

NewsLINE.

SOUTH CAROLINA PRIMARY HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION

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SOUTH CAROLINA CHC DELEGATION TRAVELS TO WASHINGTON DC FOR NACHC P & I

Health care promises to be one of the top legislative issues for the new 108th Congress. With the numbers of uninsured climbing and state budget deficits forcing cutbacks in eligibility for Medicaid and other public health programs, the 2004 National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) Policy and Issues (P & I) Forum opens a dialogue among health providers, health policy experts, lawmakers, community health center leaders and consumers to discuss this deepening crisis in America's health care. For health centers and all community stakeholders, this is an opportunity to learn and gain insights into the issues, the opportunities, and the new political environment that will shape tomorrow's health care delivery.



Arthur Kennedy, MD, CEO of Family Health Centers, presents Senator Lindsey Graham with an award for his support of the Community Health Center movement over the past year.

Over 40 representatives of South Carolina's Community Health Center (CHC) movement attended this year's P & I, held March 23-26, where the following learning opportunities were featured:

1. Continuing the multi-year expansion of the health center program by securing a \$250 million increase in appropriations.
2. Protecting and preserving access to Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) services for health center patients and other low-income individuals.
3. Securing Federal support for health center facility construction, expansion and renovation needs.
4. Supporting efforts to expand coverage for the uninsured and underinsured.
5. Getting the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS) to change the Medicare payment cap to protect the ability of health centers to care for the uninsured.

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The Art of Giving

By Odessa Chavous
Chavous International

The Art of Giving is a craft honed by the selfless and compassionate acts of kindness, service and commitment to others. It is the capacity for love and altruism, and a performing art of the highest calling. Like other great art forms, it is characterized by creative and incisive thinking, realistic appraisal, and decisive judgment. It is sharp and penetrating, breaking through barriers to convey beauty and truth.

What is the truth about homelessness and the healthcare needs of those who find themselves in that predicament? Have you experienced homelessness?

What do you see or feel when you encounter a homeless person or family? To what do you attribute to their demise and suffering? Do you blame the victim, or do you understand the circumstances that brought them to that point? One of the great tragedies of humankind's journey along the road of history has been the limiting concern for our fellow human beings, and particularly those less fortunate. The harmful consequence of this moral limitation is that we don't really mind what happens to the people with whom we have no ties, or whose faces we never see.

The true test of our humanity is found in the consideration of others. It is there, when we meet a need, that we are transformed by the act itself. What will happen to the millions of homeless people, people just like you, whose lives are shattered by forces often beyond their control?

The South Carolina Primary Health Care Association and its partners understand the problem of homelessness and the requisite emphasis on healthcare. For it is within the whole of physical, mental and emotional health that families are better able to navigate the uncertainties of life, and find strength to rebound from the devastating changes and setbacks that homelessness can bring.

We implore you as individuals and as organizations to become involved in the SCPHCA Health Care for the Homeless Initiative. Please make a commitment to support our efforts as we lead the way in addressing healthcare for the homeless in South Carolina.

SCPHCA Holds Art Show to Benefit Homeless

The South Carolina Primary Health Care Association (SCPHCA) is pleased to announce the success of its very first fundraising endeavor. The SCPHCA, in conjunction with Henry Schein Inc. and Caligor, held a private reception and exhibition of The Paintings of Johnnie Lee Gray, works that depict a personal vision of the segregated South, on Friday, February 20, 2004. Guests of honor included Marilyn Hughes Gaston, MD, Former Assistant Surgeon General of the United States, and Shirley Sims Gray, widow of artist/painter Johnnie Lee Gray. Over 100 invited guests enjoyed an elegant evening to support the Association's efforts to provide health care for South Carolina's homeless population.

Ms. Shirley Sims Gray has graciously agreed to donate 25% of the proceeds to the SCPHCA's homeless efforts from any of the six prints purchased/sold thru September 30, 2004 at www.artbyjgray.com. Please note that roughly 1,000 of

each of the six special edition fine art canvas prints are available for sale/purchase.

Please visit www.artbyjgray.com to order any of these prints. Your purchase will benefit the South Carolina Primary Health Care Association's Health Care for the Homeless Initiative.

For more information or to make a pledge or a general contribution, please contact Cynthia Frazier, Program Manager for Training and Public Relations, at (803) 788-2778.



