



Helping Hands

News from the School-Community Health Alliance of Michigan

2005 SCHA-MI Annual Meeting *celebrating another exciting year!*

The 2005 SCHA-MI Annual Meeting was held on November 10th at the Holiday Inn Express Conference Center in Okemos, Michigan. The event was deemed a success by the 80 members, staff, and guests who were in attendance to celebrate another successful and eventful year for the School-Community Health Alliance of Michigan and the field of school-based and school-linked health care.

Opening remarks for the day were provided by Dr. Dean Sienko, MDCH's Chief Medical Executive. He captivated and educated the attendees on avian/bird flu and other health issues for the state. We then had Laura Brey present an award to the state of Michigan on behalf of the National Assembly on School-Based Health Care (NASBHC). This award, accepted by Brenda Fink from the Michigan Department of Community Health, was in recognition for Michigan's efforts and success with the Medicaid Match process and the expansion of

school-based and school-linked health centers and programs across the state.

The Awards Luncheon was an exciting time for us to recognize the passion and dedication throughout the field. Doug Paterson was awarded the 2005 SCHA-MI Leadership Award and our very own Board President Kathleen Conway was selected by the planning committee as the recipient for the 2005 Marilyn Keeslar Legacy Award. We also took the opportunity to recognize the four community partners for the W.K.Kellogg Foundation School-Based Health Care Policy Program: Detroit (Henry Ford Health System), Ann Arbor (Regional Alliance for Healthy Schools), Baldwin (Baldwin Family Health Care – Teen Health Center), and Benton Harbor (Benton Harbor High School Adolescent Health Center).

Breakout sessions were held in the afternoon on a variety of topics including an advocacy session presented by Denise Sloan, a Medicaid outreach review presented by Carrie Tarry and Lisa Rutherford, and a Mental Health session presented by Laura Brey. Brenda McCulloch, SCHA-MI's Billing and Technical Assistance Specialist, also kicked-off a Billing Networking Group at this time (see article, page 5).

We would like to thank everyone who was in attendance and those who donated



Award recipients Doug Paterson and Kate Conway with SCHA-MI's Executive Director Deb Brinson.

their time and energy into planning this successful event. If you are interested in assisting with the 2006 SCHA-MI Annual Meeting please contact Anne Gladstone at agladstone@scha-mi.org.



Meeting new friends and colleagues at the Networking Breakfast.

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HELPING HANDS

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SCHA-MI welcomes articles and information from our readers. For membership information, permission to reprint, or submission guidelines please contact:

Helping Hands Editor:
Anne Gladstone,
agladstone@scha-mi.org



School-Community Health Alliance of Michigan
2525 Jolly Road, Suite 280
Michigan, Okemos 48864
Phone: (517) 381-8000
Fax: (517) 381-8011
www.scha-mi.org

SCHA-MI STAFF

Debbie Brinson
Executive Director
dbrinson@scha-mi.org

Bob Parks
Deputy Director
bparks@scha-mi.org

Anne Gladstone
Communications &
Education Director
agladstone@scha-mi.org

Brenda McCulloch
Billing & Technical
Assistance Specialist
bmcculloch@scha-mi.org

Linda Terry
Office Coordinator
lterry@scha-mi.org

Alan Lantzer
AmeriCorps Volunteer
alantzer@scha-mi.org

Message from the Executive Director



The Holiday Season has a way of making you stop for a moment, reflect on the year and count your blessings. This truly has been an amazing year for the field and a very busy one for everyone involved with the expansion of school-based and school-linked health centers and programs. So as 2005 comes to a close, I would like to extend our appreciation to our partners at MDCH, MDE, Medicaid, the managed care health plans, MPCA and MAHP for all of their hard work and dedication to serving the health care needs of Michigan's children. A huge thanks and pat on the back to all of those who served as mentors and consultants and to the communities and schools starting a school-based or school-linked health center.

As we begin 2006, SCHA-MI is looking forward to forging new partnerships with the 12 communities that have received funding to begin operating a school-based or school-linked health center. This is will be an opportunity to increase services for children while supporting schools in doing what they do best – teach our youth. Congratulations goes out to these communities:

1. Albion Healthcare Alliance - Albion High School
2. Alcona Community Schools - Alcona Elementary School
3. Chippewa County Health Department - Sault Area High School
4. Health Delivery Inc. - Saginaw High School
5. Jackson Public Schools & Center For Family Health - Parkside Middle School
6. Kalamazoo Communities in Schools Foundation - Edison Environmental Sciences Academy (Elementary)
7. Kalkaska Memorial Health Center - School Linked Health Center serving Kalkaska Public Schools and Forest Area Community Schools
8. Northwest Michigan Community Health Agency - School Linked Health Center serving Mancelona Middle and High School
9. Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District - Traverse City High School and Career Tech Center
10. United Community Hospital - School Linked Health Center serving 8 Detroit Public Schools
11. Van Buren/Cass District Health Department - Bangor Middle and High School
12. Waterford School District - Waterford Alternative High School

While it will be exciting to expand it will surely be exciting if not breathtaking to participate in the state budget process. We as advocates and as citizens will be challenged to work with our elected officials in ways that perhaps we had never imagined as the State will yet again be challenged to balance the budget. More importantly, we will have an obligation to make sure that in 2006 the voices and needs of all, including young people of all ages, are heard and respected. After all the budget is a reflection on what is important to all and not just a select few.

