

SC-HCQU View

Facilitate-Educate-Communicate

November 2004

The South Central Pennsylvania Health Care Quality Unit

Volume 1

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Greetings from South Central Health Care Quality Unit!

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce ourselves. South Central Health Care Quality Unit (SC-HCQU) is one of eight Health Care Quality Units (HCQUs) developed by Pennsylvania's Mental Retardation Service System under the Department of Public Welfare. The HCQU is responsible for providing leadership and coordination to enable county mental retardation programs, in collaboration with the Department of Public Welfare's Office of Mental Retardation, to assure the highest achievable level of physical and behavioral health to individuals with mental retardation living in the community.

South Central is one of eight HCQUs covering the 46 counties in Pennsylvania. The South Central unit includes Dauphin, Franklin, Fulton, Lebanon, Lancaster, Cumberland, Perry, York and Adams counties. The purpose of the program is to build capacity and competency in those receiving support as well as those providing support. We work to accomplish this through:

- Trainings – to inform families, caregivers, provider staff and individuals with mental retardation in residential and day program settings about health, nutrition, therapies, medications, and treatments. We are also available to provide trainings regarding mental retardation/developmental disabilities and related issues to health care providers/personnel.
- Technical Assistance – to provide caregivers and individuals with developmental disabilities information on how to effectively navigate through the medical system. In addition, we provide them with information regarding new health care initiatives and health care systems changes in PA.

We are also responsible for completing Health Risk Profiles (developed by the Office of Mental Retardation) designed to identify and monitor the health care risks of individuals with mental retardation. This information helps to assure the basic health and safety of individuals with developmental disabilities living in the communities throughout PA.

We at South Central look forward to working with you to achieve our goal of assuring the highest level of health to individuals being served by the Mental Retardation Programs in our 9-county region. If you would like to learn more about us, visit our website at www.geisinger.org/schcqu.

Sincerely,

The Director and Staff
South Central Health Care Quality Unit

The information presented here is to increase your awareness of medical conditions and situations. It is not intended to replace medical advice. If you believe you or someone you support has a condition, please seek the advice of a physician.

Flu Season / Vaccine Shortage

The flu season is upon us and there has been much concern with the recent announcement of the vaccine shortage. The *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, has developed a screening tool for healthcare providers to determine who should and who should not get a flu shot? The CDC has also made available a flyer entitled, "Vaccination is Not the Only Way to Help Prevent the Flu." We all have a responsibility to be vigilant about preventing the spread of flu and other respiratory viruses. Below is a sample of the information covered on the flyers, which are available free of charge at www.cdc.gov/flu to be used in promoting overall health and wellness.

Who should get a Flu vaccination?

- **People who are 65 years old or older—**
Even if you're in great health!
- **Children 6 to 23 months old—**
Children younger than 2 years old have one of the highest rates of hospitalization from influenza
- **Adults and children with a chronic health condition—**
Like heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease, asthma, cancer, or HIV/AIDS
- **Women who will be pregnant during flu season—**
Flu season is typically November through March
- **Residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities**
- **Children aged 6 months to 18 years on chronic aspirin therapy**
- **Healthcare workers involved in direct patient care**
- **Out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children younger than 6 months**

If you're not in one of these groups, you should not get vaccinated, to allow those at highest risk to get a shot.

Vaccination is Not the Only Way to Help Prevent the Flu

You can protect yourself from the flu even if you don't get the flu vaccination this year. These simple actions can help stop the spread of germs and help protect you from getting sick:

- **Avoid close contact.** Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.
- **Stay home when you are sick.** If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- **Cover your mouth and nose.** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- **Clean your hands.** Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.** Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

Other good habits, such as **getting plenty of sleep**, engaging in **physical activity**, **managing stress**, **drinking water**, and **eating good food**, will help you stay healthy in the winter and all year. In addition, antiviral medications are available for influenza and can be used to prevent influenza and to treat the flu if they are started in the first 2 days of an illness.

Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

For more information, ask your healthcare provider or call the CDC
Immunization Hotline
English 800-232-2522
Español 800-232-0233

November – National Health Awareness Month

American Diabetes Month
www.diabetes.org

Diabetic Eye Disease Month
www.preventblindness.org

COPD Awareness Month
www.uscopd.com

Jaw Joints –TMJ Awareness Month
www.tmj.org

Lung Cancer Awareness Month
www.alcase.org

National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month
www.alz.org

National Epilepsy Month
www.epilepsyfoundation.org

National Healthy Skin Month
www.aad.org

Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month
www.pancan.org

7-13 National Allied Health Week
www.asahp.org

21-27 GERD Awareness Week (gastroesophageal reflux)
www.aboutgerd.org

National Family Caregivers Month
www.nfcacares.org

PH (Pulmonary Hypertension) Awareness Month
www.phassociation.org

National Marrow Awareness Month
www.marrow.org

Emergency Preparedness for People With Disabilities

Former Pennsylvania Governor, Tom Ridge, now US Department of Homeland Security Secretary, launched the first Conference on Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities on September 22, 2004.

