



Swatches

Connecting Rural Iowa

August 2013

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by Fred Eastman, IRHA President

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Iowa Mission of Mercy

The Iowa Rural Health Association's mission statement adheres to the commitment to strengthen health systems for rural residents and communities through leadership, education, advocacy, public awareness and networking. We provide avenues for Iowans to be informed on changes and developments affecting the health and healthcare of rural Iowans. As we all know, there are many changes occurring right now that affect healthcare. Through this newsletter, website, webinars and our annual meeting, information is made available for you to glean knowledge on healthcare trends. We encourage our members to network with others. This is evident through our collaboration with the Iowa Association of Rural Health Clinics in our joint annual meeting. This year's theme is "Celebrate Living in Rural Iowa". Please plan to attend. The meeting will be held Thursday, November 21 at the Animal Rescue League of Iowa. Watch the IRHA website <http://www.iaruralhealth.org> or your email for more information.

As president of the board I get to work with some great people who offer their time, knowledge and expertise to make this organization helpful to you. Working with the board adds to your knowledge in areas you may not have expected. You receive so much.

One of IRHA's goals is to provide opportunities for leadership

Protect Your
Groundwater Day -
September 10



Thank you for your IRHA Membership!

Benefits of being an IRHA member:

1. Health advocacy with a rural perspective
2. Access to resources through the IRHA and NRHA websites and email distribution lists
3. Networking opportunities with professionals from diverse disciplines
4. Input opportunities for State and Federal Policy issues
5. Discounted rates for Annual Conference
6. Opportunities for leadership development

development through active membership involvement. Now is your chance. Due to some life and career changes there are a couple of board seats open. We are looking for people willing to step in to fill the remainder of the board members' terms. These would be appointed positions. You could contact Melissa Primus at 515-282-8192 or any member currently serving on the board of directors to express your interest or for more information. I want to thank you for considering taking a role on the board.

Innovative Rural Medication Programs

Programs developed to connect rural Iowans with free and low cost medications were featured at the 2013 National Rural Health Association's Annual Conference in Louisville, KY. Iowa Rural Health Association members, Jon Rosmann (Director, Iowa Prescription Drug Corporation) Gloria Vermie (Director, Iowa State Office of Rural Health) and Dr. Bernard Sorofman (Professor and Executive Associate Dean, University of Iowa College of Pharmacy) presented a general session highlighting Iowa's Drug Donation Repository Program and the Iowa Medication Voucher Program which connects released offenders with behavioral health medications. Both programs have emerged as national models to efficiently connect uninsured and underinsured persons in rural areas with free medications.

Through the Drug Donation Repository Program, Iowans in need of assistance can receive medications and medical supplies for little or no cost. Donations are received from long-term care dispensing pharmacies, medical facilities, and individuals. The medications and supplies are inspected by a pharmacist, distributed to medical facilities or pharmacies, and dispensed to Iowans in need. Since the program was established in 2007, over 35,000 Iowans have received over \$8.3 million dollars in donated medications and medical supplies.

The Iowa Department of Corrections Behavioral Health Medication Voucher Program was launched in April 2013. Through this initiative, individuals released from one of Iowa's nine prisons can access up to 90 days of behavioral health medications at no cost. Connecting offenders with free behavioral health medications will increase the individual's ability to establish a safe lifestyle outside of Iowa's prison system.

For more information on these programs, or to see how these resources can be leveraged to serve patients in your area,

New IRHA Member Benefit!

IRHA is excited to announce a new benefit for our members - an Online Career Center.

IRHA members looking to fill open positions are now able to post employment opportunities to the IRHA website at no cost. Also, IRHA members looking for positions are able to post their qualifications and type of employment they are seeking at no cost.

This service is also available to non-IRHA members for a nominal fee.

To take advantage of this new member benefit, visit

www.iaruralhealth.org

and click the "Career Center" link on the main menu.

Protect Your Ground Water Day - September 10

Protect Your Ground Water Day is a time when the National Ground Water

please visit www.iowapdc.org or call 1-866-282-5817.



Iowa Health and Wellness Plan: Iowa's Medicaid Expansion Compromise

The June 2012 U.S. Supreme Court decision on the Affordable Care Act allows each state to decide whether or not to expand Medicaid eligibility for all adults up to 133% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL). For states that choose to expand eligibility they will receive federal Medicaid matching payments for the cost of services to the newly covered populations at the following rates: 100% in 2014, 2015, and 2016; 95% in 2017; 94% in 2018; 93% in 2019; and 90% thereafter.