Cover the Uninsured Week MAY 10 – 16, 2004

There are nearly 44 million Americans living without health coverage – including 8.5 million children. In 2002, the number of people without health coverage increased by more than 2 million, the largest one-year increase in a decade. Unfortunately, the problem won't get better soon. Rising health care costs continue to undermine the ability of individuals, businesses and state governments to purchase health care coverage. Reversing this disturbing trend, elevating this issue on the national and local agendas, educating Americans about the problem and providing immediate assistance to the uninsured and small business owners are the goals of *Cover the Uninsured Week 2004*.

Some of the most influential organizations in the United States such as the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the AFL-CIO, and including more than 800 national and local organizations, as well as thousands of Americans in all 50 states and the District of Columbia are working together to organize the second *Cover the Uninsured Week* to make the issue of the uninsured a focus of national discussion.

Cover the Uninsured Week staff will work in communities across the country with strong, diverse coalitions that will sponsor local activities, leading up to and during the Week as well as in the weeks and months to follow. From May 10-16, more than 1,000 events will be held in communities across the country, including health and enrollment fairs for uninsured Americans and health coverage seminars for small business owners. Prior to the Week,

hundreds of faith communities and dozens of medical facilities, nursing homes and schools will organize events that will raise awareness and build interest in the issue and the Week.

With former Presidents Ford (R) and Carter (D) once again serving as Honorary Co-Chairs, *Cover the Uninsured Week* will involve a diverse group of organizations representing thousands of individuals in every sector of American society, including business owners, union members, educators, students, health consumers, hospitals, health insurers, physicians, nurses, faith leaders and their congregants, among others.

Cover the Uninsured Week will be launched at a national event scheduled for May 5, 2004, and will coincide with a powerful advertising campaign that will be seen and heard nationally and in local markets. Noah Wyle, star of the popular television show "ER," is serving as the campaign's national spokesperson. Noah will speak out on the issue at public events and appear in public service announcements. Other television and sports stars will join in the effort in communities across the country.

To learn more, visit www.CoverTheUninsuredWeek.org* or call (202) 572-2928. We can let millions of Americans live without health coverage, or we can do something about it.

**CoverTheUninsuredWeek.org is a project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*

Who's Uninsured in South Carolina and Why? About 485,600 South Carolinians do not have health insurance. This is about 14 percent of South Carolina's population.

Race/Ethnicity Number Percent of Uninsured without Insurance

White non-Hispanic: 264,500; 11.1%
Black non-Hispanic: 176,500; 19.0%
Hispanic: 30,500; 28.8%
Other: 14,200; 22.7%
Total 485,600*

Age Number Percent of Uninsured without Insurance

0-18: 103,200; 9.5%
19-29: 143,200; 26.9%
30-49: 155,300; 13.6%
50-64: 83,900; 11.5%
Total 485,600*

*Total may not add due to rounding

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Characteristics of South Carolina's Uninsured Population

Most uninsured South Carolinians are in working families.

For most uninsured South Carolinians (78 percent), at least one person in the family works either full-time or part-time. Many (53 percent) have family members who work full time, all year.

Uninsured people include children, young adults, middle-aged adults, and people nearing or at retirement.

Because the Medicare program provides health insurance for most people age 65 and over, the uninsured are almost entirely under the age of 65. The largest number of uninsured are those aged 30-49, but the rate of uninsurance is highest for young adults, aged 19-29.

The uninsured are disproportionately people of color, although whites are the largest group of uninsured nationwide.

Racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to be uninsured than are whites. Among Hispanics, 28.8 percent are uninsured.

Why are People Uninsured?

Employer-based coverage is often unavailable or unaffordable.

People who lose their jobs often lose their health insurance

Buying coverage in the private individual market is often prohibitively expensive.

This information published by Families USA, November 2003

Families USA

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State Legislative Update

By Rudy Williams
SCPHCA Legislative Consultant

The General Assembly continues to be dominated by various proposals to address structural problems in the state budget. The Senate Finance Committee has reviewed four major proposals to raise revenue, shift taxes, or reduce revenue. Additionally, the Health and Human Services Reorganization and Accountability Act was modified by both the Senate Finance Committee and the Senate Medical Affairs Committee and contains a cigarette tax increase. Health and Human Services Reorganization legislation (aka Medicaid Reform), as amended, is far different than the version passed by the House. The Senate Finance Committee added a 2.65% per cigarette tax (53 cents per pack) which would generate revenue for a Medicaid Match Fund. Additionally, Senate Finance included a version of Governor Sanford's Income Tax Reduction plan. The Senate Medical Affairs Committee added pilot programs for further implementation and expansion of Medicaid managed care, created a taskforce on emergency room diversion, added a prevention of youth access to tobacco provision, changed the requirement for outsourcing Medicaid eligibility from a requirement to an exploratory project, and requires DHHS and

various other state agencies to effectuate electronic eligibility determinations. The original House version of Medicaid Reform included various House passed restructuring proposals which were deleted by the Medical Affairs Subcommittee and replaced with the Senate Judiciary version of restructuring (S841). However, the full Medical Affairs Committee stripped out all restructuring proposals from the Medicaid Reform legislation. Both the Restructuring legislation (S841) and the Medicaid Reform legislation (H3768) are on the contested calendar of the Senate.

