

F OCUS

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Community Health Care Services Foundation, Inc.

*the premier educational resource
for home care and hospice*

inside: no-cost education brings value
to paraprofessionals

CHC's grant projects making a difference for home care across the country

Over the past few years many CHC customers asked if the Home Care Community Forum programs could be made available in languages other than English and funding was found to translate the first ten workbooks into Spanish which was the most asked for language. Now CHC has been able to greatly expand its offerings in languages other than English.

Toward the end of 2006, CHC received additional funding to translate Forum audio conferences and workbooks into Spanish and Russian (also a highly-requested language) from Cardinal Health Foundation. This is one of three grant projects CHC currently has underway in furtherance of its mission of promoting home and community-based care.

A total of nine audio conferences and accompanying workbooks were translated this spring and a marketing program was developed to make home care agencies and paraprofessionals nationwide aware that this education

was now available in two different languages (plus English). Any of the audio conferences and workbooks can be downloaded from the CHC website (www.chcforum.org/forum). The translated materials were added to the website at the beginning of July. Marketing included advertisements in national home care magazines, direct mail to home care agencies and announcements in newsletters and websites of various state home care associations. A press release about the project was also issued.

The translation project, supported by a \$132,000 grant from Cardinal Health, is now providing education and training for paraprofessionals nationwide at no cost to them or their agencies.

Tony Zullo, CHC Project Coordinator for the translation project, reports that during the first two weeks of the program, several dozen home care agencies from many different states registered for the program with almost all indicating an interest in both Russian and Spanish programs. According to the agencies, more than 1,700 home care paraprofessionals will receive the benefits of this education and that's just from those agencies that had signed up by mid-July.

The Forum started in 2003 and was supported by a grant from the New York State Department of Labor. Some 12 audio conferences and accompanying workbooks were produced on important topics for home care paraprofessionals. By downloading from the CHC website or purchasing a conference on CD, home care

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FREE Paraprofessional Training in Spanish and Russian!

To listen to these translated Forums, or
to download these FREE programs and
the corresponding workbooks,
visit www.chcforum.org/forum

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agencies were able to take advantage of this valuable education even if they missed the original audio broadcast.

After the initial grant funding was concluded, CHC obtained sponsorships from various organizations including the Health Care Providers Self-Insurance Trust (HCPSIT) and Fidelis Care New York to continue the program with six new Forums being presented per year. (Forum #33—"Advancement Opportunities for Paraprofessionals"—is set for September.)

Depression in the elderly

The mission of a second CHC project is to increase access to evidence-based care and improve outcomes of elderly home care patients who are suffering from depression in the community. Since January of this year, CHC and four member agencies of the New York State Association of Health Care Providers, Inc. (HCP) have been collaborating with the Joan & Sanford I. Weill Medical College of Cornell University on a grant project titled, "Depression in Elderly Home Care Patients: Increasing Access to Evidence-Based Care." The grant was one of 32 proposals (out of more than 600 submitted) that was selected and funded by the New York State Health Foundation in its inaugural year.

To date, over 75 Registered Nurses have been trained as part of the study. All RNs began their training in a highly interactive, classroom-style setting at their agencies. They were then required to attend a live debriefing and refresher class that was accessed using CHC's webinar capabilities. The trainings — Trainings in the Assessment of Depression (TRIAD) used various tools developed by Cornell to help guide the nurses in assessing signs of depression. Some of the RNs who attended TRIAD went on to receive additional classroom and webinar trainings to specifically teach them how to use the Depression Management Carepath tool that has also been developed by Cornell. These nurses became the CAREPATH subgroup. All RNs who successfully completed the trainings and tests were entitled to CEU credits.

CHC Project Coordinator Anne McDonough reports this project is now well into its data collection phase. RNs from

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Forum programs bring valuable training to paraprofessionals

Home health aides and personal care aides are on the front lines of home care; they are the face of home care each time they enter a patient's home. The training of these paraprofessionals is essential in providing the quality service that agencies promise and patients expect. But New York home care agencies frequently do not have the financial resources to invest in all the education that is desired for their personnel.

