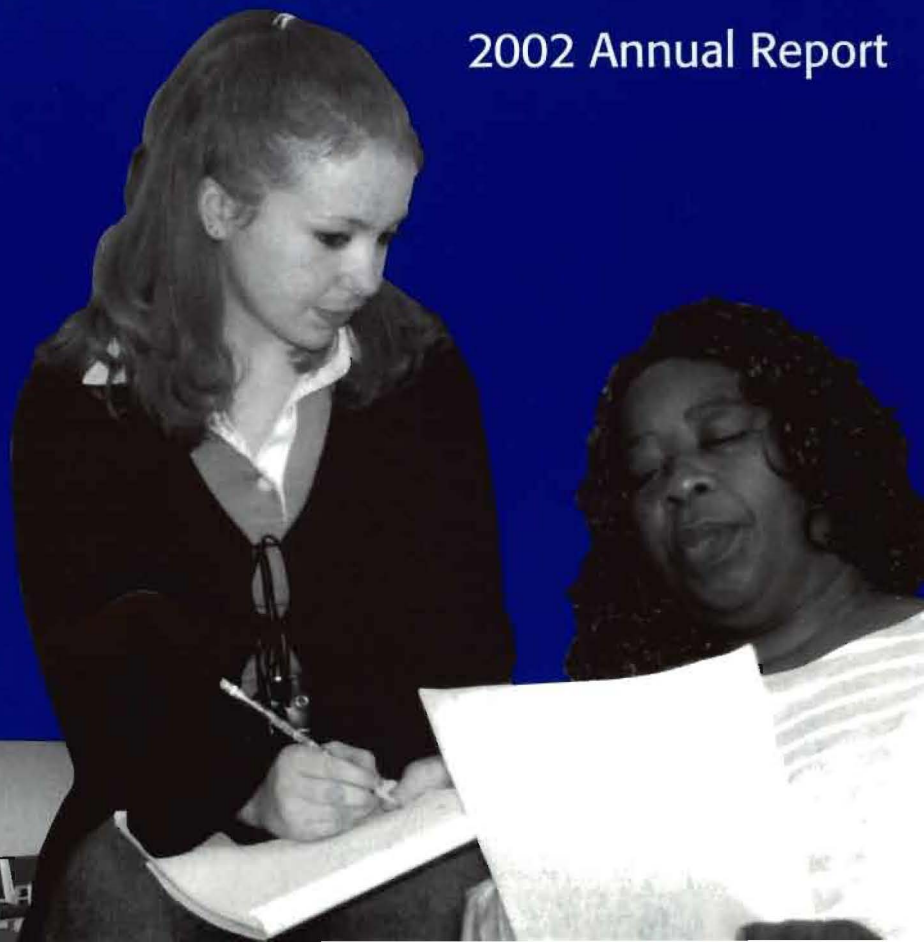


Western Maryland Area Health Education Center

2002 Annual Report

The mission of the Western Maryland Area Health Education Center (WMAHEC), a community-based organization, is to improve access to and promote quality in health care through educational partnerships with centers for higher education, community health professionals, and other vital supporters and advocates.



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FY2001 - 2002

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"Stepping Forward" is what it is all about.

Along with its traditional programs and services, the Western Maryland Area Health Education Center (WMAHEC) moved forward during fiscal year 2002 into several new arenas. In conjunction with the Maryland AHEC Program, WMAHEC developed and received a grant for federal Model AHEC funding. Model AHEC funds will expand our efforts to increase youth interest in health careers, engaging the "Grow Your Own" philosophy of health professional recruitment.

WMAHEC is particularly proud of its new Computer Learning Lab (CLL) that will be utilized for educating and training professionals, students, and community members alike. Funded by the Office of Primary Care and Rural Health within the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the CLL adds ten state-of-the-art workstations to the established PictureTel telecommunications hardware in the Distance Learning Center. The workstation desks utilize a transparent window under which the monitors are mounted, allowing students the added workspace of the tabletop and removing any visual obstructions to the audiovisual and telecommunications hardware.

