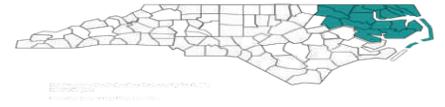


# ***GIVING CLARITY TO DISPARITIES***

***Quarterly Regional Newsletter***



**NORTHEASTERN NORTH CAROLINA PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC HEALTH**

Bertie · Beaufort · Camden · Chowan · Currituck · Dare · Edgecombe · Gates · Halifax · Hertford · Hyde · Northampton · Pasquotank · Perquimans · Warren

**Volume 1, Issue 1**

**January, February, March 2011**

## **SAVE THE DATE**

### **Fourth Leadership Conference to Eliminate Health Disparities in Northeastern North Carolina-Spring 2011**



**Friday June, 24TH, 2011  
Senator Bob Martin Agricultural Center  
Williamston, North Carolina**



**EVERYONE IS INVITED TO ATTEND!!!**

Political Leaders, Health and Educational Professionals, Faith Based and Community members, all coming together to make a difference with the health challenges and opportunities in our communities.

For more information contact Crystal Dempsey, Regional Health Disparity Coordinator at 252-358-7833.

## **Eastern Health Network**

The Eastern Health Network concept was the result of overwhelming feedback from the 2009 Leadership Conference, "Unity and Communities, Building Healthy Opportunities." The Eastern Health Network will create collaborations between faith based organizations, health departments, schools, government, and community based organizations. The project will create avenues to strengthen communities via capacity and infrastructure building and sharing resources across county lines to eliminate health disparities in the eastern region of North Carolina. The network will be piloted in five counties initially in the northeast, Bertie, Beaufort, Edgecombe, Hertford and Northampton and gradually roll out to the remainder NENCPPH counties. In addition, the project will include the development of a regional Steering Committee with representatives from these groups, Regional Health Disparity Program Manager, NENCPPH Director and a Community Empowerment Network representative just to name a few. County Steering Committees led by the county health department's Disparity Gap Coordinator and community representatives will also be created. Each county will convene a county Steering Committee of the Network and hold focus groups to collect qualitative data. This will lead to a strategic planning process with the five pilot counties Network Steering Committee to develop a Regional Eastern Health Network implementation plan.

## GIVING CLARITY TO DISPARITIES

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### Pow Wow For Health (Dare County)



As the beat of the drums fill the air and the dancers take to the circle, American Indian tribes gathered, along with Health Disparity coordinator Mandy Earnest, from the Dare County Department of Public Health (DCDPH) to celebrate not only their heritage and culture but also raise awareness of health concerns affecting their population at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual American Indian Pow Wow in August.

The American Indian population has long experienced lower health status when compared with other Americans. Lower life expectancy and the higher risk for disease exist perhaps because of inadequate education, disproportionate poverty, unawareness of health services available, and cultural differences.

With educational tools and raising awareness of the health conditions relevant to this population, DCDPH hopes to help lower these statistics through providing services to address these health disparities and will continue to participate in events related to American Indian Health.

Additionally, the Health Disparity Coordinator recently received training on the Eat Smart Move More Faithful Families curriculum. This program is aimed at promoting adoption of healthier choices as a faith community by making policy and environmental changes that promote healthy eating and physical activity. It is anticipated to provide this curriculum at two local African American churches as well as reaching out to the Hispanic population.

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### Awareness Increased At Diabetes Support Group (Edgecombe County)



“In Edgecombe County, we are proud to be able to offer a diabetes education and patient support program through the Edgecombe County Health Department”, says Health Disparity coordinator Derrick Haskins. The goal of the Edgecombe Diabetes Education program is to provide diabetic citizens of Edgecombe County with educational resources and social support that will enhance their understanding of what diabetes is and how to handle living with diabetes. The program regularly invites its participants to an educational luncheon to become more aware of some aspect of diabetes. “This past February, I had the privilege of teaching this group about the importance of heart health and its relation to diabetes”, say Haskins. Learning about heart disease was a major focus too, as diabetics are twice as likely to suffer a heart attack, or stroke, than non-diabetic citizens. The turnout was great with more than 30 participants in attendance. The program went very smoothly and participants had a chance to voice questions concerning diabetes during and after the presentation. Haskins believe that the Diabetes Education program and its participants deserve to be commended for their hard work and determination in improving the health of Edgecombe County citizens.