During the budget debate in the House, numerous amendments were offered to raise the cigarette tax but none of those amendments passed. Those cigarette tax amendments were a 93-cent increase by Rep. Bales (Amendment 175) which was tabled (essentially voted down) by a vote of 83-27, a 30-cent increase by Rep. Rice and others (Amendment 291) which was tabled 68-43, a 53-cent increase by Rep. Lourie (Amendment

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295) which was tabled 68-41, and a 33-cent increase by Rep. Govan (Amendment 326) which was tabled 73-33.

On April 5, Governor Sanford sent a letter to all members of the Senate outlining his objections to the House passed budget bill. Among other things, the Governor implied that he would veto a number of items that the House passed to buttress revenue for the upcoming fiscal year. The Governor's letter questions the House's reliance on "wish-list funding" derived from potential revenue collection by the Department of Revenue and questions using wish-list money for core governmental services such as the Department of Social Services, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Juvenile Justice, and DAODAS, in addition to funding other cabinet agencies.. The Governor also raised concerns about the proposed reduction in the Job Development Tax Credits, the proposed delay in repeal of the estate tax, and "the use of a one-time tax increase to fund recurring costs." The Governor's letter requests that the Senate make non-negotiable any attempt to raid the Conservation Land Bank and also states that the Barnwell Facility and Cleanup Fund not be opened to more waste than previously agreed

upon. The letter also asks that the legislature restore money to the Barnwell Cleanup Fund that was raided in past budgets.

Though Seatbelt legislation (most recently S356, as amended by the House) has taken much of the Senate's time, the budget discussion will become the main issue for discussion for both the House and Senate for the remainder of the legislative session. Other issues which continue to cause controversy and potential/ongoing filibusters are the Mini-bottle legislation (H3489), Character Education/Conduct Grades ((S462/H 3701), legislation to increase the number of guns that can be purchased (H3442), legislation to change how regulations are adopted by state agencies, particularly DHEC (H3082), and changes to whether prior authorization is needed from DHHS before Medicaid recipients can receive certain prescription drugs (S450). Tort reform also continues to be a hot topic.

Are you registered to vote? For instructions on how to register online or by mail, visit the South Carolina State Election Commission's homepage at <http://www.state.sc.us/scsec/>

A SPECIAL THANKS TO SENATORS LINDSEY GRAHAM AND ERNEST HOLLINGS . . .

Senator Graham was one of 18 Senate Republicans to have signed the Bond-Hollings letter requesting increased funding for Community Health Centers. Senator Hollings, a long-time champion of the health center movement, co-authored this letter of support and signed it along with 60 other Senate Democrats.

Program News & Notes

Hold Out the Lifeline: A Mission to Families

Hold Out the Lifeline: A Mission To Families (HOTL), an interfaith and interagency partnership of the S.C. Primary Health Care Association and the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, continues to move forward. Just recently, HOTL has received funding to focus on health improvement in Fairfield County:

- A \$15,000 Prevention Community Coalition Capacity Building grant from S.C. Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS) will allow HOTL, in partnership with the HOTL Fairfield County Mission to Families and Fairfield Behavioral Health Services, to focus on the harmful effects of tobacco on women and adolescents. The goal is to reduce smoking through prevention strategies such as holding educational sessions, partnering and linking with health and human service agencies, organizations, and community groups,

utilizing improvisational drama to reach out to adolescents and other youth, exposing and counter-marketing the tobacco industry's deliberate targeting of women and adolescents, and establishing a youth anti-tobacco movement. The effort is being called "Smoking Ain't Blazin'."

- The American Cancer Society also has awarded \$3,000 to continue training congregation members to become Family Health Advocates for projects offering prostate, breast and colorectal cancer screenings in Fairfield County.