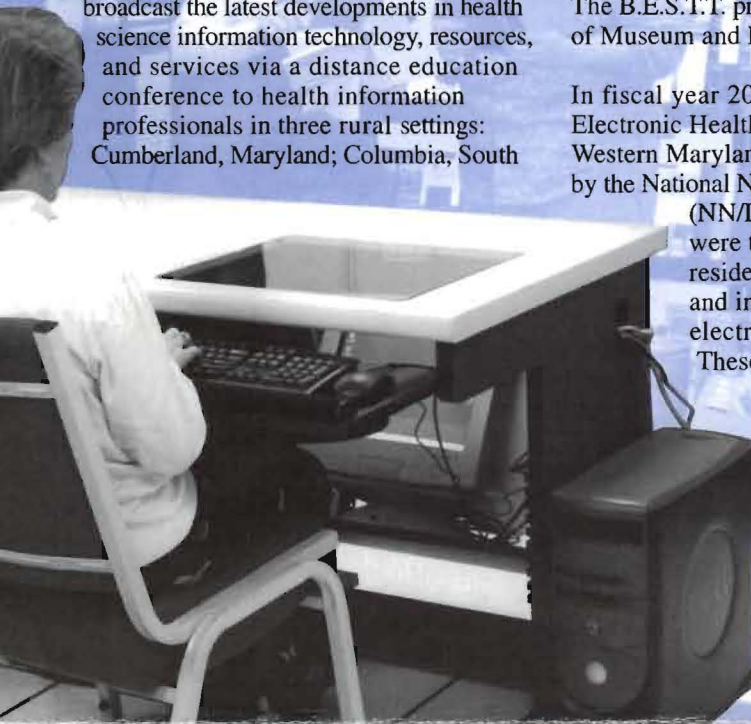
WMAHEC also submitted grants for a Medical Reserves Corps for disaster planning; bioterrorism training; nursing workforce development; the continuation of interdisciplinary training; intergenerational activities; and outreach to our underserved, uninsured, and underinsured citizens.

We sit at a table with a full plate in front of us, but that's what an AHEC is all about. We are "Stepping Forward," with an eye on the future, to continue meeting the needs of the communities we serve.

John Kenney
Chairperson, Board of Directors

Kery Hummel
Executive Director

Information



Remaining on the cutting edge, Western Maryland Area Health Education Center's (WMAHEC) Learning Resource Center (LRC) assisted rural health information professionals to become community leaders. The LRC, in partnership with the University of South Carolina, School of Medicine Library, developed a project called "Bringing Effective Skills and Technology Together" (B.E.S.T.T.). This program simultaneously broadcast the latest developments in health science information technology, resources, and services via a distance education conference to health information professionals in three rural settings: Cumberland, Maryland; Columbia, South

Carolina; and Wheeling, West Virginia. Presently underway, follow-up trainings with hands-on experience emphasize the use of best practices and critical thinking in selecting, evaluating, and utilizing resources. WMAHEC developed the B.E.S.T.T. Web site, which provides resources for health information professionals to assist their patrons with their health information needs, focusing on best practices and critical thinking. The B.E.S.T.T. project is funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

In fiscal year 2002, WMAHEC completed Electronic Health Information for the Public: Western Maryland InfoHealth, a project funded by the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NN/LM). The goals of this project were to assess Western Maryland residents' health information needs and improve their access to quality electronic health information. These goals were achieved by:

- Creating, implementing, then evaluating an online Health Information Needs Assessment;
- Training librarians and human service providers in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties to

utilize the National Library of Medicine's (NLM) resources, particularly PubMed and MEDLINEplus, the Western Maryland InfoHealth Web site, and techniques such as the reference interview;

- Publicizing the NLM and the National Network of Libraries of Medicine Southeastern Atlantic Region (NN/LM SE/A) services and resources;
- Developing and publishing the Western Maryland InfoHealth Web site which focuses on regionally available health resources as well as those provided by the NLM and NN/LM SE/A

Although this project has reached completion, WMAHEC will continue to update and maintain the Western Maryland InfoHealth Web site.

