

ALABAMA'S

A PUBLICATION OF THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

HEALTH

VOLUME 34

NUMBER 8

APRIL 2001

Alabama's hypertension program produces positive results while remaining economical

Hypertension has been identified as the most common reason adults in this country see their doctor. Clear evidence connects hypertension with increased risk of stroke, kidney failure and heart attack. There is also good evidence that keeping blood pressure levels controlled, especially when reducing other cardiovascular risk factors, can significantly lessen the occurrence of these major problems.

In 1974 Alabama began a pilot hypertension program offering full services in one county in East Central Alabama—Chambers. The program expanded in the 1990s, and presently the state hypertension program provides services to approximately 15,000 patients. The program is designed to serve only those who cannot otherwise afford care. To qualify for services, the patient:

- cannot be under private care
- cannot be eligible for Medicaid
- cannot have an income greater than 150 percent of poverty

Based upon these guidelines, the program is serving less than 10 percent of the estimated eligible population of 233,000.

The value of the hypertension program is evident simply by looking at the numbers. Hypertension is linked to cardiovascular disease, including heart attacks, stroke and kidney disease. According to the National Stroke Association, the direct and indirect expense of cardiovascular disease in the nation now equals \$326 billion annually. Alabama's cost is estimated at \$5.2 billion annually.

A study by the American Heart Association found the average hospital and physician cost for adults with stroke, age 40 and over, in 1995 was \$11,010. For stroke victims age 65 and over, the hospital cost from admission to discharge was \$18,244 in 1996. For people who have major strokes, their chances of admission into a nursing home are greatly increased. According to the Alabama Nursing Home Association, the average monthly cost for a nursing home patient is approximately \$3,300. For persons whose hypertension leads to kidney failure, the average

cost of a Medicare patient on dialysis is \$38,700 annually. Calculations indicate that approximately 300 individuals could be provided preventive treatment for one person who must have kidney dialysis resulting from hypertension.

Based on these national figures, stroke is estimated to strike 11,696 Alabama citizens costing the state more than \$48 million in direct and indirect costs annually. According to the Center for Health Statistics, stroke claimed 2,936 lives in the state in 1998. Hypertension is a major contributing factor for up to 70 percent of strokes, according to the National Stroke Association.

While hypertension affects all segments of our society, African Americans have a disproportionate rate of the disease. Approximately 33 percent of African Americans have high blood pressure, compared to 25 percent of Caucasians. The National Stroke Association reports that 20 to 30 percent of deaths in blacks can be attributed to hypertension. Blacks have a 1.8-fold greater rate of fatal stroke than do whites. The African American community is well represented in Alabama's hypertension program, with 63 percent of participants being black, 36 percent being white and 1 percent being of other races.

Alabama health department patients enjoy better control of their hypertension

In June 2000 the department's hypertension program was transferred to the Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease from the former Bureau of Disease Control, and Tom Phillips was named director. The program operates in approximately 61 of the state's 67 counties. Some counties have had to freeze their caseloads because of inadequate funds and cannot accept new patients, and several programs have less than 10 patients. In 1990 the program served 8,802 Alabamians and at the program's height in 1995, the hypertension program served 18,396 persons.

The hypertension patient profile finds an average of 4.8

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patient visits to the health department per year, the clinic staff costs are \$16 per visit or \$78 per year, and there is an annual drug cost per patient of approximately \$40. The patient's direct cost for clinic and drugs is approximately \$120 per year.

"Local county health departments need financial support to staff hypertension clinics," Phillips said. This year, however, enhancement or enlargement of the program does not appear likely.

While great strides have been made in the treatment of hypertension during the past three decades, only 53 percent of Americans with hypertension are being treated, and less than one-third of those treated have their blood pressure under control. This paltry percentage is according to a Joint National Commission VI report. **Yet among patients treated in county health departments, 56 percent of Alabama's hypertension patients have their blood pressure under control.**

"Why do health department clinics have so many more patients remain under control of their hypertension?," Phillips asked. "I believe this is a tribute to the education and encouragement provided by dedicated local health department nurses who urge their patients to take simple steps to improve their health and remain faithful to their drug therapy."

Exciting program improvements underway in the department's programs include the following:

- Dr. Jack Hataway, director of the Chronic Disease Prevention Division, is chairing a committee to upgrade the hypertension drug formulary.
- Measures are being taken to streamline the local nurse's time in hypertension
 - ~ There is a clinic encounter form item reduction
 - ~ The computerized Telxon system has been put in place to order medication from vendors
 - ~ Preprinted prescription forms have been designed to expedite the work of referring physicians, clinics and nurses
- Four new electrocardiogram machines have been purchased for full care clinics and other EKG purchases are planned for next year.

Lifestyle modifications are initial therapy

Drug therapy is an important part of managing the hypertension program, Phillips said. "However, there is another important part—community health programs to affect lifestyle changes for hypertension patients served by the program. While drug therapy is important, it may not need to be the first treatment, but is to be used when lifestyle measures are not effective or it is clinically important to use drugs to reduce the elevated pressures.

"Like the story of the old lady trying to sweep back the waves of the ocean with a broom, so will we be ineffective in trying to raise funds to treat all of Alabama's eligible population with drug therapy," Phillips added. "With 233,000 eligible people and the cost of treatment at only \$120 per person, Alabama's costs would still be \$28 million annually. It is improbable this amount of funds will be forthcoming in today's health economy.