In late May, the Legislature and Governor Branstad reached an agreement on how the state will expand Medicaid benefits to nearly 150,000 Iowans. This agreement is known as the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan. Beginning January 1, 2014, the plan will cover all Iowans age 19-64 with income up to and including 133 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.

The Iowa Health and Wellness Plan will provide coverage for those currently covered through the IowaCare program, which will expire December 31, 2013.

The Iowa Health and Wellness Plan consists of two elements:

- 1) Iowa Wellness Plan covers adults age 19-64 with incomes up to and including 100% FPL and who are not otherwise eligible for Medicaid. A comprehensive set of health services equivalent to the State Employee Health Benefit Package will be provided to these individuals. The

Association (NGWA) and its partners educate members of the public about what they can do to preserve and protect groundwater to meet human and environmental needs. This is an important message-not just for household well owners who rely on privately owned and managed water wells for safe drinking water-but also for people on public water systems whose daily habits have an impact on groundwater quality.



Iowa Wellness Plan will utilize the existing Medicaid provider network.

2) Iowa Marketplace Choice Plan covers adults age 19-64 with incomes of 101%-133% FPL and who are not otherwise eligible for Medicaid. This is a premium assistance program through which members will select a commercial health plan through the new Health Benefits Marketplace. The commercial plan will provide coverage for comprehensive health services, at least equivalent to the State Employee Health Benefit Package.

The State is required to submit two 1115 waiver applications to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) that outline details of both plans. Iowa Medicaid Enterprise (IME) held two public hearings in late July on the waivers and accepted written comments through August 15, 2013.

A summary of the both plans can be found by clicking here. The draft waiver applications are available on IME's website at <http://www.ime.state.ia.us/>.

IRHA will continue to monitor progress of these waivers and will provide additional information to IRHA members on the rollout of the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan as more information is made available.

Health Insurance Marketplace: Educating Consumers on New Insurance Options

Beginning October 1, 2013, millions of Americans will be able to find health insurance that fits their budgets and meets their needs, with less hassle, at the new Health Insurance Marketplace, a part of the health care law. The Marketplace will offer a whole new way to shop for coverage that will provide access to better options and better health.

Now is the time for consumers to get ready, and the best place to go to prepare for the Marketplace, to learn about what it is, how to get covered, and more, is the updated website, www.HealthCare.gov. The website now has new resources, videos, and checklists to help everyone prepare for the Marketplace.

Starting on October 1, eligible individuals, families, and small businesses will be able to go to one place to search for health coverage options, to get accurate information in easy to understand language, and to make apples-to-apples

comparisons before they make a plan choice.

No matter where they live, Americans will be able to find health plans on the Marketplace that cover a comprehensive set of benefits and they cannot be denied coverage based on a pre-existing condition. Coverage starts as soon as January 1, 2014.

Additionally, with the opening of a new toll free call center, consumers can now call 1-800-318-2596 to speak with a trained customer service representative 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Representatives will be available in English and Spanish, and there will be a language line to assist callers in over 150 additional languages.

Beginning October 1, HealthCare.gov will be the place to go to directly access the Health Insurance Marketplace. Consumers will only need to fill out a single application to choose from the health plans available in their area; to learn if they qualify for programs like Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program; or to find out if they qualify for lower costs on monthly premiums or out-of-pocket costs. Assistance, including online web chat, at the toll free number, or through trained, unbiased, professionals who will be working in communities, will also be available.

Iowa Builds Marketplace Education and Enrollment Infrastructure

Here in Iowa efforts are underway to build a network of organizations and individuals who can help assist consumers with understanding their options and helping them enroll in new coverage. This network of Navigators, Certified Application Counselors, and other assisters will be available.

Navigators will receive federal funding to perform education and enrollment assistance. This is a competitive grant application. Applications were due in June and awards are scheduled to be announced in mid-August. Navigators are required to meet certain standards, will complete several hours of federal and state training, and will be certified to provide assistance to consumers.

Certified Application Counselors (CACs) include a wide range of organizations, such as community health centers, other health care providers, hospitals, local governments, and non-profit organization, with experience providing social services to their

communities. CACs are also required to complete several hours of training and be certified to provide assistance. If you are interested in learning more about becoming a CAC organization go to <http://marketplace.cms.gov/help-us/cac-apply.html>.

