

F OCUS

Two grant projects underway; more in proposal stage

CHC has been successfully carrying out the activities of two awarded grants while pursuing additional grant funding for other demonstrations on behalf of the home care and hospice industries in New York.

In the fall of 2002, Workforce New York, a division of the New York State Department of Labor (DOL), awarded CHC \$52,500 for a demonstration program targeted at workforce retention for home care paraprofessionals. The goal of the program, entitled "Home Care Community Forum," was to improve knowledge and job satisfaction by providing quality education and support to home care aides. Improved knowledge and job satisfaction through training were expected to result in increased worker retention and lower turnover rates.

The program used audio-conferencing and website technology to provide 12 monthly training programs used by home care agencies for in-service training all across New York. In addition, workbooks were developed for participants to supplement each training session. (Ten of the workbooks are available in Spanish as well as English.) Finally, a set of ten educational brochures were developed for paraprofessionals to offer helpful tips about stress, nutrition, exercise, and other information to show paraprofessionals that their organizations cared about their well-being in light of their hectic work schedules. All of this material was made available at no charge to home care agencies or to the aides.

To ensure the widespread dissemination of this material, CHC held an audio conference monthly, made the conference available through a rebroadcast feature for one month, and made each conference permanently available for download from the website. Workbooks for each conference were sent out to agencies that joined as official participants in the Home Care Community Forum and were also made available through the website to any interested parties. (A number of organizations outside New York State took advantage of the materials in this manner.)

Since the grant's completion in February 2004, CHC has received over 2000 evaluations from participants of the

Volume 1, No. 1
Summer 2004



community health care services foundation, inc.
*the premier educational resource
for home care and hospice*

Welcome to the first issue of "Focus," the newsletter of Community Health Care Services Foundation, Inc. (CHC).

CHC, an affiliate of the New York State Association of Health Care Providers, Inc. (HCP), is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) foundation dedicated to the development and delivery of high-quality education for home care, hospice and other community-based providers and to the advancement of research in the area of home care.

Focus will be published quarterly and will cover CHC's activities in its two major spheres—research, grants and demonstration projects plus educational programming for management, clinicians and paraprofessionals in home and community-based care.

You may learn more about CHC by visiting our website (www.chcforum.org). If you have any comments or suggestions about *Focus* or CHC, please contact us at 518/463-1167 or by email: chc@chcforum.org.

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Forum. Throughout the year, thousands of copies of the workbooks were downloaded. The Home Care Community Forum continues as an important section of the CHC website (www.chcforum.org). The audio conferences, workbooks and brochures remain available for downloading and three new programs sponsored by the Health Care Providers Self-Insurance Trust have just been announced.

To encourage more entrants into the home care field, CHC was awarded \$83,910 in grant funding for Project ACT (Assessment, Coaching, and Training) through the New York State Department of Health (DOH) TANF Healthcare Worker Training Initiative in the fall of 2003. The initiative funds three pilot projects—in the Capital District, Erie County, and Long Island—that focus on the recruitment, screening, training, job placement, and coaching of home care paraprofessionals through the services of career counselors in each region. CHC has been working with Workforce Investment Boards and universities in each region to collaborate on resources and project milestones.

The administrative work to be done includes selection of

Nearly 40 agencies have expressed interest in participating in Project ACT.

career counselors; the acquisition of space to conduct interviews and perform screening of applicants; the development of tools and resources for use by career counselors and home care agencies; and formulation of an advertising campaign to attract applicants. To date, 38 home care agencies have expressed an interest in

participating in the program. These agencies will be contacted once the program is ready for implementation.

Most recently, CHC has submitted proposals to conduct two telemedicine demonstrations across various regions in New York. Telemedicine, broadly defined, is the

CHC has submitted two proposals for telemedicine demonstration projects.

transfer of electronic medical data (i.e. video, vital signs, images, etc.) from one location to another.