"To effectively treat the families in need, we must involve the patients in the struggle. Encouragement, education and lifestyle modification are the light at the end of this health care tunnel. The fact that Alabama's patients with controlled blood pressure are twice the nation's success rate is evidence that this approach can lead to a major breakthrough in enhancing the health and economy of our people and the state."

Community health programs will focus on improving dietary intake, increasing physical activity levels, and



Clinic nurse Mary Chamberlain takes Julia Cogburn's blood pressure. Mrs. Cogburn, age 84, has been enrolled in the joint care program at Montgomery County Health Department since 1993.

Hypertension.....continued on page 3

ALABAMA'S HEALTH

Alabama's Health is an official monthly publication of the Alabama Department of Public Health, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease. If you would like to receive the publication or wish to submit information for future articles, please telephone requests to (334) 206-5300. Articles may be reprinted provided credit is given to the Alabama Department of Public Health. The department's web site is <<http://www.alapubhealth.org>>

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Informational materials in alternative formats will be made available upon request..

discouraging tobacco use. For individuals with hypertension, these lifestyle changes can enhance the control of blood pressure and minimize the need for medication. For persons at risk for hypertension, taking these steps can prevent the development of hypertension.

The Sixth Report of the Joint National Committee on Prevention, Detection, Evaluation and Treatment of High Blood Pressure, National Institutes of Health: National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, National High Blood Pressure Education



Pat Schloeder of the Montgomery County Health Department discusses newly prescribed medications with patient Julia Rose Horton.

Program. NIH Publication, (November 1997), No. 98-4080, page 20, recommends the following:

The highly successful DASH diet would be part of the lifestyle modifications to lower blood pressure.

The Bureau of Health

Promotion and Chronic Disease is working with the University of Alabama at Birmingham to lay the groundwork for community intervention programs that emphasize lifestyle changes for the prevention and management of hypertension. Improved compliance in taking medication, when prescribed, is also to be emphasized.

In the next few months, the Alabama Department of Public Health in Area 7 and UAB will be conducting a pilot program with Assistant Area Administrator Ziba Anderson in Wilcox County. This program will focus upon these community intervention concepts.

County health department programs

Counties with larger hypertension programs include the following: Dallas, Jefferson Mobile, Cleburne and Greene. Dallas County serves approximately 1,000 patients and Jefferson County has approximately 3,740 patients served both by the department and by primary care clinics. Public health areas 3, 4, 7 and 9 have significant numbers of participants in each county.

For more information about the Alabama Department of Public Health Hypertension program, please contact Tom Phillips, Director, Hypertension Branch, Division of Chronic Disease Prevention, Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease, RSA Tower, Room 1278, P. O. Box 303017, Montgomery, Ala. (334) 206-5627, email: tphillips@adph.state.al.us.

Lifestyle Modifications for Hypertension Prevention and Management

- Lose weight if overweight.
- Limit alcohol intake to no more than 1 oz. (30 ml) ethanol (e.g., 24 oz [720 ml] beer, 10 oz [300 ml] wine, or 2 oz [60 ml 100-proof whiskey) per day or 0.5 oz (15 ml ethanol per day for women and lighter weight people
- Increase aerobic physical activity (30 to 45 minutes most days of the week).
- Reduce sodium intake to no more than 100 mmol per day (2.4 g sodium or 6 g sodium chloride).
- Maintain adequate intake of dietary potassium (approximately 90 mmol per day).
- Maintain adequate intake of dietary calcium and magnesium for general health.
- Stop smoking and reduce intake of dietary saturate fat and cholesterol for overall cardiovascular health.

Alabama celebrates Public Health Week

National Public Health Week, April 2-8, is a time to recognize the contributions of public health for America's well being and to help focus public attention on the major health issues facing communities. "Healthy People in Healthy Communities" is the theme for 2001. Local health departments have planned events to connect with their communities and to promote public health services.

BLOUNT

The Blount County Health Department set up booths at the health department with refreshments and literature describing the services offered to the public. There will be banners hung around town inviting the public to stop by for refreshments and to find out what the department offers in health care. The American Red Cross will be at the department April 2 for a blood drive.

CHAMBERS

The Chambers County Health Department will participate in the Chambers County Health Fair to be held on April 27.

CHOCTAW

Choctaw County plans to celebrate the event with services including blood pressure checks, hemoglobin checks, tuberculosis skin tests, hearing and vision tests, immunizations and cholesterol checks. Elected officials were among those invited to participate.

CLAY

Throughout the week milkshake coupons will be handed out to all children. On Wednesday refreshments will be provided for staff.

COOSA

Staff will offer blood pressure screenings, blood sugar and
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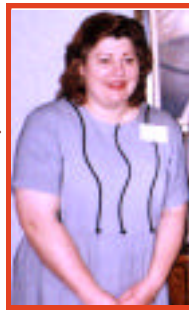
Outstanding Public Health Social Workers for 2001 recognized

March is National Social Work Month, and the Alabama Department of Public Health honored four public health social workers at the Tenth Annual Public Health Social Work Celebration held March 2 at the RSA Plaza Terrace in Montgomery.