WMAHEC provided knowledge-based information consultation and services to Garrett County Memorial Hospital, Somerset Hospital Center for Health, and the Western Maryland Health System. By working closely with local regional, and national health information professionals, WMAHEC continued LRC outreach efforts. Staff from the Learning Resource Center also provided panel presentations on the above mentioned projects at the Medical Library Association's Annual Meeting Conference in Dallas, Texas, in June of 2002.

Development & Advocacy

Maryland Covering Kids

WMAHEC conducted outreach for publicly funded health coverage programs to uninsured and underinsured families in Allegany County through three pilot programs in FY02. For the past three years, WMAHEC has been coordinating the Western Maryland Pilot Program for Maryland Covering Kids funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Direct volunteer and staff support for the Western Maryland Covering Kids pilot program has come via WMAHEC infrastructure, community partners, Local Health Departments and Departments of Social Services, Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Maryland State Department of Human Resources, county libraries, the March of Dimes, and local outreach workers.

In FY02, WMAHEC leveraged additional funding to help support Maryland Covering Kids outreach through Reach Out Allegany and the Community Development Partnership (CDP) grants. The goals of these Allegany County initiatives included enhancing outreach to uninsured and underinsured families through recruitment, training, and support of ten outreach workers in targeted Allegany County communities. The outreach workers collected 1,248 *What happens when you or someone in your family gets sick?* surveys from February 15 through June 30, 2002. They also distributed 425 Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP) application packets. Reach Out Allegany is funded by the Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) through a separate grant to CHCS by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Community Development Partnership is funded by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH).

Outreach workers also participated in the Allegany County Community Access Program (CAP), distributing 687 CAP brochures county-wide and submitting 164 healthcare referrals for uninsured and underinsured adults, age 19-64. These referrals were often made for the parents, siblings, and grandparents of MCHP children, greatly enhancing overall family coverage. Allegany County CAP collaborates with the Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism and the Governor's Wellmobile. WMAHEC will continue to partner with Allegany CAP in the recruitment and training of Allegany CAP volunteers for fiscal year 2003.

Additional resources and financial support for MCHP/MCHP Premium outreach were possible through the Faith-based Outreach in Western Maryland, funded through Maryland Covering Kids and Allegany Outreach, a March of Dimes grant project. To fulfill faith-based outreach goals for 2002, WMAHEC joined forces with the Washington County faith-based community to facilitate MCHP programs in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties.

What Now?

Funded by the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, *What Now?* offered "stop gap" intervention, resources, education, and support for women diagnosed with breast cancer through the Western Maryland Health System (WMHS). Upon diagnosis, women were connected with a breast cancer survivor who would advocate for and share resources with her until she was connected with a traditional treatment center and support services in the community. Activities included a 24 hour a day/7 days a week service by "Sister Survivors," a web page of resources and services, sensitivity training for health care professionals and workshops and resources regarding complementary health options.

As a result of *What Now?*, The WMAHEC facilitated the following: low-income women in rural Western Maryland obtained support and information from the moment of diagnosis until treatment began and connections were made within the healthcare system; healthcare professionals became more sensitized on how to deliver the diagnosis and provide immediate crisis referral; the WMHS Wellness Center created a resource management system for the project; "Sister Survivors" was formed and began volunteering their time to breast cancer victims; WMAHEC designed and publicized a Web page of breast cancer victim resources and services; and a "Sister Survivor" volunteer created "Choosing Wellness During Breast Cancer," a compilation of health and wellness techniques for victims.



Healthy Reading

WMAHEC received funds from the Maryland Home & Community Care Foundation to coordinate Healthy Reading, a one-year project which linked literacy and health issues through 24 educational programs. Using volunteers trained in health literacy, participants conducted puppet presentations and readings for preschool children and parents in Allegany and Garrett counties. Programs were held in cooperation with Head Start, area libraries, and day care centers. At the inception of this project, 15 health professional volunteers were recruited and trained to become Healthy Reading puppeteers. 457 children and 148 adults participated in the program with 41 health and social service professionals participating. Project goals also included coordinating an interdisciplinary continuing education program for 23 area health professionals: Health Literacy: Can your patients understand the instructions you give them? Healthy Reading ran from June 30, 2001 through June 30, 2002.