Over 400 people attended the Arlington, VA conference with Ridge as keynote speaker. "We know that preparing before emergencies works. Today we are gathering to discuss a specific type of emergency preparedness- the particular and specific needs of people with disabilities. The Administration and the Department of Homeland Security are deeply committed to improving preparedness capabilities for the disability community." (Department of Homeland Security – 2004.)

More than 80 organizations and all 56 states and territories joined together at this conference. The SC HCQU View will continue to follow and report the progress of this collaboration as they seek to reach a level of preparedness that will serve the critical needs of people with disabilities.

Department of Homeland Security, (2004). Press Room: Speeches and Statements: Remarks by Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge at the Conference of Emergency Preparedness for People with Disabilities: Retrieved 10/25/04 from www.dhs.gov/dhspublic

A Truly Super Man

The National Organization on Disability (www.nod.org) paid tribute to Vice Chairman Christopher Reeve, who passed away at age 52 on October 10, 2004. Nine years ago Christopher sustained a spinal cord injury, paralyzing him from the neck down. Christopher was a role model for millions of Americans with disabilities, rising above extremely difficult challenges to lead a productive, meaningful life. As previously reported in the November 2002 HCQU View by Roberta Hottle, York/Adams County HCQU nurse, Christopher Reeve, V.C. of the NOD wrote an article to "Dear Abby" stating there are an estimated 55 million old cell phones around the country and the Organization is asking readers to donate their old cell phones to Sprint Project Connect. Phones can be dropped off at any participating Sprint Store, Easter Seals location, here at the South Central HCQU office, or see a list of locations on the Organization's website. These phones will be recycled or resold and a portion of the proceeds will benefit the Organization and Easter Seals. What a charitable way to get rid of your old cell phones!

For more information about this super-hero and the ongoing research and development addressing the needs of individuals with disabilities, check online at the following websites:

www.nod.org or www.christopherreeve.org.

Regional Trainings

South Central HCQU

- **Respiratory Complications** – December 2nd, 10:00-12noon – Hershey Public Library

For more information contact csadkins@geisinger.edu

- **Agency Nurses Meeting** – December 1st, 10:00a-noon – South Central HCQU Office – All provider nurses welcome! *For more information call 717-909-3854.*

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SC-HCQU is not affiliated with the following organizations:

Riverside Center:

- **Listening Skills** – November 2nd, 9:30a-3:30p (Potak-Knowlton)
- **Problem-solving For Supervisors** – November 9th, 9:30a-noon (Potak-Knowlton)
- **Focus on Behavior** – November 18th 9:30a-noon (Potak-Knowlton)
- **Post Traumatic Stress & OCD** – November 30th, 9:30a-3:30p (Lemmon)

For more information contact www.riversideassociatespc.com

Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center:

- **Adult Anxiety Disorders: Diagnosis & Treatment** – November 18th, 7:45a-3:30p – Eden Resort & Conference Center, Lancaster
- **Depression, Grief, and Loss in the Elderly: Medical & Therapeutic Interventions** – December 2, 8:00a-3:30p – Masonic Village, Elizabethtown

For more information contact CPPI at www.pennstatecpqi.com or (717) 531-4107

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PA Association of Resources for People with Mental Retardation Conference:

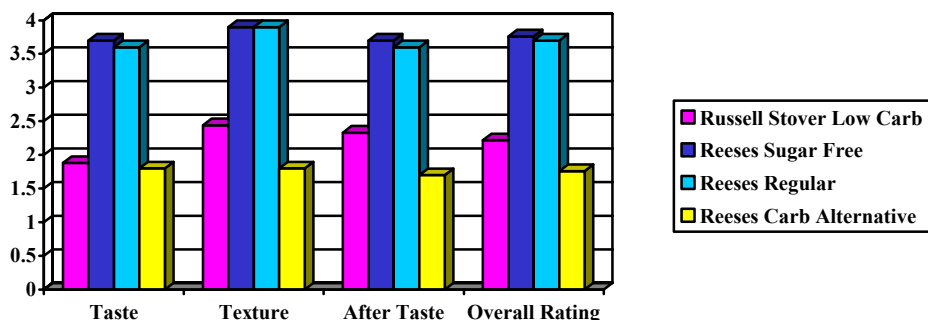
- **Paths to a Sustainable Future** – November 16, 17, & 18 – Grantville, PA