Once the navigators and certified application counselors are in place, they will be listed on www.healthcare.gov as local resources. IRHA will continue to keep our members updated as this information is made available.

Individuals and organizations may also become Champions for Coverage to help spread the word about new insurance coverage options. More information about becoming a Champion for Coverage can be found at <http://marketplace.cms.gov/help-us/champion.html>.

I-TABS

By: Susan Smith, ssmith7@dhs.state.ia.us; 515-438-3309

Iowa's Technical Assistance and Behavior Supports (I-TABS) is a program whose purpose is to support the development and delivery of technical assistance and behavior supports to stakeholders and service providers supporting Iowans who are Medicaid eligible.

I-TABS services are funded by the Iowa Department of Human Services, and therefore, are free-of-charge to the recipient.

I-TABS services are provided in a variety of formats including trainings, consultations, and building behavioral infrastructure activities. Training topics include, but are not limited to: Behavior Analysis Certification; Reducing Aggression: The Power of Reinforcement; Autism Spectrum Disorders; Autism and Sexuality; Non Pharmacological Interventions; Psychotropic Medication Advocacy; Validation, a Caregiver's Friend; Why People Hurt Themselves; a variety of mental illness diagnoses, and others. Topic suggestions/requests are welcome.

Stakeholders or service providers can also request a behavioral consultation. I-TABS will either assist the stakeholder/service provider to develop a behavior plan for someone they are supporting or provide a peer review of a plan that is currently in place but not yielding the desired outcome. I-TABS is also available to review systemic behavioral procedures within a program, agency, office, hospital, etc.

As Iowa's Mental Health Redesign project unfolds, the newly formed regions throughout the state will provide local

behavioral services. I-TABS has, and will continue to facilitate the development of local behavioral infrastructure, especially in rural areas by increasing awareness of Behavior Analysis certification and collaborating with stakeholders, service providers, and regions.

I-TABS is based at the Woodward Resource Center, in Woodward, Iowa. Services are provided via phone, email, and on-site meetings. The program's Director, Susan Smith, has provided both individual and group counseling at the Woodward Resource Center, as well as provided behavioral consultation throughout Iowa to agencies and families who support individuals with various levels of intellectual abilities, mental illness and/or an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Susan is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor and a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA). She can be contacted by email at ssmith7@dhs.state.ia.us or by calling 515/438-3309.

Iowa Mission of Mercy

by Barb Blough, Iowa Dental Association

As I am writing this, many of you are enjoying the Iowa State Fair. You're munching on something fried that you would "never normally eat" and wandering around the Varied Industries Building looking at a multitude of products that you just "have to have," only to forget about them as soon as you hit the Midway. As I sit here, I'm thinking about what will be happening in that same Varied Industries Building in two short months: the Iowa Mission of Mercy.

On October 18 & 19, 2013, the Varied Industries Building will be transformed into a huge, field dental clinic. Over 100 dental chairs will be ready and waiting for the over 1,400 patients that we expect will come to Iowa MOM to receive free oral health care. Volunteers will be bustling around making sure patients get where they need to go for their particular treatment. A child care center will be fully staffed to take care of the little ones who will spend the majority of their day waiting for their relatives. Interpreters will be assisting patients from many different backgrounds communicate with dental professionals during treatment. The Salvation Army will be busy preparing meals for volunteers each day and providing hot coffee to patients waiting in line outside the building overnight. And many people who face barriers to receiving oral health care will leave Iowa MOM just a bit healthier. Patient stories consistently show they cannot afford dental care because many don't have insurance and, for those who do, their insurance is little or no help.

Since 2008, the Iowa Mission of Mercy has provided over \$4.5 million in free oral health care to almost 7,000 people. This is a huge accomplishment. The dedication of the dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, medical personnel and people from all walks of life give Iowa MOM the momentum to continue year after year. And there is no expectation that the need for free oral health care will be going away soon.

So we will be there, bright eyed and ready at 6 a.m. to greet those people who need our help and hope they leave smiling, some for the first time in years! If you want to experience that great feeling of helping others, volunteer for the Iowa Mission of Mercy October 18 or 19th. We guarantee you'll have a smile on your face too!



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