Allegany Outreach

Funded by the Maryland Chapter March of Dimes, Allegany Outreach combines the versatility of WMAHEC with the direct service capacity of the Western Maryland Health System (WMHS), Maryland Cooperative Extension (MCE), Allegany County Library System (ACLS), and Radio Disney to support March of Dimes focus areas. WMAHEC began sponsoring a series of family-fun events that support positive pregnancy outcomes and early childhood health. These events are both fun-filled and educational. One WMAHEC staff member dons a "Chipper the MCHP Bear" costume to engage children and parents in event activities. Other WMAHEC staff or caucus members present a puppet show about healthy eating habits. During each event, the partners provide women of child bearing age with folders containing specific information related to the following: enrollment in Maryland Children's Health Program; availability of prenatal and perinatal services in Allegany County Maryland; importance of folic acid intake; and tobacco cessation services. Radio Disney markets and participates in the outreach events making use of its "On Location Street Team." ACLS distributes suggestions for developing literacy skills. The MCE reinforces healthy eating habits by extending its existing March of Dimes funded folic acid education to event participants and others. The WMHS houses a clinical dietitian at the Women's Resource Center (WRC) for four hours per week to counsel pregnant women. WMAHEC coordinates all grant activities and anticipates reaching approximately 2,000 women of childbearing age by the completion of the project.

Family Violence Council

In 2002, The Allegany County Family Violence Council, with the help of a full-time Coordinator accomplished the goal of moving forward in the campaign against family violence by 1) sponsoring trainings and educational events with nationally-recognized speakers, 2) creating innovative methods for community outreach, 3) advocating for statewide legislation to improve services for victims, 4) obtaining grant funding for local projects, 5) participating in numerous community awareness activities, 6) increasing active Council membership from 20 to 35 agencies, 7) investigating and pursuing a comprehensive data collection system, 8) launching a multi-disciplinary team of Council members and community professionals to attend Strangulation and Stalking conferences and 9) increasing the Family Violence Council's visibility and activity level within the community. The Family Violence Council is funded by the Violence Against Women Act through the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention.

Minority Outreach and Technical Assistance

WMAHEC concluded its second year as the sub-contractor for the state's Minority Outreach and Technical Assistance (MOTA) component of the Cigarette Restitution Fund Program (CRFP). As a MOTA vendor, WMAHEC provides support to the health departments in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties by facilitating minority involvement in local health planning and related activities in their communities in ways that ensure the reduction of smoking and the control of cancer. Outreach and technical assistance focus on helping groups, which have been targeted by the tobacco industry, to gain the skills and financial resources they need to participate in the state's network of community health coalitions (CHCs). Each county has both tobacco and cancer CHCs that plan the use of CRFP monies, and the state wants planning input from minorities and medically underserved to help eliminate disparities.

In FY02, WMAHEC provided assistance to all local health departments in Western Maryland, identified three minority community-based organizations to receive MOTA funds, facilitated MOTA mini-grant applications for five community based organizations, and conducted two community empowerment workshops for community-based organizations and local health departments.



Recruitment and Retention

Clinical Education

Seventy-eight students, representing 9 disciplines from 13 universities, colleges, and programs completed 585 weeks of clinical experience with 46 preceptors in Allegany, Garrett and Washington counties and nearby areas of West Virginia.

A Union Memorial Hospital resident completed an Internal Medicine rotation. Western Maryland Area Health Education Center (WMAHEC) served a University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) pediatric dental fellow with the Allegany County Health Department, a nuclear medicine technology student at Washington County Hospital, and three pre-med student AmeriCorps volunteers at Allegany Health Right.

The clinical education program added four preceptors: Ruth Dwyer, MD; Karin Forman, MD; Diane Romaine, DMD and Sotiere Savopoulos, MD. Area practitioners continued to share their knowledge and skills with students during site visits or "sub-rotations."

Collaboration with the Maryland AHEC program included medical preceptor training by Dr. David Stewart from the UMB, School of Medicine and surveying health departments and medical preceptors to identify a community health issue that students will be addressing during the next academic year.