For more information contact Candy Condran at 717-236-2374 or e-mail candy@par.net

HCQU Food Review

In their effort to seek and devour healthy snacks, the staff of the SC HCQU conducted a taste test of peanut butter cups at their last staff meeting. Though the task was ultimately completed in an orderly and systematic fashion – it was unclear at the beginning that would be the case. The sweet smell of peanut butter cups filled the air as the staff eagerly began their task of evaluating these products. In the midst of the trial and with sugar levels rising the staff began to fade. The coach gave some encouraging words and they were able to come together as a team and finish the task. However, due to the consumption of peanut butter the staff meeting had to be delayed a few minutes – as nobody could speak. ☺ Quite surprisingly the Sugar Free Reese's Peanut Butter received the highest rating in 3 out of the 4 cups tested! Please read Nutrition Facts printed on all product labels for more information.

Reeses is a division of Hershey Foods Corporation
Russell Stover Candies, Incorporated



Techy Tips / Website Info

By Leanna Gingrich, Data Analyst SC-HCQU

Part of the general charter of the HCQU is to gather, report, and analyze 'data' to identify patterns and trends, provider profiling, and outcomes measurement. However, in order for 'data' to become operational (affect change) – it is important to understand the basics of compiling data, analysis, and reporting. This month I will focus on the basics of a database. So get ready, let's learn the 'lingo'.

DATABASE 101 – Learning to “Talk the Talk”

Database: A set of related data tables and other database objects, such as forms or dictionaries, organized as a group. (Basically, a place to store relational data in an organized fashion).

Field: A single item of information in a 'record' or 'row'. (i.e. "what" is stored within a single 'cell' in the database).

Record: In layman's terms this is the entire account of defined fields in a relational database.

Data Type: The description of how the computer is to interpret the data. This could be a text string or numeric value. It could be entered manually, pre-defined in a set of values, have a default value assignment or be dependent on the value of other cells.

Counter: A specific database field that assigns a unique number to each record (also called autonumber). This number is assigned when the record has at least ONE field completed.

Primary KEY: The column or row within a database that individual or combine values identify each record as unique. For example in a database containing health related information it may be the patients medical record number and date of service.

Technical Tidbit:

When entering information into a database REMEMBER that a record can't be saved unless the primary key contains data.

SC HCQU Data Analyst NEWSFLASH

On-line Web-based learning anticipated to be available the end of October @ www.geisinger.org/schcqu. The first courses available are Hepatitis B and Depression. Reminder: Central HCQU also has 11 web based learning courses available at www.geisinger.org/hcqu.

Please feel free to contact me with questions, comments, or concerns @ Impardoe@geisinger.edu.

Who's Who in the View

In order to get to know each other better, each month SC-HCQU will highlight a county agency/provider in "Who's Who". For November let us introduce ourselves!

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Bulletin Board



Thank You!

We would like to send out a big "Thank You" to our models from Renova Center in Lebanon. They were great in our photo shoot! Look for their pictures in upcoming issues.

Remember –

"Take pride in how far you have come. Have faith in how far you can go".

-- Author Unknown

HRP Tips

Here are a few helpful tips for making the HRP/HCSIS process an easier one:

1. Have your provider data entered into HCSIS and **finalized** before the nurse's visit. This will make the whole process go much quicker in the long run.
2. Remember: when collecting and entering the provider portion of the HRP, just do the best you can; the nurse will clarify and make any needed corrections at the time of her visit.
3. When scheduling the nurse's visit, please consider meeting at a quiet location, a place free of distractions and interruptions.
4. At the time of the nurse's visit, have the following readily available:
 - a. The consumer's MARs (both for the daily meds and prns/OTCs) for the past full month (the nurse's HRP portion will require information re: how many prn/OTC meds the consumer has had in the past 30 days)
 - b. Results (or at least the orders) of the lab work the consumer had during the past year

Thanks!

Consumer's Creative Corner



Everyone has a creative side. Whether it is dabbling in sewing, building, paints, sketching, poetry, or photography, we all enjoy producing something beautiful. At SC-HCQU we would like to see the creative efforts of our consumers. Submit your artwork, poems, or photos with a brief description/explanation to us at SC-HCQU 1126 Cocoa Avenue, Hershey, PA 17033 and we will publish them in "Creative Corner".

Get those creative juices flowing! We look forward to hearing from you!