Debbie Brinson, Executive Director
School-Community Health Alliance of Michigan

Meet SCHA-MI's Office Coordinator In Her Own Words



Linda Terry joined the School-Community Health Alliance of Michigan staff in September of 2005 as the Office Coordinator.

When I got hired as the Office Coordinator for SCHA-MI, I wasn't sure what to expect. It was my first time working for a non-profit company. Actually it was my first time working for a company that had less than three hundred employees. It seems that accepting the offer to work at SCHA-MI rounded out what became a year of firsts for me.

In April, my fiancé and I searched for our first home in Lansing, the capital city in a state we had never visited before. My fiancé got a promotion that required our move to this area which was completely foreign to us—in my mind gone were the never ending lists of things to do and the endless conveniences living in a big city afforded you and on the bright side so were the 24 hour a day traffic jams. Having only a few weeks before he had to start his job my fiancé and I had a limited amount of time to find a house--we had one weekend.

After coordinating the move and saying all my goodbyes to family, friends and places in the Northeast, I was on another plane headed for Lansing. The difference between this recent trip and my first trip to Michigan was that this time I

had my cat with me and a one way ticket. Regardless of whether I liked it or not, I was traveling away from the area I spent my entire life in and going home to a house I had only seen twice. I called New York my home for most of my life and then Philadelphia for the last four years. So, as what I suppose you would call a city girl, I was nervous about the move to a community with a slower pace. I had a lot of settling-in to do my first few months here in Lansing and temping part time at MPCA afforded me the flexibility to do that. While temping at MPCA I found out about the opening at SCHA-MI and as the saying goes, the rest is history.



I started working at SCHA-MI in September, and about six weeks later it was another first for me. I got married in a perfect ceremony on a beach in Honolulu. As this year comes to an end, it is clear that 2005 will always be one of the biggest years in my life. I don't know what the future holds for SCHA-MI and I but I do know that I will always have a special fondness for SCHA-MI as it was part of a turning point year in my life ... my year of firsts.

2005 Youth Legislative Day Snapshots

October 28th • Michigan State Capitol



A student participant voices her opinion during the committee debates.



The students convene on the House Floor of Representatives.



State Representative Geoff Hansen greets the students on the House Floor.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: 2006 NP NETWORKING MEETINGS

These meetings will be held at the BCBSM Lyon Meadows Conference Facility in New Hudson, Michigan. If you have any questions or wish to be added to the NP Networking listserve please contact Nancy George at ngeorge@comcast.net.

January 13 (Sheffield Room) • April 7 (Sheffield Room) • June 9 (Berkshire Room) • October 20 (Sheffield Room)

Incremental Problem Solving

Recognizing Our Piece of the Puzzle

By Alan Lantzer, AmeriCorps Volunteer

Humans are natural problem solvers. We've never been the strongest or fastest animals in the forest; instead, we've used our intellect to survive. But solving problems today is vastly different, and vastly more difficult, than it was for our historical forbears.

Humans are "wired" to recognize a problem comprehensively, and quickly identify possible approaches to solve it. Historically, that worked well. Crops need to be planted and harvested, the predations of wild animals had to be eliminated, and marauding enemies needed to be forestalled. In each case, the problem was clear, compelling, and could be grasped directly.

Addressing modern problems is seldom so straightforward. For better or worse, we have developed remarkably complex societies and institutions that have, in turn, created complex problems which resist immediate solutions. Delivering health care to all our citizens is one of those problems.

The metrics themselves are staggering: millions of American citizens have no health insurance at all (Health insurance itself is an attempt to solve the root problem.) Others secure coverage, but limitations and stipulations create a range of additional difficulties that too often seem to make the solution more onerous than the original problem.

And from what we're told, all of this seems to be getting worse. Social commentators and political theorists articulate approaches of every conceivable stripe, while local, state, and Federal governments spend billions; but over and over we hear that the health care "crisis" in the country continues to grow.

How can we make any sense of this?



How can we contribute to a solution, and avoid unwittingly making things worse? One approach could involve "incremental" problem solving. Instead of exercising our natural predisposition to search for complete solutions to problems, we can focus instead

on an incremental approach, that is, accepting that a comprehensive answer is beyond us, and focusing on one aspect of that broader solution.