State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson; Kathy Vincent, LCSW, ACSW, assistant to the state health officer; and Dollie Hambrick, LCSW, ACSW, director, Social Work Unit, welcomed participants from throughout the state.

Highlighting the conference was an address by Kimble Forrister, State Coordinator for Alabama Arise. His topic was "You Can Make A Difference." Then delivering a special address at the gathering was Mona Martin, M.S.W., Health Resources and Services Administration Social Work Consultant for the New York Field Office, Region II. She spoke on the topic of "Having Our Cake and Eating It Too—Investing in the Big Picture."

Judy Durden of Public Health Area 9 and **Lerrie Harris** of Public Health Area 1



Judy Durden



Lerrie Harris

are being recognized for recognition as Alabama's Public Health Clinic Social Workers of the Year 2001.

Ms. Durden was praised for her "adaptability and versatility" in working with multiple programs. Called a "patient advocate," she has gone beyond the call of duty and program protocol to meet the needs of her patients. A nominator stated, "If someone has a need, Judy will go out of her way to meet that need, whether it is direct patient care, paperwork community project, her area of responsibility or someone else's area of responsibility."

Nominators said Ms. Harris "makes every effort to be available for her clients," is "positive and upbeat, and seems to always have a ready smile," and is "empathetic to the many needs of each client." Three co-workers who nominated Ms. Harris stated, "She is an individual who displays the highest standard of professionalism," and who truly puts the patient first. They also noted "the fine example of integrity and honesty she sets in her everyday

Social Workers.....continued on page 5

Alabama seventh highest in nation in cardiovascular disease death rate

The state of Alabama ranks seventh highest in the nation for cardiovascular disease death rates, according to a new report issued by the department and the American Heart Association. As is true throughout the nation, more Alabamians die each year from cardiovascular disease than from any other cause.

The "2001 Alabama State of the Heart Report" reports a cumulative death rate of 386 deaths per 100,000 population for a three-year period 1996-1998. The report found that 16,911 residents of the state died from cardiovascular disease in 1998, accounting for 39 percent of all deaths. Nationally, 40 percent of all deaths in that year were due to cardiovascular disease. Alabama's cardiovascular death rates exceeded the national rates by approximately 12 percent.

Other findings in the report include:

- One in five cardiovascular disease deaths occurred in Alabamians under the age of 65.
- Cardiovascular disease mortality rates are 26 percent

higher for blacks compared to whites.

- Women in the state of Alabama are more likely to die from cardiovascular disease than from breast cancer.

Reducing the number of Alabamians that engage in behaviors that place them at risk for cardiovascular disease is the key to reducing the number of deaths. Residents of Alabama can do many things to reduce their risk of heart disease and stroke. Some of the most important strategies are the following:

- stop smoking
- reduce fat in the diet
- get and stay active
- know their numbers for cholesterol and blood pressure

For a copy of the report, log onto the Alabama Department of Public Health web site at <http://www.alapubhealth.org> or contact Janice Cook, Director, Cardiovascular Health Branch at (334) 206-5610.

Social Workers....continued from page 4



Lee Andra Calvin

life.”

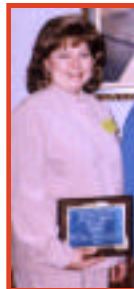
Lee Andra Calvin of the Tuscaloosa County Health Department was named the Public Health Social Worker of the Year for Home Health. Nominators stated Ms. Calvin consistently exhibits a genuine concern for the patients. For example, she has made available a food and supply closet for use in helping clients in emergency situations during the weekends and holidays. A letter of nomination stated

she is “always courteous, professional and always goes the extra mile.”

Renae Carpenter, L.C.S.W., PIP, of Clarke County and who supervises some staff in Areas 7 and 9, was selected the Social Work Manager winner. This is the first year this award has been presented. Ms. Carpenter identified a need for parenting and childbirth classes, wrote grants to obtain the necessary resources, and secured funding. The parenting classes continue today.

A nominator wrote, “Renae is an outstanding social worker who sees her community in very broad terms and who has been successful over the course of her public health career in connecting people, needs, resources, education, coworkers and her talents together.”

Serving on the Public Health Social Work Planning Committee for the celebration were the following social workers: Kay Best, PHA 1; Carolyn Hall, PHA 5; Mona McDermott, PHA 8; Kelly Rhodes, PHA 11; and Tammy



Renae Carpenter

Storm causes minor damage to Conecuh County Health Department

The Conecuh County Health Department in Evergreen suffered some damage in a noontime storm on March 12, but fortunately there were no injuries. Although there were very powerful winds, there was no tornado as was first suspected.

Assistant Area Administrator Charley Watterson said, “The staff reacted quickly when they heard the ‘freight train’ sound of the winds. They gathered in the center of the building away from all the windows.

“A very large pine tree fell with just the top of it reaching the Health Department building. It mangled our new roof and gutter on just one side in a very small area. It also broke two window panes.”

Office manager Brenda Dees used a cellular phone to notify Watterson about the situation immediately, because all power and telephone lines were down. Thanks to a county work crew who cut up the tree and a maintenance man who replaced the window panes, the office reopened by the following morning.

“We were lucky there was no one in the room where the tree came through the window,” Watterson said. “There was a lot of glass and debris scattered everywhere.”

