health (KORH) and the UK Center of Excellence in Rural Health welcomes Chris Salyers, Rural Project Manager, to the KORH team. His primary areas of responsibility will include communications, workforce programs, network development, and rural community initiatives. He will also provide coordination for the Kentucky State Loan Repayment Program (KSLRP). He

holds a Master of Arts in Counseling through the College of Education at Morehead State University. Mr. Salyers brings a wide array of skills from a range of public health sectors including behavioral health, community coalitions, and Area Health Education Centers (AHEC). With his unique skill set, Chris hopes to further develop existing programs and expand KORH initiatives throughout rural Kentucky. Chris resides in Jackson, Kentucky with his wife Shelby and two sons, Dallas and Xavier. Please join us in welcoming Chris

## Continued from page 3: NHSC

hundreds of NHSC-approved sites in medically underserved urban, rural and frontier communities across the U.S. When in service, scholars earn a market-rate salary, paid by the employing facility.

Scholarship payments other than the living stipend are federal income tax-free.

The Scholarship Program accepts applications once each year. Applicants chosen to receive the scholarship are notified no later than September 30.

### 2. Steps to become a NHSC approved site:

**Determine if Your Facility is in a HPSA** Your facility must be located in a Federally-designated Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA).

**Check Other Eligibility Requirements** Confirm that your site meets all of the eligibility requirements.

**Review the NHSC Site Reference Guide** This document provides important program detail you should understand before applying.

**Get Questions Answered** Contact your local PCO before starting your

application to make sure your site qualifies and to determine your HPSA designation. Your PCO will review your application once it is submitted. You may also contact the NHSC Customer Care Center at 1-800-221-9393 or email [GetHelp@hrsa.gov](mailto:GetHelp@hrsa.gov) for additional assistance.

**Create an Account to Apply Online** Create an account with the NHSC, which will allow you to apply online to become an NHSC-approved site.

**Gather Required Documentation** Compile the required documentation to submit with your application.

***-Policies on Non-Discrimination.*** Submit a copy of the site's policies on non-discrimination of patients based upon race, color, sex, national origin, disability, religion, age, or sexual orientation, as per the NHSC Site Agreement.

***-Sliding Fee Schedule Documents.*** Submit documentation (see list below) of the site's sliding fee schedule (SFS).

- Discounted Fee Schedule/SFS
- Patient Application for SFS
- Site's Policy on the SFS

***-Required Signage.*** Submit a photograph or copy of posted signage that meets the requirements of the NHSC Site Agreement.

***-Proof of Access to Ancillary, Inpatient and Specialty Care.*** Attach proof of referral arrangements for ancillary, inpatient, and specialty care.

***-NHSC Site Data Tables.*** Attach the completed with information on the individual site location.

### **Apply Online**

Log in to complete the online application. If an organization has multiple sites located in HPSAs and would like all sites (e.g., satellite site, mobile unit, etc.) to be NHSC-approved, each location must submit a separate Site Application and be approved individually.

***For Solo and Private Practitioners*** Please note that private practices may require a site visit before the application review is completed.

***Learn About the Approval Process*** Applications are generally processed within 6 to 8 weeks, however, some may take longer due to application volume, pre-approval site visit requirements, and the quality of submitted information.



KRHA's Board of Directors met with Adam Edelen's Chief of Staff during their Strategic Planning Retreat to address the associations concerns for rural hospitals as well as to discuss the future of health care for rural hospitals and stakeholders.