



RIHCA

RHODE ISLAND
HEALTH CENTER
ASSOCIATION

2008 / 2009
Annual Report

Rhode Island Health Center Association • 235 Promenade Street, Suite 104 • Providence, RI 02908
Phone (401) 274-1771 • Fax (401) 274-1789 • www.rihca.org

Mission

The Rhode Island Health Center Association works to support, sustain and strengthen community health centers so they can provide high quality, comprehensive health care.

VISION

Every Rhode Islander has equal access to affordable, quality, comprehensive health care.

VALUES

- We respect the worth of each individual and believe in the right to be treated with dignity, honesty, and integrity.
- We believe that diversity of culture, talent, and experience strengthens our organization and enhances performance.
- We are committed to excellence in everything we do and within our membership organizations.
- We respect individual talent and contribution as well as the synergy of team work.



Message from the President and CEO

As I review 2008 and 2009, it has been a time of growth and change for the [Rhode Island Health Center Association](#) and for Rhode Island's ten community health centers. During my first year we have worked to strengthen the infrastructure so that we can better fulfill our mission to support Rhode Island's community health centers. We recognized a need to develop a more robust public policy function within the organization. To that end, [RIHCA](#) added a position, Senior Health Policy Analyst, to advise and inform our membership regarding legislative, regulatory and administrative issues as they arise, and to help us coordinate our policy positions. We have launched a new web site, and maintained a vibrant schedule of training programs for our member centers. In addition, we continue to manage the Family Resource Counselor program throughout the health centers and hospitals, and we coordinate a statewide tobacco cessation program. None of these things would have been possible without the committed staff that [RIHCA](#) enjoys.

This is also a time of growth and change for health centers and health care nationally. Our keynote speaker, Jim Hunt, will be speaking about "Health Reform and Community Health Centers: The Massachusetts Experience," and the title of his talk illustrates what I think is on the horizon for 2010 and beyond, should a national health reform bill pass. In 2009 the community health centers have had the opportunity to continue to build the foundation for greater capacity and more comprehensive services that will be the basis for successful health reform.

The American Resource and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) has provided additional community health centers with section 330 funding to expand CHC programs. In Rhode Island, Tri-Town and WellOne's North Kingstown site received this funding, which will help these health centers with additional support to meet the health needs of their communities. ARRA funding has also provided much needed capital investment to CHCs across the country as well as new resources to meet increased demand for services; there has been a great deal of expansion and activity among the Rhode Island health centers, and we expect this level of activity to continue through the next several years.

The community health centers have a strong, patient-centered model of care featuring high-quality, affordable care that reflects community needs. Our health centers in Rhode Island are leading the way in electronic health records and care for patients with chronic illnesses. They provide care in a patient-centered medical home model, which fosters partnerships among patients, physicians and health center staff to provide comprehensive, coordinated primary care to patients. The health centers have been laying the ground work over the last several decades, and are national leaders and models for the provision of primary care. Looking at the various national health reform bills being considered, it is evident that the legislators agree.

This is an exciting time to be working with Rhode Island's health centers, and I am looking forward to continuing opportunity and innovation in the coming year.


Jane A. Hayward
President and CEO

Health Center Facts

In 2008, community health centers served over 112,000 patients in Rhode Island. In addition, community health centers provided over 417,000 patient visits. (Preliminary 2008 Uniform Data System) The Rhode Island Health Center Association has ten organizational members:

- Blackstone Valley Community Health Care
- Block Island Health Services
- Chad Brown Health Center
- Comprehensive Community Action Program
- East Bay Community Action Program
- Well One (formerly Northwest Community Health Care)
- Providence Community Health Centers
- Thundermist Health Center
- Tri-Town Community Action Agency
- Wood River Health Services

Programs

SUPPORTING CLINICAL QUALITY

RIHCA is committed to supporting the community health centers' quality clinical services. Key examples from 2008 and 2009 include:

Rhode Island Chronic Care Collaborative (RICCC): RIHCA continued its support of the RICCC, an in-state collaborative effort focusing on improving the clinical outcomes for patients with chronic illnesses. RIHCA is an active participant on the RICCC Planning Committee and serves as an informational and operational resource to the community health centers, all of which participate in the Collaborative.

Chronic Care Initiative of Rhode Island (CSI-RI): RIHCA serves on the steering committee of CSI-RI, a pilot project supporting the implementation of the patient centered medical home model of care delivery in five Rhode Island medical practices, including a community health center.

FOSTERING HEALTH POLICIES SUPPORTIVE OF HEALTH CENTERS

It has been a busy time for community health centers in the policy arena. Rhode Island is facing difficult budgetary decisions every year; the state negotiated a Global Medicaid Waiver; the federal government is debating national health reform. In addition, there are constant federal and state regulatory and administrative policies that affect health centers and primary care.

To help with this work, RIHCA created a new position, Senior Health Policy Analyst. Rebecca Kislak started with RIHCA in January 2009.

In 2009, RIHCA successfully countered a proposal to eliminate dental coverage for parents insured through Rite Care, a policy that would have been devastating to the dental safety net that the community health center have built over the last decade. In addition, President and CEO Jane Hayward was appointed to chair a subcommittee of the state's Global Waiver Task Force.