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hemoglobin checks and serve refreshments each day for Coosa County Health Department patients. On Friday a drawing will be held for two baskets that are full of gift certificates from local vendors. These activities have been advertised in two local newspapers.

CULLMAN

The *Cullman Times* is featuring an article with photographs about Public Health Department services in Cullman County. The local television station will tape two segments: one segment will feature clinical services and the other will be a site visit with one of the environmentalists at a local restaurant.

DALLAS

The Dallas County Health Department will celebrate with services including blood pressure checks, hemoglobin checks,

tuberculosis skin tests, hearing and vision tests, height, weight and cholesterol checks. Elected officials and the media were among those invited to participate.

DEKALB

The DeKalb County Health Department will be participating in a health fair at Adamsburg School on April 5.

FRANKLIN

The Franklin County Health Department and the Coalition for Hispanic Community have planned health-related classes in the Russellville CITY Program, and the Adult Education GED, English as a Second Language, and Children’s Learning Center. The Coalition for Hispanic Community is currently under the umbrella of the Health Department. These classes will

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Impaired driving in Alabama

Incidence of impaired driving

For one of every 230 miles driven in Alabama in 1997, a legally intoxicated person (BAC \geq .08) sat behind the wheel. Alabama police report 8,873 crashes involving a driver or pedestrian with a positive blood alcohol concentration (BAC). Formulas developed by NHTSA were used to estimate the number of alcohol-related crashes where alcohol involvement is not reported by the police. An estimated total of 20,300 crashes in Alabama involved alcohol. These crashes killed 473 and injured an estimated 8,400 people.

Impaired driving by blood alcohol concentration (BAC)

In 1997, Alabama drivers with:

- * BACs of .10 and above were involved in an estimated 19,300 crashes that killed 377 and injured 7,400
- * BACs between .08-.09 were involved in an estimated 300 crashes that killed 28 and injured 300
- * Positive BACs below .08 were involved in an estimated 700 crashes that killed 68 and injured 700

Costs

Alcohol is a factor in 30 percent of Alabama crash costs. Alcohol-related crashes in Alabama cost the public more than \$2 billion in 1997, including nearly \$0.8 billion in monetary costs and over \$1.2 billion in quality of life losses. Alcohol-related crashes are deadlier and more serious than other crashes. People other than the drinking driver paid \$0.8 billion of the alcohol-related crash bill.

Cost per alcohol-related injury

The average alcohol-related fatality in Alabama costs \$3.1 million:

- * \$1.2 million in monetary costs
- * \$1.9 million in quality of life losses

The estimated cost per injured survivor of an alcohol-related crash averaged \$76,000:

- * \$35,000 in monetary costs
- * 41,000 in quality of life losses

Cost per miles driven

Crash costs in Alabama averaged:

- * \$3.90 per mile driven at BACs of .10 and above
- * \$1.70 per mile driven at BACs between .08-.09
- * \$0.10 per mile driven at BACs of .00

Costs per drink

The societal costs of alcohol-related crashes in Alabama averaged \$1.00 per drink consumed. People other than the drinking driver paid \$0.50 per drink.

Impact on auto insurance rates

Alcohol-related crashes accounted for an estimated 13 percent of Alabama's auto insurance payments. Reducing alcohol-related crashes by 10 percent would save \$40 million in claims payments and loss adjustment expenses.

Prevention savings

Alabama already has many important impaired driving laws. However, a number of additional strategies can be used to mitigate the harm from impaired driving.

- * **Enforcing Serving Intoxicated Patrons Law:** Using undercover police officers to enforce Alabama's law against serving alcohol to intoxicated bar and restaurant patrons would reduce alcohol-related crash fatalities by an estimated 11 percent. It would cost 20 cents per licensed driver and save \$20 per licensed driver.
- * **Graduated Licensing:** Graduated licensing would impose a nighttime driving restriction on passenger limits for young novice drivers in Alabama. Graduated licensing with a midnight curfew would reduce youth fatalities by 5-8 percent and total alcohol-related fatalities by 2 percent. It would save an estimated \$400 per youthful driver. The value of the

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mobility lost by youth is the large majority of the \$40 cost per youthful driver. **

- * **Ignition Interlock:** Breath-testing ignition interlocks are designed to prevent anyone with a BAC above the legal limit from starting or driving a car. Attaching an interlock to a car for a year after its operator is convicted of driving while intoxicated would reduce alcohol-related fatalities by an estimated 7-12 percent and save \$6,700 per vehicle equipped. Including the value of mobility lost, as well as equipment and case management costs, interlock costs would total \$720 per vehicle. Existing programs typically recover their equipment and case management costs from sanctioned drivers.
- * **Sobriety Checkpoint Program:** Intensive enforcement of Alabama's BAC limit with highly visible sobriety checkpoints would reduce alcohol-related fatalities by at least 15 percent and save \$33,200 per checkpoint. Including costs of travel delay and the value of mobility losses by impaired drivers apprehended and sanctioned, the costs of conducting a checkpoint would average \$5,000 including police resources.
- * **Primary Belt Law:** Primary belt laws allow law enforcement to stop and ticket a driver for non-use of a safety belt without requiring the driver to be cited for or having committed another offense. Unbelted drivers account for 75 percent of impaired driving fatalities. A primary belt law can reduce alcohol-related fatalities in Alabama by 10 percent. The law would save \$100 per licensed driver. If enforced with frequent belt-use checkpoints, the value of temporary discomfort experienced by some new belt wearers and travel delay costs at checkpoints would be the large majority of the law's \$2.20 cost per licensed driver.***

Reprinted from Public Services Research Institute, Landover, MD.

