

Healthy Signs



UNIVERSITY of
ROCHESTER
MEDICAL CENTER

National Center for Deaf Health Research April 2010

Mission of NCDHR:

To promote health and prevent disease in the Deaf and hard of hearing populations through community-based participatory research.

SAVE THE DATE

Deaf Health Talk

Skin Cancers and Lesions

May 20, 2010
7 pm to 8:30 pm
At RRCD

Check NCDHR Website for more details

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SOPHE-PRC Joint 2010 Conference: A Recap

Members of NCDHR and its partners attended the first joint meeting of the Society of Public Health Education (SOPHE) and the CDC Prevention Research Centers (PRCs) on April 7 - 9 in Atlanta, Georgia.

The conference theme, "Advocate, Communicate & Translate to Enhance Research and Practice," was influenced by "pervasive and disturbing differences in morbidity and mortality among various sectors of our population." In other words, health disparities, which are higher rates of diseases occurring in more diverse communities than the general population, have become a national public health priority.

Matthew Starr, MPH gave an illuminating



presentation on how Deaf Americans would be better informed during public health emergencies by accessing both videos with captions and ASL videos in the Internet.

Nancy Chin, MPH, PhD and **Jess Cuculick, MSW, MSSEd**, displayed a poster describing a pioneering qualitative study of



how Deaf women receive information about breastfeeding. Several conference attendees stopped by to view their beautifully composed poster entitled, "Deaf Mothers and Breastfeeding: Assessing Their Knowledge and Practices Through Focus Group Discussions."

The conference was an enlightening experience for **John T. Reid, BSW**, the current Chair of the Deaf Health Community Committee (DHCC). The conference enabled him to see the impact by public health practitioners and educators in improving the health of communities through health promotion and disease prevention. Equally important, community-based partners and advocates play a vital role in all efforts to



eliminate health disparities in diverse communities. J.T. represented DHCC at the meeting of the National Community Committee (NCC). NCC will soon be deciding the winning bid for the 2011 NCC Annual Meeting between community committees of the University of South Florida PRC and the University of Rochester (NCDHR) PRC.

Steven Barnett, MD, Associate Director of NCDHR, participated in the PRC annual business meeting. There are several national committees run by both academicians and community partners from 37 PRCs.



Each committee gave a report. The highlight was a speech from a key legislative staffer from the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) who spoke about an important piece of the recently enacted federal health care reform act. According to ASPH, \$500 million for prevention, wellness and public health activities will be allotted this year to various public health agencies and programs, possibly including PRC programs. This line item funding will grow to \$2 billion annually by 2015.

Philip Zazove, MD, a professor of Family Medicine at the University of Michigan and a member of the NCDHR's External Advisory Committee, was one of the plenary speakers who discussed how to achieve healthy equity by advocating, communicating and translating during the closing remarks of the conference.



Alicia Heim, MPH, Project Officer from the PRC Office, who oversees some of the PRCs and their activities, including NCDHR, took opportunities to meet with all members of NCDHR throughout the conference.

Select presentations from the conference can be viewed at
www.sophe.org/2010midyearsessions.cfm

NCDHR Happenings

After a short hiatus, the Online Community Resources Directory is now being constructed. This directory, which was modeled after the old MCAHI Directory, will be a new addition to the current NCDHR website as a free community service to the Deaf community. Any agency or program serving deaf and/or hard of hearing consumers can apply to be listed in this online directory. There will be at least 12 categories built into the database: Advocacy, Communication, Demographics, Education, Employment, Health, Housing, Legal, Recreation, Transportation, Worship and Miscellaneous. Each listing will contain information on how this particular agency or program is accessible to deaf and/or hard of hearing people such as signing staff, videophones, interpreting services provided and much more. For more information or to be listed, contact

NCDHR at 585-286-2721 VP or e-mail at ncdhr@urmc.rochester.edu.

The Outreach Work Group (OWG) of the Deaf Weight-Wise Research team is raising awareness about the obesity epidemic and how NCDHR will be working on a research project that promotes healthy weight behaviors. Members of the OWG are **Deirdre Schlehofer, Mike McKee, Scott Smith** and **Matthew Starr**. There will be a series of ASL presentations throughout the Rochester area in the next few months (see the slide presentation posted on the NCDHR website at www.urmc.edu/ncdhr). If your organization, church, temple, or club is interested in an hour-long presentation to your members, please contact NCDHR at 585-286-2721 or e-mail at ncdhr@urmc.rochester.edu.

Deaf Health Talk (DHT) is nearing its goal of presenting 10 health topics in American Sign Language. On May 20, the health topic will be about skin cancer and lesions, a topic that was voted by the audience during the April's DHT at RRCD. This will be the 8th topic presented so far. DHT is sponsored by Deaf Health Community Committee and Rochester Recreation Club for the Deaf Educational



Awareness Program (R.E.A.P). **Mike McKee, MD**, a member of the DHCC, successfully secured a grant from the Center for Community Health. In June, two ophthalmologists will be presenting, "Healthy Eyes." Slide presentations from all health topics are posted in NCDHR website. For more information about future Deaf Health Talks, check out www.urmc.edu/ncdhr.

Interview with John T. Reid: DHCC Member since 2008



Why did you want to become involved? As an African-American who is aware of health disparities within the Deaf community, and

especially Deaf Black people, I wanted to participate in efforts to improve health in my community. We have a right to good health just like everyone else! Research is a long-term process and I am committed to be involved as long as I can.

What have you learned so far?

I realized that without the DHCC's participation, research to improve the health of the Deaf community may not be so effective. We work side-by-side with the researchers for the most effective research outcomes. Understanding community-based participatory research is vital. To try to absorb a large amount of information about the research enterprise (NCDHR, PRC, NCC and NIH) is like trying to learn all the materials from

grades K through 12 all at once! (laugh)

Does DHCC benefit you?

Yes, the fact that I am actively engaged in community-based participatory research (CBPR) with NCDHR will have a positive impact on my own health as well as for the Deaf community as a whole. I have enjoyed opportunities to attend conferences that focus on improving health of communities and to share that knowledge with members of the DHCC.

How do you think the DHCC is helping with the mission of NCDHR?

By working closely with NCDHR, we have enabled the center to become a place for other interested researchers to become more culturally and linguistically sensitive to the Deaf community. This would lead to improved health services for Deaf patients.

What do you hope to see in the future? I would like to see more variety of research questions and

topics being studied. And of course, I would like to see more opportunities for Deaf people to choose public health or medicine as careers.

How can the Deaf community become more involved with the DHCC?

I believe we need to do more to further educate our community about what is research. We can explain the concepts of research in our preferred language, ASL. Once they understand the concepts, more Deaf people will want to join DHCC.

Any other thoughts?

I just participated in a conference call about CBPR today which helped me realize that DHCC would benefit immensely from more CBPR training. That way, we can become much stronger in advocating for better Deaf health research for our community. We also need to become efficient documenting our ideas and thoughts, since we are experts living in our community.