

Delaware Health Care Commission
Project Updates
February 2005

Uninsured Action Plan

CHAP

As of January 31, 2005 CHAP enrollment had reached 2580, up from 2371 as of December 31, 2004. Other key statistics:

Total CHAP applications ever received	10754
Total CHAP ever enrolled	6627
Current Medicaid enrolled	1816
Total referred to VA	95

Federal Fiscal Relief Fund

The draft document reviewed and approved by the Commission in January was presented to the Health Care Access Improvement Coalition – CHAP providers and partners - for review and discussion on January 28, in accordance with the Commission's wishes. The document was accepted, and HCAIC members volunteered to form a workgroup to outline program design and implementation details.

Of particular note was the disease management proposal, which received enthusiastic support. Among HCAIC workgroup activities outlined in the proposal would be defining caseloads, defining target populations for disease management programs and developing a customized care plan.

The group agreed that one target sub-population of CHAP enrollees might be those who receive social security disability payments. These payments make them over income to be Medicaid eligible, and they must wait two years before they can enroll in Medicare. They are eligible for the Delaware Prescription Assistance Plan, however. Additional discussion will be required to determine how and if this sub-population should be targeted, and, more specifically, which of the four projects outlined in the document would best serve this sub-population.

Although most of the community health centers in the network were aware that the issue was to be discussed at the January 28 meeting, representatives from three were not in attendance. A conference call with these centers is being scheduled to allow comments and feedback. Upon completion of this call commissioners will be informed of substantive changes if there are any. If not, the report will be submitted to the Budget Office, as required.

Health Professional Workforce Development

Health Careers workshop for guidance counselors

Fifty four K-12 guidance counselors and teachers attended the February 8 health careers workshop, with 16 of the 19 school districts represented at the conference. Speakers included Valerie Woodruff, Secretary of Education and Joseph Letnaunchyn, President of the Delaware Healthcare Association. A review of the evaluation forms received show ratings of "excellent" on all fronts. Secretary Woodruff delivered a powerful speech about the influence and positive impact on students' futures that counselors can make. Mr. Letnaunchyn encouraged counselors to suggest to their students that they explore academic pathways that will lead to "excellent job opportunities" in the health professions. Following the presentations, the counselors participated in three or more roundtable discussions with 15 organizations representing employers of health professions, schools of health professions and community organizations involved in health

careers, such as Junior Achievement, the Delaware Business Industry Education Alliance and the Girl/Boy Scouts. The counselors were also provided information about available scholarships and other financial aids, web links and a "Guide to Careers in Nursing and Allied Health" that students can use to learn more about the many career opportunities health has to offer. School districts will identify a point person that we can contact to distribute additional materials as they are needed. The project was carried out under the leadership of the Commission's Nursing Implementation Committee, with sponsorship from the Commission in partnership with the Department of Education. The Nursing Implementation Committee at its February 15 meeting will review the results and determine next steps.

State Loan Repayment Program

Discussions within the State Loan Repayment Committee over the past year, attendance at a national SLRP partnership conference, changes in federal tax law and a site visit from the federal Health Resources and Services Administration have resulted in a set of recommendations for structural changes. The goals are to increase the number of participating clinicians, increase the program's effectiveness in addressing provider shortages and maximize the use of available federal matching program funds. The recommendations include:

- Focus on retention of providers, as well as recruitment
- Expand the eligible specialties list to include all those allowed under federal rules
- Identify sites eligible for placement under federal guideline; targeting them for marketing
- Reduced the minimum services requirement from three years to two years (the federal minimum)
- Increase allowable award thresholds to the maximum allowed under federal rules
- Engage an intern to focus exclusively on administering these program changes
- Consider alternative "economic incentives", i.e. loan assistance for capital expenditures to establish a practice in a high-need area

DIDER approved the recommendations at its February 9 Board of Directors Meeting. DIMER will consider the recommendations on March 2. The Commission will be asked to consider the recommended changes at its March 3 meeting.

DIDER

In addition to its review and approval of structural changes to SLRP, the DIDER Board considered a set of approaches developed by a DIDER workgroup to improve opportunities for Delaware residents to obtain a dental education and to address issues related to access to care. These include:

- Purchasing dental seats at nearby schools
- Making scholarships available to dental students, regardless of where they attend
- Utilizing funds to enhance and expand the general practice residency program in Delaware (possibly via downstate satellite sites and/or a mobile van)
- Establish a flexible fund account that could be used depending on need

The Board will most seriously pursue the first three options.