The estimates reported here were produced under National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Partners in Progress Cooperative Agreement No. DTNH22-97-H-55072.

** At the time of printing, the graduated drivers license bill had passed the House and was in the Alabama Senate.

***Alabama's primary seat belt law became effective in December 1999.

Injury News

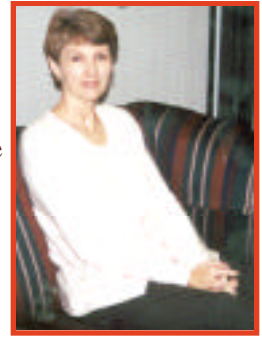
Published By

The Alabama Department of Public Health
Injury Prevention Division
Bureau of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease
Carol F. Mysinger, M.Ed., M.P.A.....Director
Lynn B. Williams, M.A.....Editor

Funded by a grant from the Law Enforcement and Traffic Safety Division, Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs

Registered nurse, surveyor selected as Employee of the Month

Debbie L. Wetzel was selected Employee of the Month for the Central Office for February 2001. Ms. Wetzel is a registered nurse and a surveyor in the Medicare Other Unit of the Division of Health Care Facilities. Her primary responsibilities include performing on-site investigations to ensure that health care facilities statewide meet federal and state regulations and provide quality care to Alabama's citizens.



Debbie Wetzel

According to nominator Dottie Strickland, "Debbie has certainly excelled in this field, as in her previous assignments. Debbie's manner is professional; her attitude is caring; her demeanor is happy and she has the right mix of loving humor. This combined with Debbie's desire to survey with an unbiased opinion of the providers, fair but firm in the decision making process regarding the regulations that she is charged to uphold; Debbie is an excellent choice for this honor."

Ms. Strickland said, "There are only attributes to Debbie that I haven't touched on such as dedication to her job, willingness to work anywhere, anytime, and helping new staff to get a good start on the job, but I think you get the picture. All good things rolled into one smart young lady."

Before working with the department as a surveyor, Ms. Wetzel worked as a long term care surveyor and supervisor, as director of nursing in a nursing home and as a supervisor with a county home health agency.

By GERALDINE ROSE DANIELS

Retirements

The following employees have announced their retirements recently:

- Sandra Fason** - Tuscaloosa County Health Department
- Bruce Houck** - Madison County Health Department

Abstinence-based education program begins in Tallapoosa County

The Tallapoosa County Health Department was awarded a grant by the Alabama Unwed Pregnancy Prevention Program (AUPPP). Funding is through a partnership with the Alabama Department of Public Health and the Alabama Department of Human Resources using Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) dollars.

The primary purpose of the grant is to educate area high school students on risk-taking behaviors that result in teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. This grant, one of 26 projects funded statewide, began implementation at Benjamin Russell High School in Alexander City in December 2000 and looks forward to beginning work in the county schools in July 2001.

The curriculum selected was *Safer Choices*, an abstinence-based program featuring social skills as well as decision-making skills. Education about sexually transmitted diseases is also stressed.

Cheryl Hamlin, public health social worker at the Tallapoosa County Health Department, is enjoying teaching the course which is a part of the physical education classes at the school. Girls and boys currently are instructed separately. From Mrs. Hamlin's experience as a social worker in advocating, instructing and linking services to needs, she believes the classes will prove valuable to the young people and the community.

"We are committed to making a difference in the lives of our teenagers to reduce teenage pregnancy and risk-taking behaviors," Mrs. Hamlin said. "The aim of this project is to saturate the school environment and community with information, activities and services so that teenagers have meaningful involvement and establish personal responsibility in the prevention of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases."

The multi-faceted project will include the development of a community task force, parental education and involvement, curriculum for ninth and tenth grade classes, peer involvement, and, in high-risk situations, linkages to individual case management.

"I'm pleased at how active, supportive and receptive the school administration, teachers, parents and students are," Mrs. Hamlin said. Mrs. Donna Campbell, R.N., school nurse at Benjamin Russell High School, said, "It has been great having representation from the Health Department on campus, addressing risky teenage behavior. We are providing students with accurate information that they can use in their personal lives to make informed decisions."

The *Safer Choices* curriculum was presented in the physical education classes of Jane Busby, Marie Parks and Allison Sanders during the month of December. The curriculum was presented in the physical education classes of John Elliott, Henry Hicks and Richy Brooks during the month of January.

Jim Nabors, superintendent, stated, "I, along with the other staff in the school system will work closely with this program and its staff person to see that our students are offered appropriate materials. We strongly support these outreach and educational efforts to our students and community."

Further, he states that accurate information and skills are needed by the youth to meet the many challenges that they confront every day. The percentages of unwed adolescent births, teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases are high in our county. I am delighted these issues are being addressed through the Pregnancy Prevention Grant Program. This grant program offers an incredible opportunity to provide helpful, positive messages to our students and community about abstinence, consequences and responsibility.