For the home care industry, this means the transfer of information from a patient's home to a nurse at a home care agency or other central location. Other terms used more or less interchangeably are "telehomecare" and "telehealth." In the home care industry, the use of telemedicine is increasingly appealing in light of a rapidly aging population with multiple chronic conditions coupled with the ongoing shortage of health care professionals. Through telemedicine, home care agencies are able to utilize their personnel more productively as the number of "physical" home visits is reduced. It has also been theorized that telemedicine increases the quality of life for patients and lowers the number of physician visits, emergency room visits, and hospitalizations. Unfortunately, most home care agencies do not have access to the capital needed to invest in telemedicine equipment; hence why alternative funding sources must be pursued to get agencies up and running with the equipment.

In March 2004, CHC submitted a proposal to U.S. Rep. John Sweeney (R-Clifton Park) for a direct Federal appropriation in the amount of \$540,280 to conduct a telemedicine demonstration in Columbia, Greene, Warren, Washington, Rensselaer, Essex and Saratoga Counties. The project would study the effects of telemedicine on Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) patients over the course of six months to determine the cost effectiveness of using telemedicine along with any impact telemedicine may have on the nursing shortage. Selected agencies would be located in the Congress Member's district and service patients in these counties. Recently, U.S. Rep. Michael McNulty (D-Green Island) has also expressed interest in supporting such a program.

In April 2004, CHC submitted a proposal

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charissa ashman is Administrator of Grants and Demonstrations for CHC and is in charge of grant demonstration development and overall grant administration. She is a practicing registered nurse of 10 years and an independent health care consultant specializing in assisting health care providers with operations improvement activities; grant writing; and Medicare compliance. Charissa has presented

several training sessions to nurses and physicians throughout the United States in the areas of quality improvement, case management, and Medicare. She has also published on the nursing shortage and the need to improve the work environment so that nurses can operate more productively. Charissa holds a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from the Institute of Technology at Utica-Rome, and a MBA in Health Systems Administration from Union College.

CHC offers top-quality education

many of CHC's marketing materials state, "We are the premier source in New York for quality education for the home care and hospice industries." That statement is taken very seriously at CHC. Starting in 1989, Community Health Care Services Foundation Inc. (CHC), has committed itself to developing and presenting a continuous stream of practical, affordable, high-quality, educational programming to meet the needs of home care and hospice employees. Through the years CHC has built and attained a reputation for quality sessions and enjoys a large percentage of repeat customers.

CHC works with its affiliate, the New York State Association of Health Care Providers, Inc. (HCP), to stay abreast of topics, trends and subject matter that impact providers. This extensive experience allows CHC to identify the very best faculty in topic areas, the best onsite locations for training and the increased use of technology as alternative training delivery techniques. CHC holds seminars all across New York State and also presents a variety of seminars as audio, webcast or other conferences which participants can join in from their own offices. Onsite programs are often presented in

more than one location to satisfy a larger geographic audience. CHC always offers a program evaluation form customized for each seminar whether it's an onsite program or audio session. CHC staff and faculty carefully review each evaluation and take into consideration the scoring and comments made by attendees. Additionally, through the evaluation, CHC customers have the opportunity to suggest topics they feel would be valuable for future development.

CHC's comprehensive website, www.chcforum.org (see story on Page 4), offers a current list of educational sessions with links to specific descriptive brochures and online registration.

Over the years CHC's methods and techniques have changed and adapted to technological innovations but our goals have remained the same: to inform and educate health care providers on issues and strategies relating to the efficient, effective provision of high quality health care services.

Our commitment to support the industry remains unchanged.