Student Health Action And Recruitment Education

The WMAHEC's middle school health careers program, S.H.A.R.E., successfully expanded into Washington County, offering its first summer Health Careers Camp in Hagerstown. The camp included many health and career activities such as learning CPR, touring a hospital, and spending a day at a retirement center. A camp was once again held for Allegany/Garrett students in Frostburg. Both camps were the culminating activity for a year in which 1,973 students learned about health careers via classroom presentations and after-school programs. Senior center and adult day care center participants were treated to a Vintage Fashion Show in April which mobilized a multitude of community volunteers, including youth, college students and local residents to model clothes from the past. It was a great way for the middle school participants, who planned the event and served as models, to learn more about the elderly and the services they need.

Health Careers Opportunity Program

Now in the third year of a five-year grant, the Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP), a partnership between West Virginia

University (WVU) and WMAHEC, provides educational programming that prepares students for the academic environment of health professions schools. Participating students gain knowledge, skills, support and abilities to enter and graduate from post-secondary schools offering careers in allied health, medicine, dentistry and pharmacy then return to practice in the Central Appalachian region. The preliminary education portion of the project is conducted simultaneously on the WVU and Frostburg State University campuses. Students spend 6-weeks in a summer, residential academic program where basic foundations in biology, writing, chemistry and math are enhanced. Throughout the program students visit regional hospital and medical institutions, speak with practicing professionals and participate in community events. Funding is provided through a grant received from the Bureau of Health Professions.



2002 Preceptors

Matthew Beckwith, MD
Anthony Bollino, MD
Brian Bonham, MD
James Bosley, MD
J. Nelson Brouillette, MD
Alice Butner, PT
Vincent Cantone, MD
Thomas Chappell, MD
K. Jill Ciccarelli, MD
Robert Coughlin, MD
James Crable, RPh
Amy DeMay, CTRS
Charles Downs, PharmD
Ruth Dwyer, MD
Reed Erickson, MD
W. Raul Felipa, MD

Karin Forman, MD
Gene Gall, DMin, MDiv, MA
Martin Gallagher, MD
Rosario (Gonzaga) Borromeo, MD
Matthew Hahn, MD
Gerard Herpel, PD
Maria Hopkins, PT
Jesse Jalazo, MD
Margaret Kaiser, MD
Audrey Kennedy, MS, PT
Shiv Khanna, MD
William Lamm, MD
Michael Levitas, MD
John Loar, PT
Jose Loveria, MD
Stanley Matyasik, DO

Elmaslias Menchavez, MD
Mary Money, MD
Doug Moore, PT
Nancy Robertson, OTR/L
Diane Romaine, DMD
Darleen Russell, PT
Sotiere Savopoulos, MD
Husam Semaan, MD
Huma Shakil, MD
John W. Staggers, III, PT
Michael Staggers, MS, PT
Jerry C. Stewart, PD
John Stuckey, MS, OTR/L
Penny Ziegler, PT



Rural Interdisciplinary Health Promotion

The Rural Interdisciplinary Health Promotion (RIHP) project, having completed its second of three years, has met and exceeded all of its FY02 objectives. RIHP develops academic interdisciplinary training modules and service learning trainings that can be integrated into existing courses. Concepts are based on the premise that preventive healthcare is well served through a coordinated, comprehensive approach that includes interdisciplinary health professional teams. These teams need diverse skills and competencies and need to be trained to practice disease prevention and health promotion collaboratively with other professionals.

Students and faculty from 5 different academic institutions work in conjunction to increase knowledge of and promote interdisciplinary practices. Teams are diverse, incorporating medical technology, occupational therapy, social work, physical therapy, public health, respiratory therapy, and nursing. In FY02, new service learning partnerships with the Parish Nursing Program of the Western Maryland Health System and the Allegany County YMCA summer camps enabled student teams to provide health promotion services to 89 adults and youth. Through team discussions, health professions students gave youth participants the opportunity to learn about health careers. The grant's second interdisciplinary online module, Stress Management, was posted

at www.allconet.org/ahec/rihp for use by health profession's faculty in existing courses. Eighty-one students used interdisciplinary module components in 5 courses this year. Information on the project's curricula and service learning trainings was presented at 6 national conferences in the United States and reached an international level as a poster presentation was made at a conference in Sweden.