Mrs. Hamlin also credited many other teachers for their support by furnishing equipment and supplies to demonstrate the spread of HIV/STD. Teachers have also actively participated in role playing exercises about how to handle pressure lines from their peers. Further support was received from local pediatricians—Dr. Eugenia Slavcheva and Dr. Jitendre Jain, or "Dr. Ava" and "Dr. JJ" as they are known in the community.

The physicians, with the support of Pediatric Associates, provided instruction on the reproductive system and disease prevention to every class. During the month of December, Dr. Bice and Mrs. Campbell arranged for Tom Robertson, AIDS Education Manager, to address the entire student body at a general assembly.

The project is a partnership between the Alexander City School System, the Tallapoosa County School System and the Tallapoosa County Health Department. The partnership will be expanded to include other social service agencies and community leaders.

For further information or inquiries about the Pregnancy Prevention Program, you may contact Cheryl Hamlin, L.B.S.W., at the Tallapoosa County Health Department in Alexander City at 256-329-0531.

Commendations

Health department employees who are listed here have received letters of commendation recently. To recognize other employees, please send letters through your supervisors or the state health officer to *Alabama's Health*.

Cindy Aldridge

Health Promotion and Chronic Disease

from Geraldine Rose Daniels
Health Promotion and Chronic Disease

Delois Baxter

Bill Johnson, M.B.A.

Financial Services

from Katherine Boltz
Medforce, Inc.

Beverly Jo Carswell

Radiation Control

from Kay W. Page, R.T., R.M.
John L. Reichle, M.D.
Scottsboro, Ala.

Elva Goldman

Rick Harris

Health Provider Standards

from R. O. Rutland, M.D.
Fayette, Ala.

Shirley Henley

Tammy Langlois

Nancy Lavey

Teela Reynolds

Marion Wilford

Health Promotion and Chronic Disease

from Jack Hataway, M.D., M.P.H.
Montgomery, Ala.

Terri Morris, R.N.

Area 10 Wellness Program

from Mike Bragg

Goshen, Ala.

Reginald Strickland

Center for Health Statistics

from Cara Y. James
Columbus, Ohio

Theresa Mulkey

Center for Health Statistics

from Michael Ramey
Richmond Hill, Ga.
Dianne Roberts
Address unlisted

Kathie Peters

Center for Health Statistics

from Charlotte Vellingri
Address unlisted

Ruthie Spencer

Health Provider Standards

from Sylvia S. Stamm
Montgomery, Ala.

Lynn Williams

Health Promotion and Chronic Disease

from Beth Camp

Montgomery, Ala.

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be to address family issues: family planning, prenatal care, child care which will include available insurance coverage, tuberculosis, Hepatitis, sexually transmitted diseases, hygiene, nutrition, infection control, etc. Toiletry products have been donated for door prizes and handouts for those attending these classes. These classes will be presented by Health Department professional staff and interpreted by Coalition staff.

The staff is also making plans to be available at the schools on the day of kindergarten registration and Head Start registration to help with interpreting/translations and to distribute informational literature, primarily children's health insurance programs, immunizations, family planning and early prenatal care. The target population is the large Hispanic population in Franklin County that is without medical care and without insurance coverage, but assistance and information will be for those of all ethnic and economic backgrounds. Fliers will be distributed to promote Adult Basic Education's GED, ESL, and Children's Learning Center. The Children's Learning Center was started as a joint effort of the Hispanic Coalition and NW Community College Adult Education Family Literacy Program. Those children eligible to attend are the children of the caregiver(s) who are attending the GED or ESL classes.

HALE

The Hale County Health Department will offer services including blood pressure checks, hemoglobin checks, tuberculosis skin tests, hearing and vision tests, immunizations and cholesterol checks. Elected officials were among those invited to participate.

HOUSTON

The Houston County Health Department has planned the following events/activities:

March 27 - Interview at local television station promoting Public Health Week and public education on diabetes and proclamation signing by Mayor of Dothan at City Commission meeting

April 2 - Interview at local television station promoting Public Health Week and oral health care for children and all-day activities at local health department

Mini Health Fair - offering educational materials, health screenings, contests and door prizes. Contest winners and door prizes furnished by local merchants, Flowers Hospital and Southeast Alabama Medical Center. Activities are designed for all ages.

April 3-6 - PSAs by local radio stations throughout the week promoting public health, and media coverage of clinical services, home health/lifecare services with home visits, adult day care visits, and environmental on-site visits

April 2 - Tentative - Interview of Dr. James T. Stapleton, past health officer of Houston County Health Department, now at a local assisted living facility.

April 6 - Wrap-up of week with an employee recognition and celebration day

JEFFERSON

During Public Health Week, banners will displayed in eight

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Jefferson County Department of Health centers with the message, "Public Health Week - Celebrating Healthy People in Healthy Communities."

On **April 2**, Dr. Samuelson will present her "State of the County's Health Address" and State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson will present an overall look at Alabama's health. Public health awards will be presented to persons, organizations and/or businesses that have been particularly important to public health during the past year (media awards, etc.) Employees, government officials, invited guests and the media will attend this event. A reception will follow the ceremony.

On **April 5**, an Employee Recognition Ceremony will be held at The Club, with guest speaker - NBC 13's Mike Royer. After his talk, service pins will be presented to employees who have 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 years' service, etc., with the department. Special awards - Wellness, Creativity, Leadership, Customer Service, Employee of the Year - will be presented to employees who have been nominated by their coworkers and selected by judges from outside the department. A reception with refreshments will follow the presentations.