Our service to school-based and school-linked health centers clearly demonstrates the value in incremental approaches to complex problems. We don't serve everyone in need, obviously, but we do make a real difference in the lives of Michigan students.

Even with that, we often feel frustrated in our desire for a comprehensive solution to the problem of health care delivery. "We're doing what we can," we tell ourselves wearily. But this not a statement of resignation. Rather, it is a proclamation that advocates an incremental approach, and an acknowledgment that, given the complexities, this is the only possible strategy.

And our efforts may lead directly to solutions for problems like these.

Healthy kids become healthy adults who can consistently adopt behaviors that might reduce their need for medical care. And who knows; these healthy adults may become agents who can find creative solutions for all the broader problems that elude us.

As dedicated professionals addressing complex problems every day, we don't get much chance to lift our gaze to the horizon and envision possible futures. With our attention so concentrated, we might from time to time fear that, in the broader sense, we're really doing nothing. That isn't the case. Given the complex problems we face, only an incremental approach has any real promise of making that future what we hope it to be.

Billing Networking Group Kick-Off

By Brenda McCulloch, Billing and Technical Assistance Specialist

In an attempt to provide SCHA-MI's membership with more resources for billing, a Billing Network Kick-Off was held at the November Annual Meeting. The turn out was excellent, and the group was polled about what they feel would benefit them most. From the responses, it has been determined that the group will meet biannually with conference calls as needed, likely quarterly. Prior to the calls/meetings, the topic will be determined and if possible, an appropriate expert will be invited to lead the discussion and answer any questions that members may have. SCHA-MI will provide the networking group with updates on ICD-9/CPT changes, Health Plan Changes, and any other appropriate billing updates. The Billing and Technical Assistance Specialist will also research any outstanding issues that come up. The billing listserv will be used to communicate updates and other relevant information.

There were several topics discussed during the kick-off meeting, including mental health billing, billing health plans and Medicaid for immunizations and VFC administration, billing for supplies

and pharmaceuticals, and general questions surrounding coding. The group completed a form that allowed them to request specific topics for discussion at future meetings.

Following are the list of topics we hope to tackle during the coming Networking Group Meetings:

- How to implement a program
- Billable v. non-billable
- Mental health billing
- Billing for non-Medicaid services
- Billing for Uninsured
- Teen confidentiality
- Coding
- Claims Denied
- CAHC specific billing/coding
- Billing Changes Updates
- Cost Based analysis for establishing fees
- General Billing Info
- Modifiers



The Billing Networking Kick-Off meeting at the SCHA-MI Annual Meeting in November.

If you are interested in being a part of the Billing Networking Group, please contact Brenda McCulloch at 517-381-8000, ext. 226 or bmcculloch@scha-mi.org for more information. We would also like to welcome anyone who has expertise on any of the above topics to volunteer to lead that particular discussion. We will convene the meetings after the beginning of the new year, and we look forward to assisting our members with this resource. Please feel free to submit any additional topics or suggestions as it relates to billing and coding.

THANK YOU TO OUR NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS!

ACCESS Community Health & Research Center ▪ Berrien County Health Department ▪ Center for Family Health, Inc. ▪ Cherry Street Health Services ▪ The Corner Health Center ▪ Sharon Davids, NP ▪ Detroit Department of Health & Wellness Promotion ▪ Genesee Intermediate School District ▪ Cynthia Gengler, RN ▪ Inkster Teen Health Center ▪ Rod Johnson ▪ Kalkaska Memorial Health Center ▪ Alyssa MacFarlane, RN ▪ MidMichigan Health Services ▪ Northwest Michigan Community Health Agency ▪ Oakwood Teen Health Centers ▪ Dottie Rodriguez, NP ▪ Angelia Williams

If you are interested in becoming a member of SCHA-MI please visit our website at www.scha-mi.org or contact Anne Gladstone at agladstone@scha-mi.org to request a membership packet.

Joan Chesler
The Corner Health Center

Kate Conway
Henry Ford Health System

Ken Coleman
St. John Health System

Rod Johnson
Community Care Management
Organization

Nancy Pommer
Cherry Street Health Services

Jennifer Salerno
Regional Alliance for Healthy Schools

Gail Stewart
Henry School-Based Health Initiative

Sue Szurek
Oakwood Lincoln/Jefferson Barns
Healthcare Center

Angelia Williams
Health Delivery, Inc.

Dee Walker
Mott Children's Health Center

2006 Reminders

Congratulations to the new members of the
SCHA-MI Board of Directors for 2006-2007:

Rod Johnson, Nancy Pommer, and Dee Walker!

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February is...

National School-Based Health Center Awareness Month

Start planning your activities!

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Effective January 23, 2006 SCHA-MI's new contact info:

2525 Jolly Road, Suite 260

Okemos, Michigan 48864

Phone: (517) 908-0847

Fax: (517) 381-8011

www.scha-mi.org

Working together to build a healthy future!