Summer Seminars

- ◆ **Standard Precautions, Bloodborne Pathogens, Needlesticks**
July 8—audio conference FREE for paraprofessionals
- ◆ **HIPAA: Home Care Security Action Plan**
July 13—New York City July 14—Albany
- ◆ **Smarter Care Plans and Case Management**
July 13 and July 22—audio conference
- ◆ **Coordinator Training/Scheduling**
July 22—Albany
- ◆ **Emerging Best Practices in Home Care**
July 27—Albany July 30—New York City
- ◆ **Getting the Business You Want**
August 5—Rochester
- ◆ **Smarter Surveys in the PPS**
August 10 and August 19—audio conference
- ◆ **Home Care Managers' Retreat**
August 25—Rochester August 31—Albany

More
to come!
Check the
website for
the latest.

www.chcforum.org

Ellen Dollard is Manager of Meetings and Education for CHC. Her responsibilities include identifying and producing a continuous series of educational offerings designed specifically for home care and hospice providers, both administrators and clinicians. Ellen brings 17 years of meeting planning experience to CHC. That experience began as a conference planner for a private lobbying firm in Albany and continued with New York State's local district Social Service Commissioners as conference coordinator for the New York Public Welfare Association. Ellen's formal education is local to the Capital District culminating with a New York State Practical Nursing License with practice at St. Peter's Hospital in Albany. As a licensed practical nurse, she was employed for 10 years in the high school health office of the East Greenbush Central School System. She joined CHC in 1997.



CHC on the web: www.chcforum.org

an ambitious website was launched by CHC in early 2003 as part of the “Home Care Community Forum” (see grants story on page 1). The site—www.chcforum.org—was a major part of that project as agencies participating in the Forum (and others from around the country who were interested in the subject), downloaded project materials including audio conferences and workbooks.

Grant funding for the Community Forum project ended in February 2004, but the project lives on, primarily through the website. In January 2004, CHC introduced a redesigned website that made the Forum an ongoing section of a more broadly-focused communications vehicle. The Forum section contains all 12 audio conferences and workbooks (ten of the workbooks are also available in Spanish) and a

resource area for home care aides. (Thanks to the generosity of the Health Care Providers Self-Insurance Trust, three more free audio conferences for home care aides will be held in 2004.)

The remainder of the CHC website has a major section on upcoming seminars for providers (both administrators and clinicians) which now features the convenience of online registration.

Another section of the website explains CHC’s activities in the areas of grants and demonstrations while a final section tells about CHC, its history, mission and leadership and offers an explanation of home care in New York State.

We invite you to visit us often at www.chcforum.org and to pass along any comments or suggestions.

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to the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration for the Technology Opportunities Program (TOP) with a grant request in the amount of \$1.3 million. For this grant, CHC will examine the impact of home technologies on health care utilization and patient quality of life by carrying out a 20-month study across two different regions of New York—Western and Northeastern New York.

If the grant is awarded, our study will follow 60 homebound patients with CHF who will use home telemonitoring units and receive monthly education sessions in their homes. We will compare the results of the home technologies used by the study patients against a control group of 60 CHF patients. In this endeavor, CHC is partnering with WILLCARE; the Visiting Nurse Association of Albany; Adirondack Area Network; and

Craig Lehmann, Professor and Dean of the School of Health Technology and Management at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. CHC should receive word on the status of this grant in early August. CHC continues to explore other opportunities that may exist for telemedicine demonstrations in New York.

At CHC, in addition to applying for grants that will benefit New York’s home care and hospice industries, we are also on the lookout for funding opportunities for which home care agencies can directly apply. We will keep you informed of these opportunities through this newsletter and the *HCP Insider*.

We continue to brainstorm grant program ideas for a variety of topic areas, including training grants for home care professionals and paraprofessionals; worker safety; needle stick prevention and education; and telemedicine and other technologies. Your feedback for future grant topic areas and grant proposal ideas is important to us. If you have some ideas you would like to share with us, please contact Charissa Ashman at 518/463-1118, ext. 816 or ashman@nyshcp.org.

Future editions of *Focus* will include instructional articles for health care providers about seeking and writing grants; grant resource links; relevant grant proposal links; information from HCP members who have been awarded grants and what they are doing with the funding; and feedback on the grant topics and ideas you have provided to CHC. We look forward to using this newsletter to explain some components of grant writing, provide you with relevant research and collaborate with you on our future grant proposal endeavors!



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Community Health Care Services Foundation, Inc.
99 Troy Road, Suite 200, East Greenbush, NY 12061

Tel: 518/463-1167
chc@chcforum.org
www.chcforum.org

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