A special edition of the department's newsletter, *SCOPE*, will go out to employees during Public Health Week. It will contain a thank you letter from Dr. Carole Samuelson to all employees for their dedication to public health. It will also have some fun features, such as, "Who are they now?" (such as baby photos of service/health center administrators, health officer and deputy health officer), and a crossword puzzle based on public health in Jefferson County. A drawing will be held from entries which contain correct answers to all of the puzzles.

During April, 15 billboards located throughout Jefferson County will carry a message about the Jefferson County Department of Health and Public Health Month.

MARENGO

The Marengo County Health Department celebrated the event with services including blood pressure checks, hemoglobin checks, tuberculosis skin tests, hearing and vision tests, immunizations and cholesterol checks. Elected officials were among those invited to participate.

MOBILE

This year in Mobile County, recognition efforts have been expanded from National Public Health Week (April 2 - 8) to an entire month of awareness, providing more time to focus on the many services and programs provided by Mobile County's public health system.

April 2 - Public Health Month Kick-off! Mobile County Health Department's service display, "A World of Health" will be presented in the lobby of the Mobile Government Plaza. MCHD Mascot, Alphie Apple, and Health Promotion staff will be giving out apples and health information.

April 3 - 6 - Careers in Public Health Display - "Considering a Career Serving Your Community? Consider Public Health!" That is the theme of a display that will be presented at the Mobile County Personnel Board as part of Public Health Month. All positions at the Health Department are filled through the Personnel Board; the display highlights the people in public health and the various career opportunities available.

April 4 - Kick Butts Day - MCHD Health Promotion staff will be traveling throughout the area to tourist sites, chambers of commerce and local restaurants distributing the latest smoke free dining guide. Dr. Eichold attends Mobile Mayor Mike Dow's press conference to receive a proclamation and discuss the state of the community's health.

April 7 - Mobile County Health Department is holding a public rabies clinic from 9 - noon at the Chickasaw Auditorium. Cost per pet is \$8. This is also World Health Day

April 10 - The Healthy Kids Club Wellness Program and ALL Kids Health Insurance will be promoted at the Health Department Women's Center. Pediatric staff will be on hand to answer questions about pediatric services and welcome new families to the pediatric clinics. The public is encouraged to stop by and sign up for All Kids.

April 11 - Women's Health Series Part II - The topic- "Cancer Awareness," in recognition of Minority Cancer Awareness Week in April, will be presented at the Citronelle WIC Clinic. This is a monthly series focusing on the health care needs of today's busy woman and is open to the public.

April 12 - Spring Egg Hunt and Egg Safety Awareness - Children from the Dearborn YMCA and Health Department patients and visitors are invited to participate in a spring egg hunt and games at the main Health Department. Buckle Bear-Bunny will be leading the hunt. Health and safety information will be sent home with children. The Food and Lodging Department will be providing media interviews on Easter Egg/food safety.

April 14 - Public Health Wellness Fair at Colonial Mall - Bel Air Health Department professionals will be on hand to answer questions and distribute information about a variety of public health topics. Safe Kids will feature kid fingerprinting with "McGruff Crimestopper" and a visit with Mobile Fire-Rescue Dalmatian, Nutrition Services and WIC, HIV/AIDS Control, Alabama Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program, Mosquito and Rodent Control, Foodhandling Safety featuring Egg Smarts; MCHD Buckle Bear Bunny visits kids, Lead Poison Prevention, Rabies, Women's Center and MCHD Family Planning and Maternity Services, TEEN Center Healthy Kids Club, Immunizations & ALL Kids Insurance sign-up, Tobacco Control, Home Health Services offering free blood pressure checks; Health Checks for Men & Women, Mobile Area Water & Sewer Services "Water Willie- H2O Inspector," MCHD's Alphie Apple mascot

April 16-21 - National Medical Lab Week recognizes laboratory professionals and educates the public about lab's role in health care delivery. Last year, the 12 MCHD lab professionals performed more than 112,000 in-house lab tests. MCHD labs will be offering tours to staff and screenings and distributing Health Checks for Men and Women brochures and magnets encouraging everyone to get life-saving screenings.

April 15 - 21 - Minority Cancer Awareness Week - MCHD lobby will house a mini health fair for those who missed the Mall Health Fair. Focus will be on minority health care and services available to improve quality of life. Displays to be featured

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include: Cancer detection program, AIDS, Nutrition Services, overall MCHD services and more. Breast and cervical cancer information will be presented at local churches.

April 17 - Free HIV Testing in recognition of Sexually Transmitted Disease Awareness Month. Confidential testing at main Health Department.

April 20 - MCHD Employee Wellness Walk 2001 - Employees lace up their walking shoes and hit the trail for their annual employee wellness walk departing the main Health Department to Bienville Square. Dr. Eichold reads Public Health Month Proclamation at noon in the Square to the crowd and thanks staff for their contributions to preserving and improving the public's health.

April 22-28 - National Infant Immunization Week highlights the immunizations needs of children under 2. Children need 16-20 doses of different vaccines, which can be given in about five visits, before a child's second birthday to protect them against serious childhood disease. A display at MCHD will be available for the public to view describing current immunization needs. Refreshments and giveaways! Free immunizations for children!