Geriatric Assessment Interdisciplinary Team

The year seven Geriatric Assessment Interdisciplinary Team (GAIT) projects provided interdisciplinary geriatric care training in Western Maryland for 59 health professions students representing Gerontology, Law, Medical and Research Technology, Medicine, Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Psychology, Recreation Therapy, and Sociology. Faculty at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, Towson University, and Frostburg State University recommended students for participation.

Geriatric care sites in Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington counties hosted GAIT projects on: Health Care Decisions and the Elderly, Community Based Hospice Care, Geriatric Rehabilitation, Assisted Living in the Continuum of Long Term Care, Quality Activity Programs: Maximizing the Physical and

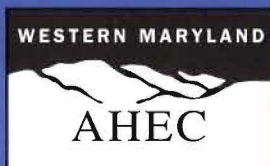


Nursing Outreach

The University of Maryland School of Nursing has operated two off-campus sites in Western Maryland for over 20 years. In Western Maryland, outreach efforts are based at WMAHEC, with classes offered at both the Hagerstown Center of Frostburg State University. WMAHEC contributes significantly to nursing education in Western Maryland. Practical contributions, including classroom and office space as well as telephone, video, and copying services, enable the program to have a home base. Equally important is the fact that personnel in the learning resource center and office are immensely helpful in ensuring that students have access to interactive video, computer, and a full range of library services.

Both the RN to BSN/MS option and some graduate specialties are offered in region. The RN to BSN/MS track is available in its entirety at both locations. Registered nurse students may also take advantage of an on-line alternative, which allows them to complete part or all of their undergraduate education through the School of Nursing's web-based program. In 2002, 13 students completed their baccalaureate degrees at the two off-campus locations. The graduate program currently offers concentrations in the

Family Nurse Practitioner Program, Nursing Administration and a combined MS/MBA degree program with Frostburg State University. There are currently 9 local Family Nurse Practitioner students who are slated to graduate at the end of 2003. In 2004, the University System of Maryland plans to open a facility in Hagerstown. That facility may allow for a wider range of graduate options in the area.



WMAHEC thanks its many partner organizations for a great year of service to the community. United in working toward quality healthcare in the rural region, WMAHEC looks forward to continued collaborations with these partners in future endeavors.



Cognitive Functioning of Elderly Persons, and Leaving the Nursing Home: Rehabilitation and Discharge Planning.

The GAIT projects are funded by a University System of Maryland Redeployment Grant directed by the Geriatrics and Gerontology Education and Research (GGEAR) Program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore.

Geriatrics and Gerontology Education and Research

WMAHEC continues its collaboration with the Geriatrics and Gerontology Education and Research (GGEAR) program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore to provide local educational activities and resources in geriatrics.

Five continuing education programs in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington counties were supported by GGEAR mini-grants. Topics included Diabetes, Mental Health and Dementia, Best Practices in Dementia, and Senior Housing Options. A total of 311 area health care professionals, senior care providers, and seniors had an opportunity to acquire new knowledge and skills, and meet certification and job requirements.

The Aging Resources Web page was updated. A link to careers in aging was added to the Health Connections Web site. Middle school students and Health Careers Opportunity Program (HCOP) students explored geriatric health careers and participated in activities with older adults.

A survey of volunteer opportunities and speakers about geriatric issues and careers at agencies in Western Maryland was completed and will be used to expand geriatric opportunities for students participating in WMAHEC programs.

Core Funding

Maryland Statewide Medical Education & Training System

University of Maryland

Donald E Wilson, MD – Dean,
University of Maryland School of
Medicine

Claudia Baquet, MD, MPH – Associate
Dean for Policy and Planning, University
of Maryland School of Medicine; Project
Director, Maryland AHEC Program

Malinda B. Orlin, Ph. D. – Dean,
Graduate School and Vice President for
Academic Affairs University of Maryland

Maryland Department of Health and Mental
Hygiene

Georges Benjamin, MD – Secretary,
Maryland Department of Health and
Mental Hygiene