

Director's Corner

Amy Atkins, MPA, Director



The Center for Local Health is pleased to release the first of many newsletters to bring information and resources to local public health agencies. We, as a unit within the Bureau for Public Health, are committed to working in partnership with stakeholders to strengthen and support the delivery of local public health services in West Virginia.

This year began with new leadership as Dr. Rahul Gupta became our Commissioner and State Health Officer. Throughout the past several months, the Center has had the opportunity to develop new partnerships and implement new initiatives to strengthen our public health system.

Through efforts such as the Public Health Impact Task Force, governance training for local boards of health and our new administrators orientation program, the Center for Local Health strives to bring resources to local boards of health and health departments throughout the State. We are thankful for all that you do to promote

healthy people in healthy environments! We hope that you will find these newsletters informational and helpful as you go about your daily work.

West Virginia Public Health Impact Task Force Hits the Road

Amy Atkins, MPA, Director

The West Virginia Public Health Impact Task Force will hold its next meeting in Morgantown, West Virginia, hosted by the Monongalia County Health Department, in an effort to make the meetings more accessible to those across the State.

The Task Force was commissioned by Rahul Gupta, MD, MPH, FACP, State Health Officer and Commissioner of the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health, for the purpose of redefining the mission of public health in West Virginia. The Task Force launched in April 2015 with a presentation of the [State of the State's Health](#) as Commissioner Gupta laid the foundation for why this effort is critically important to West Virginians. DHHR Cabinet Secretary L. Karen Bowling provided a keynote address to the Task Force and to those in attendance.

During the most recent Task Force meeting on June 2, four workgroups (Better Health, Better Quality, Affordable Public Health and Community Engagement) were formed to align with the [Triple Aim](#) and the recently released report [Vital Signs: Core Metrics for Public Health](#). Better Health will focus on enhancing public health services by defining the mission and scope of public health in West Virginia. Better Quality will focus on using public health accreditation to drive performance and quality of services and programs. Affordable Public Health will focus on redefining the BPH statutory and regulatory authority and Community Engagement will focus on integrating community resources to improve public health and health care.

All meetings are open to the public and include a comment period for anyone wanting to share ideas or comments. All minutes and presentations from the meetings are posted online at the Center for Local Health's website: www.dhhr.wv.gov/localhealth. The Task Force continues to actively request comments, ideas or suggestions for helping to redefine the mission of public health in West Virginia. Ideas may be submitted by email to the Center for Local Health at the following email address: dhhrbphclh@wv.gov.

First Local Board of Health Governance Forum

Linda Lipscomb, Public Health Administrative Coordinator

The Center for Local Health sponsored and organized the first ever Local Board of Health Governance Forum on April 30 and May 1, 2015 at Stonewall Resort. The first half day included dedicated and interactive time with Rahul Gupta, MD, MPH, FACP, Commissioner and State Health Officer, discussing the State of the State's Health and a question and answer session specific to the future challenges and direction of public health in West Virginia specific to the work of the West Virginia Public Health Impact Task Force.

The Forum also included a session conducted by the West Virginia Center for Rural Health and Development titled The Fundamentals of Governance, which included topics such as fiduciary responsibilities of boards, effective governance structures, Board/CEO relationships and public health and health care collaboration. Forty-seven (47) individuals, representing 25 local boards of health, were in attendance.

The Center for Local Health is partnering with the West Virginia Public Health Association to offer additional opportunities for local boards of health at the upcoming conference in September.

Future of Nursing WV Coalition

Judy McGill, Public Health Nursing Coordinator



Angela Gray, Director of Nursing for the Berkeley County Health Department, recipient of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Nurse Leadership Grant Award.

The Center for Local Health is pleased to announce that Angela Gray, Nurse Director, Berkeley County Health Department, is one of only 24 nurses across the country to receive a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Public Health Nurse Leadership Grant.

The grant involves a two year leadership development program designed to increase the capacity of public health nurses to lead individuals, organizations and communities toward a [Culture of Health](#) through partnerships and collaboration. This program is part of a broader initiative to advance health by advancing nursing through practice, education and leadership.

The Center for Local Health has teamed up with [The Future of Nursing West Virginia](#), a coalition supported by the RWJF, which includes representatives from business, health care, academia, education and consumer groups. The coalition is guided by a strategic action plan that aligns with the Institute of Medicine (IOM) nursing report. The IOM nursing report, [The Future of Nursing: Leading Change and Advancing Health](#), states: "What nursing brings to the future is a steadfast commitment to patient care, improved safety and quality, and better outcomes."



Future of Nursing West Virginia Transition to Practice Leadership Advisory Committee

West Virginia Delegation to Attend NACCHO

Lisa Thompson, Public Health Financial Coordinator



This month, a delegation of new local health department administrators will attend the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) Conference in Kansas City, Missouri as part of the Center for Local Health's new CHANGE

continued

West Virginia Delegation, *continued*

Program, Connections for Health Administrators: Networking, Governance and Education. The objective of this program is to orient and introduce new local health department administrators to national and state partners and resources that support public health practice and service delivery.

Through this program, a delegation of seven (7) local health department administrators will attend the NACCHO Conference which includes a session titled Management Essentials for Public Health Professionals. In addition, the Center will host a series of workshops during FY 2016 that will provide guidance and orientation from the Bureau for Public Health to local health department administrators.

Mandatory Nurse Training

Judy McGill, Public Health Nursing Coordinator

The Center for Local Health organized and provided CEUs for local health department and DHHR nurses for trainings required by the West Virginia Board of Examiners for Registered Professional Nurses. The new requirement mandates that all RNs must receive continuing education for mental health conditions common to veterans and family members of veterans prior to the October 31, 2015 re-licensure date.

Four regional trainings were held at the following sites:

- * Charleston, WV - 61 nurses from 21 facilities
- * Morgantown, WV – 35 nurses from 25 facilities
- * Huntington, WV - 19 nurses from 9 facilities
- * Roanoke, WV – 71 nurses from 29 LHDs and BPH

NACCHO Forces of Change

Linda Lipscomb, Public Health Administrative Coordinator

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) recently released the results of the *2015 Forces of Change* survey. The survey results contain findings on the forces that affect change in our nation's local health departments. The results show local health departments face challenges and opportunities as the public health and clinical care environments continue to evolve.

Findings show that local health departments continue to experience budgetary challenges. Likely as a result, local health department leaders value budget management skills in their professional public health staff. The fiscal and political environments have had an impact on the type and scope of services they provide. Some have decreased clinical services to focus on population-based health activities, while others continue to provide these services in their communities with the help of revenue from billing third-party payers. Local health departments have also explored new opportunities for collaboration as a result of health care reform, including with non-profit hospitals and primary care providers.

It is important the local health departments in West Virginia continue to support these national initiatives. The NACCHO Research and Evaluation analyst reported West Virginia had a response rate of 88% (15 out of 17). We want to acknowledge and thank those local health departments that participated and completed the survey: Boone, Braxton, Cabell-Huntington, Gilmer, Grafton-Taylor, Grant, Kanawha-Charleston, Marion, Mercer, Pendleton, Randolph-Elkins, Summers, Tucker, Webster and Wyoming. Your contribution provided valuable information to NACCHO through the survey related to the public health challenges and opportunities in our State. Visit www.nacchoprofilestudy.org/forces-of-change to download the full survey or the informatics report.

Upcoming Events/Conferences:

- NALBOH Annual Conference, August 5-7, 2015, Louisville, KY
- WVPHA Annual Conference, September 23-25, 2015, Wheeling, WV