April 22 - Earth Day - Love your Mother Earth! Public health encourages citizens to get involved in locally organized Earth Day activities. Teach your children to respect their environment by picking up trash together or planting a tree.

April 25 - Wellness Express and Free Lead Screening Promotion Climb on board Public Health-on-wheels or visit the Wellness Express for well child check ups, immunizations, and family planning. Worried your child may have a lead poison problem? Stop by for a free lead screening.

MONROE

The Monroe County Health Department is planning an open house on April 3. The department is having a "Public Health Walk," which is a tour of the facilities. Along this tour booths and displays will be set up on the various services the health department offers. Local businesses have donated refreshments, balloons and door prizes. The Home Health Division will be performing a skit of the Wizard of Oz's "There is no place like home," and several employees will be dressing up like those characters promoting home health services. The tobacco coordinator will be conducting a puppet show for the children. Requests for coverage of the events have been made to the local newspaper and radio station, and a press release has been sent to the local newspaper and two local radio stations, and flyers have been distributed. Staff are planning for a large crowd.

PERRY

The Perry County Health Department plans to offer services including blood pressure checks, hemoglobin checks, tuberculosis skin tests, hearing and vision tests, immunizations and cholesterol checks. Elected officials were invited to participate.

PICKENS

The Pickens County Health Department will conduct blood pressure screenings, administer adult tetanus-diphtheria and distribute preventive education materials. Social workers will

feature Plan First. WIC will have a table for educational materials and outreach. A weight control organization will have an exhibit table featuring program and outreach for community participation.

In addition, healthy snacks will be offered to the public and recipes will be made available. A VIP table featuring community program for teen mothers, which is sponsored by a Johnson & Johnson grant. There will be a viewing of the Pickens County Family Resource Center, which will feature the new "Adolescent Fatherhood Program and Star Program (supporting the at-risk student) An environmental update will discuss the dangers of mosquitoes and there will be a Medicaid Outreach table (to include the ALL Kids program).

SUMTER

The Sumter County Health Department will celebrate the event with services including blood pressure checks, hemoglobin checks, tuberculosis skin tests, hearing and vision tests, immunizations and cholesterol checks. Elected officials were among those invited to participate.

TALLADEGA

The Sylacauga location has more than 12 local businesses participating by providing gift certificates, refreshments, balloons, candles, compact disc cases, a kids' umbrella, crayons and coloring books. Each day of the week the department will focus on some aspect of the Health Department— Monday, Teen Pregnancy; Tuesday, Immunizations; Wednesday, Nutrition; Thursday, Family Planning/Plan First; Friday, Home Health. Each patient will have an opportunity to sign up for a door prize to be given out at the end of the week..

The Talladega location has planned several activities for the week, with each day having a different theme. Monday and Wednesday are family planning days in which a guest speaker will talk about sexually transmitted diseases, and a representative from the Tobacco Program will discuss smoking with patients. On Tuesday, Children's Day will promote WIC. On Thursday, free blood pressure checks will be given. On Friday, employees will wear specially designed tee shirts to promote public health. Also, area merchants and businesses have donated items and services. At the end of each day there will be a drawing for door prizes.

TALLAPOOSA

During Public Health Week, a workshop/presentation will be given on pregnancy prevention on April 4. On April 6, Tom Robertson will speak on HIV to Horseshoe Bend School and the WIC Program will have a display on folic acid at two Dadeville grocery stores.

WINSTON

The Haleyville site will hold a special immunization clinic on April 2 and Adult Health Day on April 17. The Double Springs site will hold Adult Health Day on April 17 and its special immunization clinic on April 17.



April is Cancer Control Month
and
National STD Awareness Month.

Calendar of Events

April 6-7 Alabama’s Choice: Tobacco or Health, Marriott Hotel, Highway 280-459, Birmingham. Open to all. For more information contact Dianne Smith-Yoder, (334) 690-8186.



April 10 Alabama WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program, 1-3 p.m. For more information contact Richard Burlison, (334) 206-2929.



April 11 Vaccines and Your Clinic, Public Health Staff Development, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Fay Smith, (334) 206-5655.

April 12 Nursing Shortage: Facts and Figures, 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., For more information contact the Alabama Board of Nursing, (334) 242-4184.

April 18-19 Alabama Public Health Association Annual Educational Meeting, Marriott Hotel, Space and Rocket Center, Huntsville.

April 22 Earth Day

April 26-27 The Second Annual Rural Health Conference, Bryant Conference Center, Tuscaloosa.



May 9 Women’s Health, Public Health Staff Development, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Fay Smith, (334) 206-5655.



May 16 Saving Lives With a Touch of Your Fingers, Home Health Aide Continuing Education, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Gayla Hollis, (334) 347-2664, extension 403.

May 31 World No Tobacco Day



June 13 The Pain of Arthritis, Public Health Staff Development, 2-4 p.m. For more information contact Fay Smith, (334) 206-5655.



June 14 ADPH Statewide Staff Meeting, 3-4 p.m. For more information contact Jim McVay, Dr.P.A., (334) 206-5600.



June 26 PHALCON Update, 3-4:30 p.m. For more information contact Debbie Patterson, (334) 206-5310.



July 11 TB Update, Public Health Staff Development with UAB, 2-4 pm. For more information contact Fay Smith, (334) 206-5655.