HOTL is a coalition of faith groups, private/public organizations and citizens who work to enrich the health of families by providing health advocate training to religious congregations and communities. The effort began in 1989 and has received state and national recognitions as a leader in empowering local

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Hold Out the Lifeline: A Mission to Families ...continued from previous page

communities of faith to reach out to pregnant women and families.

Current participating denominations include the United Methodist Church, S.C. Women's Missionary Union, AME Seventh District, South Carolina Baptist Education and Missionary Convention, Seventh Day Adventist, and

Presbyterian. Successful HOTL Family Health Advocate projects are located in Columbia, Charleston, Hilton Head, Orangeburg, and the counties of Fairfield and Sumter.

For more information, contact Dolores Scott, SC DHEC at (803) 898-3951.

UPCOMING SCPHCA EVENTS

REGISTER NOW!!!

THE SCPHCA 2004 CLINICAL NETWORK RETREAT

"SEEKING QUALITY IN A QUANTITATIVE WORLD"

MAY 21-23, 2004

RADISSON PLAZA HOTEL – MYRTLE BEACH CONVENTION CENTER

FOR REGISTRATION INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT PRISCILLA BRANTLEY, SCPHCA CLINICAL COORDINATOR, AT 803.788.2778

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

THE 2004 SCPHCA FRONT OFFICE STAFF RETREAT

"A BLUEPRINT FOR SUCCESS: BUILDING UPON YOUR SKILLS"

JUNE 25-27, 2004

RADISSON PLAZA HOTEL – MYRTLE BEACH CONVENTION CENTER

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT CYNTHIA FRAZIER, SCPHCA PROGRAM MANAGER FOR TRAINING AND PUBLIC RELATIONS, AT 803.788.2778

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!!!

THE SCPHCA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND 25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

NOVEMBER 3-5, 2004

RADISSON PLAZA HOTEL - MYRTLE BEACH CONVENTION CENTER

LOOK FOR DETAILS SOON!

Health Center Happenings

NHFHS' Mary E. Dixon Honored

On March 30, 2004, Mary E. Dixon of New Horizon Family Health Services (NHFHS) in Greenville, was honored by the Human Relations Council Greenville with the prestigious Cooper White Humanitarian Award for her many contributions towards improving the quality of life in the community. Mary Dixon has been employed with NHFHS for 12 years from the time the center opened its doors for business. Ms. Dixon is well known in the community as a tenacious patient advocate and for her many contributions to promoting access to quality

health care for the medically underserved, community development and advancing human rights in Greenville County.

NHFHS asks the rest of South Carolina's CHC family to join them in congratulating Ms. Dixon and in expressing pride and gratitude for her as a member of the New Horizon team and a strong advocate of the Health Center movement.

Congratulations to New Horizon Family Health Services! NHFHS was recognized with the Outstanding New Collaborative Member Award at the DHEC - Evidence Based Diabetes Management Seminar Jan 16-17, 2004.

Health Care Partners Comes to Marion

Health Care Partners, Inc. recently celebrated the launch of its new site at 210 East Dozier Street in downtown Marion, South Carolina. "Marion has needed this center for a long time," said Yvonne Davis, President of Health Care Partners and a native of the county's Friendship community. Marion County is a rural community with 35,466 residents. The unemployment

rate in Marion County was 17.3 percent in February 2004, the second highest in the state. According to Phillip Williams, Chief Executive Officer, the growth of Health Care Partners into Marion County means the nearly 9,000 uninsured residents of the area now have access to affordable quality health care.

SOUTH CAROLINA CHC DELEGATION TRAVELS TO WASHINGTON DC FOR NACHC P & I

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And perhaps most importantly, the P & I offered an opportunity for CHC staff, board members and patients to visit Capitol Hill as community advocates and meet face-to-

face with all eight members of the South Carolina Congressional Delegation and their staff.



Senator Ernest F. Hollings is presented a lifetime achievement award by Pamela Davis, SCPHCA President, Lathan Woodard, SCPHCA Executive Director and Board Members Wallace Brown, Sr. and Roland Gardner.



Pictured with Senator Ernest F. Hollings are Debbie Prescott (left) and Annie Geddings (right) of Sumter Family Health Center.



Members of the SC CHC Delegation gather to meet with Senator Lindsey Graham.

South Carolina Primary Health Care Association

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Mission: The mission of the South Carolina Primary Health Care Association is to provide a coordinating structure to assure access to community-based primary, behavioral and other health care services to every community in South Carolina.

Any questions, ideas or submissions for the
SCPCHCA newsletter? Please contact Allison Poole at
(803) 358-9652 or allison@scphca.org.



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