PROVIDING TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

RIHCA regularly provides technical assistance to its member health centers on a variety of clinical and operational issues, and fosters connections with national expertise and resources to support Rhode Island's community health centers:

In July, 2008 RIHCA hosted a Uniform Data Set (UDS) training session for staff of the Rhode Island and Connecticut community health centers. UDS is a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) reporting requirement of 330-funded community health centers, and provides a common set of demographic and clinical measures across all health centers in the nation.

RIHCA and CCAP/Family Health Services, with funding from the Rhode Island Foundation provided a series of training sessions in 2008 for health center providers focusing on the needs of lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgendered patients.

In May, 2008 over 100 clinicians and medical staff from community health centers and other primary care practices attended RIHCA's second Health Disparities Collaborative and Clinical Practice Summit, a one-day conference covering a wide range of health disparities and clinical practice topics.

Through a grant provided by the New England Alliance for Public Health Workforce Development, RIHCA planned and hosted training sessions in 2008 and again in 2009 for community health center board members. Training topics included the history of community health centers, quality oversight and legal responsibilities of health center board members, and health center finances.

PROMOTING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND OUTREACH

RIHCA launched the public section of our redesigned website in June 2009, and will soon launch the companion members-only area. This robust website provides a new public face for RIHCA and additional support to member community health centers in several aspects of operations, including recruitment and retention of staff.



Patient Satisfaction

According to Neighborhood Health Plan's 2008 Visit-Based Member Satisfaction Survey, CHC patients indicated high levels of satisfaction:

- 90% of patients were satisfied with their visit
- 90% of patients would recommend their doctor
- Over 90% of patients felt that office staff, nurses, and their doctors were courteous and respectful



STAFF

Jane A. Hayward, President and CEO

Mary Evans, Senior Director of Operations and Clinical Support

Ann Chiodini, Senior Director of Finance and Accounting

Pat DiLorenzo, Director of Outreach

Chris Rodrigues, Director of Information Technology and Projects

Rebecca Kislak, Senior Health Policy Analyst

Sally Mendzela, Cancer and Tobacco Disparities Program Manager

Carmela Hazzard-Viera, Executive Assistant and Project Coordinator

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Merrill Thomas, Board Chair, Providence Community Health Centers

Dennis Roy, Vice Chair, East Bay Community Action Program

Ray Lavoie, Board Treasurer, Blackstone Valley Community Health Care

Brenda Dowlatshahi, Secretary, Tri-Town Health Center

Peter Bancroft, WellOne (formerly Northwest Community Health Care)

Stanley Block, Providence Community Health Centers

Linda Cardillo, Wood River Health Services

William Hochstrasser-Walsh, CCAP/Family Health Services

Maria Montanaro, Thundermist Health Center

Gloria Rose, Chad Brown Health Center

Monty Stover, Block Island Health Services

In 2008, RIHCA's family resource counselor (FRC) program expanded from 58 to 76 family resource counselors (FRCs), at 41 sites. By the end of FY 2009, there were 90 FRCs at 43 locations. The FRC program, through family resource counselors located at community health centers, safety net hospitals and community based organizations throughout the state, provides individuals and families with Rite Care application assistance, as well as screenings and referrals for a number of assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the Family Independence Program.

RIHCA continues to partner with the Rhode Island Health Literacy Project (RIHLP), a consortium of health care education and business organizations dedicated to heightening awareness of health literacy issues among providers and patients alike, to support the delivery of culturally competent services in the health centers.

Through funding provided by the RI Department of Health, RIHCA manages a tobacco treatment program for uninsured Rhode Islanders. The program adheres to the harm reduction goal of helping people reduce their usage and move them along a path toward eventual, total success in quitting. In 2008, the tobacco treatment program served nearly 200 people by offering ten (or more) free weekly classes and free nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) at 8 sites across the state including health centers, community service agencies and one mental health facility.

COORDINATING EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

RIHCA facilitates the health centers' Emergency Preparedness Team in order to support the health centers' readiness efforts and critical collaborative relationships with our state, municipal and hospital partners.

In June 2009, RIHCA sponsored a training session, "Planning, Delivering and Evaluation of Emergency Preparedness Drills and Exercises," led by Mike Mozzer from Yale New Haven Health's Center for Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Response.



Leading the way...

In Dental Care: The health centers treated nearly 31,000 adults and children throughout Rhode Island through over 85,000 dental visits including oral examinations, emergency visits, and preventative services. This is a dramatic increase from 2003, when the health centers treated fewer than 10,000 dental patients. There are currently 69 dental operatories at the centers. Since 1998, community health centers have made a dental capital investment of well over \$5 million including the recent additions to Blackstone Valley Community Health Care's location in Pawtucket and WellOne in Pascoag.

In Electronic Health Records: Seven of Rhode Island's health centers have adopted an electronic health record, and the remaining three are set to implement electronic records by the end of 2010. Electronic medical records improve efficiency and clinical outcomes, aid in quality improvement, and streamline resource management.

Community health centers are non-profit, safety-net primary care providers that serve patient populations who otherwise confront financial, geographic, language, and cultural barriers accessing health care services. Since 1972, the Rhode Island Health Center Association (www.rihca.org) has supported our members as they provide high quality, affordable primary care to the most vulnerable populations. The following facts will illustrate the valuable service the community health centers provide to all Rhode Islanders.