Spotlight on Rural Medical Transportation Network

The Rural Medical Transportation Network (RMTN) is a project of the SIU Center for Rural Health and Social Service Development. Operating within the southern 34 counties of Illinois, the RMTN’s mission is to facilitate access to transportation for persons in need of medical and health care services. Four primary goals guide the activities of the RMTN:

- Analyze the existing medical and public transportation systems of the region and assess the strengths and weaknesses of these systems.
- Identify the “gaps” in service provision between the region’s transportation providers, consumers, medical/health care providers, and social service providers.
- Identify, report, and address policy issues impacting the funding and operations of the systems that provide transportation to rural persons in need of medical/health care services.
- Develop and implement a strategic plan to address the identified gaps in service, and subsequently, enhance the access and availability to medical/health care for rural residents. The strategic plan will utilize network development, community outreach, and enhanced coordination of services between transportation and health/medical care providers to attain the plan’s objectives.

RMTN Training Updates

One of the needs identified in the first three years is lack of local, affordable training and continuing education for emergency medical service providers. The RMTN has focused efforts to address this by establishing regional training opportunities for recognized needs. In March 2010, over one hundred EMTs, paramedics, and nurses attended the following training opportunity held at the Dunn-Richmond Economic Development Center:

- **12 Lead ECG**
  Speaker: Bob Page
  Multi-Lead Medics, a nationally acclaimed Instructor

- **Contemporary Issues in EMS Management**
  Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
  Speaker: Marcia Matthias
  Corporate Director of Health Information
  Southern Illinois Healthcare

- **Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA)**
  Speaker: April Holmes
  Corporate Director of Health Compliance
  Southern Illinois Healthcare

- **Medicaid/Medicare Fraud**
  Speaker: Dave Walker
  Illinois State Police (Retired)

- **RMTN Roundtable**
  Facilitators:
  Dennis Presley
  RMTN Project Coordinator, CRHSSD
  Dottie Miles
  Director, Jackson County Ambulance Service

For more information, contact Dennis Presley at dpresley@rural.siu.edu. To register for the NAEMSE Instructor course, go to http://www.naemse.org/events/
The CRHSSD is proud to announce the next RMTN’s next training:

National Association of Emergency Medical Service Educators’ (NAEMSE) Instructor Course  July 9-12, 2010

This is the didactic component and practical application of the beginning education process to become an EMS instructor. Again, these educational trainings are rare in our region and sometimes cost prohibitive.

To assure that our region will benefit from this educational opportunity, the RMTN will be awarding seven scholarships to local individuals interested in attending.

New Project Coordinator

The CRHSSD would like to introduce our newest staff member. Jeff Franklin joined the Center staff in January 2010 as a Rural Health Project Coordinator. Jeff is primarily working with the Delta States Rural Network Development Grant which is currently focused on implementing CATCH, Coordinated Approach to Child Health, in elementary schools throughout the 16 counties of southern Illinois.

Jeff Franklin worked with the University of Illinois Extension as a Youth Development Educator for 15 years. His work primarily focused on the subject areas of: 4-H/Youth Development, Coordinated School Health Education, Bullying Education, and Social and Emotional Learning. He now joins the CRHSSD as the Illinois Delta Network Project Coordinator.

We Need Your Help

The Rural Medical Transportation Network, in collaboration with other CRHSSD staff, will conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of health care providers in southern Illinois.

The primary goal of the needs assessment is to measure the perceptions and observations of front-line health care professionals regarding the transportation needs of the patients they serve. The data derived from this needs assessment is essential for optimizing the effectiveness and efficiency of the project’s activities, and subsequently, providing better transportation to these patients. As an outcome, the health of our region’s residents will benefit from this needs assessment.

Staff of diverse health care facilities, and from various divisions/departments of each facility, will be requested to participate, including those of:

- Nursing Homes
- Hospitals
- Rural Health Clinics
- Federally Qualified Health Centers
- Private Primary Care Providers
- Private Specialty Care Providers
- Free Clinics
- Community Mental Health Centers
- Private Mental Health Providers

Please participate and facilitate the process within your facility, if your agency is contacted and requested to participate in the needs assessment. Also, if you receive a written survey, please complete it in a comprehensive and timely manner. If you wish to play a role in the design of the needs assessment model, we would really appreciate your participation.