Mission of NCDHR:
To promote health and prevent disease in the Deaf population through community-participatory research.

Save the Dates!
April 29 - May 1, 2008
CDC Site Visit
May 19 - 20, 2008
Third Annual Meeting of the NCDHR’s External Advisory Committee (EAC)

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Deaf Health Survey Update
Deirdre Schlehofer, M.Phil.

Good news! The Deaf Health Survey will be launched mid-February. Since the summer of 2007, the research team conducted and completed 32 in-depth cognitive interviews by the end of December. The purpose of the interviews was to learn from diverse Deaf participants about their perspectives and reactions to the health survey on the computer screen (also known as interface).

Questions were asked of the survey-takers such as:
Why did you pick a particular ASL model?
Did you understand the questions?
What medical terms are not familiar to you?
How can we help you understand the survey better?

The collected responses are an important part of an on-going review in order to improve the survey. Many committee members and community-based contractors have worked tirelessly to make the complexities of the interface more workable. The University of Rochester’s RSRB (Research Subjects Review Board), charged with protecting the rights and welfare of the study volunteers, is reviewing all materials. Once approved, the health survey will be released soon.

The survey will display videos in ASL, English-like sign language and captioning. Most of all, thank you for your input and support of NCDHR.

Deaf Health Survey interface. Patrick Graybill is one of the six sign models that will appear on the interface.

Filming of the Deaf Health Survey at RIT.

Survey will be conducted in strict confidentiality at NCDHR and at some Deaf organizations.

Messages from NCDHR Leadership:

Steven Barnett, MD, Associate Director
Welcome to this edition of Healthy Signs, the NCDHR newsletter. This issue highlights recent accomplishments of NCDHR and our partners. The newsletter also describes the progress of our research team: DHCC members, researchers and staff are working together to create the Deaf Health Survey. Soon we will learn from Deaf people about the important health issues in the Deaf community. Look for more information about the Deaf Health Survey on our website, or contact NCDHR by VP or e-mail. Also, you can add your name to the NCDHR contact list, and one of our staff can contact you about NCDHR research. The Deaf Health Survey is almost here!

Julia Aggas, MS, DHCC Chair
“Spread the word!” The Deaf Health Survey will prove to be highly beneficial to the Deaf communities. For decades, public health has overlooked Deaf people who communicate primarily in ASL. The health surveys are done by telephone, which is inaccessible for most Deaf persons. The survey, which will be totally confidential, will be shown in ASL, English-like sign language and captioning will be accessible for all. Once we obtain the data, we can then find out what health disparities exist in the Deaf community and develop culturally and linguistically appropriate intervention programs to reduce or eliminate health disparities. “Spread the word!” to your Deaf relatives, friends and co-workers!
**NCDHR Open House**

Open House visitors packed NCDHR offices and hallways.

**NCDHR Happenings**

**NCDHR’s First Open House**

Susan Demers Postlethwait, MS

NCDHR had a successful and fun-filled open house on November 16, 2007 at Corporate Woods. Visitors, both adults and children from the Deaf community packed the offices and hallways (see photos left). Besides our awesome Italian-style buffet feast, visitors were drawn to the first ever demo of the Deaf Health Survey. Tours of NCDHR’s Deaf-friendly offices and meeting rooms were proudly guided by NCDHR’s full time staff, Susan Demers Postlethwait, MS, NCDHR Coordinator, Deirdre Schlehofer, M.Phil., Research Coordinator and Matthew Starr, MPH, Senior Instructor, members of the Deaf Health Community Committee and NCDHR researchers. Visitors also had opportunities to socialize as they saw their friends and met new people. Children were busy jumping ropes given out by NCDHR to promote their wellness.

**Deaf Elderly Life History Initiative**

Nancy Chin, PhD, Steve DeBottis, Colleen Pouliot, MS, Sally Taylor, MA and Tracy Washington, BS. NCDHR organizational support will be provided by Susan Demers Postlethwait, MS and Matthew Starr, MPH.

Steven Barnett, MD, Interim Associate Director and Julia Aggas, MS, Chair of DHCC, gave opening remarks to visitors, welcoming them to the nation’s first community-based participatory research center that focuses primarily on ASL communities.

For those who missed our first open house, we hope to schedule another one in the near future!

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Steven Barnett, MD and Deirdre Schlehofer, M.Phil. will serve as medical and linguistic consultants, respectively.

Let’s hope that we do get the grant!