In response, CHC developed the Home Care Community Forum series of programs in 2003 through a grant from the New York State Department of Labor that allowed the programs to be offered free of charge. After the grant was concluded, additional sponsors helped CHC continue to present additional programs. The home care industry, in New York and beyond, has responded enthusiastically.

"The Forum programs are extremely beneficial to both our paraprofessional and our professional staff; everyone always comes away having learned something new," says Melody Zampogna, Educational Training Manager for HomeCare & Hospice in Olean. She utilizes the Forum programs frequently in her standard training of paraprofessionals as well as their ongoing training. "Because these programs are offered at no cost it allows our agency to involve more staff than if we had to pay per program."

Education can also be a great recruitment and retention tool for paraprofessionals. The ability to provide so many programs to employees due to the low cost shows employees that their organization really cares about their well being. Training sessions also provide support and networking opportunities that increase worker self-confidence as well as reinforce the value of their work.

The Forum programs provide the employee with a foundation of caregiving, communication and problem-solving abilities that teach the concepts behind the skills that they are learning. This foundation promotes careful and clinically appropriate caregiving and reduces client as well as worker injuries.

"Both our professional and paraprofessional staff benefit from these programs, said Angela Rall, Administrator at Personal Touch Home Care of Long Island. "We are able to gain information on a wide variety of subjects because they are offered for free. Our agency would have to pick and chose between the different topics if the programs were offered on a pay basis."

Another added benefit to this free programming is its flexibility. "I always announce when a new program will be originally broadcast," Zampogna says, "and those who are available can attend the session live. However, the workbook is a very handy tool for those whose schedules do not permit them to attend the original broadcast. I download the workbooks and they are able to read the material on their own and then discuss it with me at a later time."

CHC is dedicated to providing cost effective education to all levels of home care employees. The Forum series is and will continue to be our commitment to training the front line employees on topics that are relevant to them. Without the hard work of our presenters and the generosity of our sponsors, these programs would not be as successful as they are today.

You can view a list of all Forum programs available by visiting the Forum website at www.chcforum.org/forum.

community health care services foundation, inc.

Upcoming educational events

Legal Issues in Home Care

August 30, 2007

One-hour audio conference.

Home Care Marketing

September 13 & 27, 2007

Two-part audio conference.

Forum #33: Advancement Opportunities for Paraprofessionals

September 20, 2007

One-hour audio conference and accompanying workbook. Free to registered participants.

HCP Annual Home Care Management Conference & Exhibition

October 17 - 19, 2007

New York's top home care event of the year. "Outside the Box: Inside Home Care" is this year's theme. Hyatt Regency Long Island Hauppauge, New York

Home Care Documentation

October 25, 2007

One-hour audio conference.

Forum #34: AIDS & HIV: Promoting Adherence

November 19, 2007

One-hour audio conference and accompanying workbook. Free to registered participants.

To register for an event, visit www.chcforum.org/seminars or call 518/463-1167, ext. 817.



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both groups, TRIAD only and CAREPATH, have been submitting data on a weekly basis to Cornell. At the end of the project, scheduled for December 2007, a report will be compiled and presented comparing the data from the two groups.

Emergency Preparedness

Thanks to grant funding made possible by the New York State Department of Health, through the Federal Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA), CHC will soon produce three new paraprofessional trainings on public health emergencies.

Home health aides will be trained on topics such as: Pandemic Influenza, Biological, Chemical, and Radiological Agents, how to communicate risk to others, what to expect in the home setting and use of personal protective equipment. Community volunteer training will also be produced and will provide volunteers with a basic understanding of home

care including such topics as: what is home care, types of home care services and the types of people who receive them, paraprofessional job duties and roles, and how volunteers can help during a pandemic outbreak.

Each training will be 60 minutes in length and will be made available in three convenient formats—streaming video (over the Internet), audio CD, and paper. CHC will also offer the audio conference in Spanish.

CHC will continue seeking new grant funding in order to create additional projects to benefit home and community-based care.



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