

Healthy Signs



UNIVERSITY of
ROCHESTER
MEDICAL CENTER

National Center for Deaf Health Research June/July 2009

Mission of NCDHR:

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

Save the Dates!

**Deaf Youth Sports Day
Saturday,
Aug. 8, 2009**

**Deaf Strong Hospital
Friday,
Aug. 28, 2009**

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Visiting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

On June 9 and 10, **Tom Pearson, MD, MPH, PhD**, along with a 10-member team from the NCDHR and the Deaf Health Community Committee, were invited to present a summary of the Center's research on determinants of health risks in Deaf populations at the CDC's Prevention Research Centers Program (PRC) in Atlanta, GA. While at the CDC, both the NCDHR team and researchers from the CDC's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities and its Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program took opportunities to engage in an exchange of information and perspectives for future research possibilities.

In his opening remarks during the first day, Dr. Pearson raised several thought-provoking questions for the audience's considerations.



"Is overall health status attained in adulthood expected to be different for children born deaf compared to hearing children?" Dr. Pearson asked, "Can early interventions in deaf children prevent poor health outcomes as adults?" His remarks were followed by a series of noteworthy accounts by NCDHR and DHCC presenters for the remainder of the 2-day visit.

On Wednesday, the team arrived at the Tom Harkin Center for Global Communication on the CDC's main campus for an closed-circuit televised webinar (Senator Tom Harkin has a Deaf brother and was one of the sponsors of the landmark Americans with Disabilities Act). The presentations were shown with real-time captioning. This was the first of an on-going series of presentations sponsored by the PRC.

The NCDHR presenters summarized numerous topics related to an overall theme,



"Working with the Deaf Community to Identify Health Priorities." Some of the topics are listed here: **Matthew Starr, MPH** gave pointers on how to ensure an accessible meeting when both Deaf and hearing people work together and **Jess Cuculick, MSW, MSSEd**, described the importance of cultivating on-going partnerships with the Deaf Community.

Scott Smith, MD, MPH and **Michael McKee, MD**, Preventive Cardiology Fellows, discussed about the Youth Risk Behavior Survey and Deaf focus groups about cardiovascular knowledge, respectively.

Tamala David, RN, FNP focused on what was learned from a college health survey while **Nancy Chin, MPH, PhD** shared recommendations for improved communications gleaned from an ethnographic study that utilized what is called the Rapid Assessment Procedure.

Robert Pollard, PhD outlined the process of adapting English to ASL and commented that the Translation Workgroup, comprised of both NCDHR researchers and DHCC members, produced outstanding results.

Then, **Deirdre Schlehofer, EdD, MPhil**, shared findings from the Deaf Health Survey, especially in the area of Inter-Personal Violence (IPV), and how the research has led to further community-based collaborations with interested organizations for future research and service endeavors. As one of the core projects of NCDHR, **Steven Barnett, MD**, Associate Director of (Continued on Page 2)

CDC Visit (cont'd)

NCDHR, reported some of the survey findings from the Deaf Health Survey.

Kim Kelstone, CI/CT, NCDHR Staff Interpreter, coordinated interpreting



services throughout the entire visit, teaming with local interpreters.

The team then fielded questions from a live audience as well as from other CDC facilities elsewhere through webinar connections.

Matthew Starr, NCDHR Communication Team Leader, noted, "We found that the CDC possesses an enormous wealth of information and expertise that would serve as an excellent technical

assistance resource for its PRCs, including NCDHR."

"This was an excellent opportunity for the CDC to gain better understanding of Deaf citizens' health statuses and concerns," concluded Dr. Pearson. "We have created several possibilities to work closely with the CDC to expand our research goals to improve the health of the culturally Deaf community."

National External Advisory Committee's Annual Meeting at NCDHR

Members of the NCDHR's National External Advisory Committee (NEAC) visited NCDHR on June 29 and 30. The purpose of NEAC is to advise NCDHR from a national perspective.

In attendance were: **T. Alan Hurwitz, EdD** (NTID), **Senda Benaissa, MPH** (Gallaudet Research Institute), **Nancy Bloch, MS** (NAD), **Marcia Dugan, MS** (HLAA), **David Ebert, MD** (Mt. Sinai Hospital's Deaf Access Program, Chicago), **Ken Levinson, CPA** (AG Bell), and **Philip Zazove, MD** (University of Michigan). **Pamela Lloyd-Ogoke, MS** (North Carolina's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation) was unable to attend due to a prior commitment.

NCDHR faculty and DHCC leaders gave summarized reports of accomplishments during the first 5 years of grant period. Outcomes and findings from numerous studies, including its core research project, the Deaf Health Survey, were presented.

The NEAC members were

especially excited about the emerging "educational pipeline" within NCDHR. An educational pipeline is an extra effort to encourage young Deaf students to choose their future studies and careers in the fields of healthcare and research. These students are recruited through networking with several nearby schools and colleges. At NCDHR, the students are matched with mentors and given opportunities to gain experience and awareness about public health.

NCDHR also invited an expert on Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) to the annual meeting. **Rogério Pinto, PhD** from Columbia University's School of Social Work, was retained to serve as a consultant to NCDHR for the next funding cycle. Dr. Pinto had positive comments about NCDHR's strong dedication to maintain the organizing principle of CBPR. Further research on collaborations and partnerships was one of his recommendations.



At the conclusion of the annual meeting, T. Alan Hurwitz, NEAC Chair, best summarized the outcome of the first five years of NCDHR grant in one word, "Transformed!" Alan explained that when NCDHR was first funded, there was so much focus on learning and growing during the early years.

Today, NCDHR has transformed to become a much more experienced and mature organization that is results-oriented. In other words, NCDHR has clearly demonstrated its potential in becoming the leading Deaf and hard of hearing health research organization!

NCDHR Summer 2009 Interns (and their mentors)



Jaime Aros, is a 3rd year NTID Administrative Technology

Support major. She is a Deaf mother of 2 young girls, with a 3rd baby expecting! Her career goal is either in the fields of Human Resources or Nursing. Jaime's mentors are Matt Starr, MPH and Kim Kelstone, CI/CT.



Nicholas Gala is a 4th year triple major student at University of

Rochester (Honors Psychology, Neuroscience and American Sign Language). He was born and raised here in Rochester, NY. Nick's mentors are Steven Barnett, MD and Deirdre Schlehofer, EdD, MPhil.



Angel Kirkham, will be a 2nd year medical student this

fall at the UR. She and her family now lives in Utah, after living in 3 states and 3 countries. Her goal is to study the interplay of culture, language and health. Her mentor is Nancy Chin, MPH, PhD.



Cody D. Moyers, originally from St. Louis, MO, now resides in

Greece, NY. He graduated with A.A. in Theology and B.A. in Political Science. He is a RIT student in Psychology. His academic goal is to earn a PhD in area of Cognitive Sciences. Scott Smith, MD, MPH, is Cody's mentor.



Jennifer Ritter, a native from the Bronx, NY. She is majoring in

Psychology (Criminal Justice) and minor in Creative Writing at RIT. She plans to pursue graduate studies in Family Therapy. Jennifer's mentors are Deirdre Schlehofer and Deaf Wellness Center at the UR Medical Center.