### Energizer Program Gets Kids Moving (Halifax County)

“The Halifax County Health Department and Healthy Halifax Partners, local Healthy Carolinians Partnership, recently received a \$20,000 grant from the Office of Healthy Carolinians to enhance action plans”, says Health Disparity coordinator Laura Ellis of the Halifax County Health Dept. Healthy Halifax Partners focus on the following areas of health: substance abuse, teen pregnancy, obesity, diabetes and blood pressure. Of the areas of focus, a portion of the funding was utilized to enhance physical activity in the classroom. The obesity action plan includes implementation of energizer kits and recess kits to all elementary teachers within Halifax County Schools, Weldon City Schools, and Roanoke Rapids Graded School District. The energizer curriculum is a great way for teachers to integrate physical activity in the classroom with academic concepts. Every new teacher received an energizer curriculum and kit with all the items needed to implement the curriculum. The short ten to twenty minute exercises can be done in the classroom. Recess kits were also given to all new elementary teachers, which included recess balls, jump ropes, bases, whistle and recess playground book with activities to utilize equipment. Over 200 teachers among ten elementary schools were trained with the energizer curriculum/recess kits. After a follow-up evaluation was administered, many teachers at all elementary schools are still utilizing the energizer/recess kits weekly.



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### School Wellness Fair a Big Hit (Hertford County)

On February 15, 2011 Hertford County Public Health Authority was invited to provide information regarding Diabetes and Tobacco prevention at the Hertford County Public Schools Wellness Fair. “Facility and staff at Bearfield Elementary School visited our display to get information and resources about diabetes and tobacco prevention”, says Latanya Fitzhugh, Health Disparity coordinator for the Hertford County Public Health Authority. Participants asked questions and gave feedback as well. Information was also available for children with diabetes. Fitzhugh stated that the information provided will hopefully encourage individuals to take more initiative in their own health that will lead to better health outcomes for our county.



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### Stopping Kidney Disease in its Tracks (Northampton County)

“Lets Stop Kidney Disease is the message that the Northampton County Health Dept in collaboration with the UNC Kidney Center and the Rural Health Group was sending on February 23 in Rich Square at the Rural Health Group as they implemented a FREE Chronic Kidney Disease Screening”, says Health Disparity coordinator, Hallie Peace from the Northampton County Health Dept. (Continue on pg 4.)



**LETS STOP  
KIDNEY DISEASE**

Early diagnosis and management can stop or slow the progression of chronic kidney disease (CKD) and prevent the need for kidney replacement therapy, dialysis or transplants. “If you have diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease or a family member who has kidney disease or kidney failure get screened”, says Peace. For more information on Chronic Kidney Disease Screenings in Northampton County please contact Hallie Peace at the Northampton County Health Dept, 252 534 –5841.

## Health Disparity Coordinator Retires (Warren County)



Warren County Health Dept says farewell to Mary Marrow, Public Health Educator III Supervisor and local Health Disparity Coordinator for the Northeastern North Carolina Partnership for Public Health. Mary has served in her position as Health Education Supervisor for 17 years and Health Disparity Gap Coordinator since 2002. Her wisdom, knowledge, good advice and leadership to all the Disparity Gap Coordinators will truly be missed.

The Northeastern North Carolina Partnership for Public Health, in collaboration with the NC Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities have been working to identify health disparities and find solutions to eliminating these disparities in the northeast region. Special thanks to the Disparity Gap Coordinators (DGC) and Regional Health Disparity Coordinator as they continue to work hard in their communities toward eliminating health disparities.



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