

A Healthy Partnership on Detroit's East Side

It takes a village to create

meaningful change in our community – the health care delivery system is no different. With the closure of Detroit Riverview Hospital last year, a collaboration of community organizations was coordinated by the Detroit Wayne County Health Authority and chaired by Sr. Mary Ellen Howard, executive director of Cabrini Clinic, and Herbert Smitherman, M.D., president of Detroit Health Centers, Inc., to create a network of primary care services on the East Side.

The collaboration, known as the “East Side Planning Team”, worked diligently for more than a year with 22 health and human service organizations, to examine the needs and health assets of the Near East Side. The result is a policy report entitled, “Ensuring Essential Health Services on Detroit's Near East Side”. This landmark report was presented to the Detroit Wayne County Health Authority Board of Directors at its meeting, July 16, 2008.

Central to the group's recommendations is establishing a method for ensuring that all 70,000 people living in the area have access to a medical home – a comprehensive approach to providing community-based, patient-centered primary health care. An estimated 30,000 residents in the area do not have a personal physician, forcing many to use hospital emergency facilities as their usual source of primary care.

Specific recommendations of the report, include:

- **Strengthen existing health care safety net providers**, such as free clinics, Federally Qualified Health Centers, and other providers.
- **Add at least 20 new primary care practitioners** at existing health centers and new sites, preferably as affiliates of existing Federally Qualified Health Centers.
- **Ensure comprehensive primary and urgent care services** through a “hub and spoke” model of service delivery providing, in effect, a virtual patient centered medical home. Primary medical care will be available at the “hub” as well as all spoke locations. At a minimum, services in the “hub” will include primary medical care, urgent care, behavioral health, oral health, pharmacy, and social services. A transportation network will enable people to easily access the full continuum of services.
- **Implement an emergency facility diversion strategy** to refer the uninsured into medical homes. People will be encouraged to call United Way 2-1-1 to secure a primary care provider.
- **Create connectivity through technology** by securing funding to ensure that all safety net providers have electronic health records and other records to track, manage, and support patient care, including e-prescribing.

The Health Authority has committed \$400,000 to begin implementing the East Side initiative.

This report, which will be included in the wider study of the health status of the East Side soon to be announced by the Greater Detroit Area Health Council, represents a model that can be replicated in Detroit and Wayne County. Community involvement from all levels is welcomed.

Members of the East Side Planning Team

Sister Mary Ellen Howard – Co-chairperson; Executive Director, St. Frances Cabrini Clinic

Dr. Herbert Smitherman – Co-chairperson; Assistant Dean of Community and Urban Health, Wayne State University School of Medicine

Richard Bohrer – Consultant; National Association of Community Health Centers; former Assistant Surgeon General and Director of Community Health Center Program

Patricia Fairchild – Consultant; Vice President, John Snow, Inc.

Dr. Yvonne Anthony – Director of the Urban Research Institute, Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion

Wayne W. Bradley Sr. – President and CEO, Detroit Community Health Connection

Dr. Chris Bush – President, Wayne County Medical Society of Southeast Michigan

Neal Colburn – Technical Assistance Consultant, Michigan Primary Care Association

Nancy DeGroote – Community Health Corporate Director, formerly of St. John Health

Maggie DeSantis – President, Warren Connor Development Coalition

Rev. John Duckworth – Pastor, Gethsemane Missionary Baptist Church

Robert Esdale – Departmental Analyst, Michigan Department of Community Health

Rev. Patrick Gahagen – Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church, MOSES

Princella Graham – Retired Corporate Director of Public Policy, St. John Health

Korey A. Hall – Regional Manager, Southeast Michigan Office of Senator Stabenow

Ms. Poincella Hardaway – Executive Director, MOSES

William J. Hart Jr. – Health Policy and Access to Care Division Administrator, Michigan Department of Community Health

Adam Jablonowski – Executive Director, Wayne County Medical Society

Jacqueline Jones – Vice President, United Way of Southeastern Michigan

Anthony King – CEO and Executive Director, The Wellness Plan

Nick Lyons – Health Policy, Regulations, and Professions Administration Deputy Director, Michigan Department of Community Health

Toni McIlwain – President and CEO, Ravendale Community Incorporated

Kurt Metzger – Director of Research and Evaluation, United Way of Southeastern Michigan

Adam Miller – Senior Benefits Coordinator, United Auto Workers Social Security Department

Dr. Margaret Meyers – Medical Director, Mercy Primary Care Center

Kim Sibilsky – Executive Director, Michigan Primary Care Association

Audrey Smith – General Manager Community Health Services, Detroit Department of Health and Wellness Promotion

Lucille Smith – Executive Director, Voices of Detroit Initiative

Dr. Cynthia Taug – Vice President of Community Health and Senior Services, St. John Health

Terence Thomas – Chief Advocacy Officer Michigan Market and Corporate Responsibility Officer, St. John Health

Rev. Skip Wachsmann – Pastor, Genesis Lutheran Church

Judith West – retired Executive Director of Advantage Health Centers

Aiisya Williamson – Executive Director, Mercy Primary Care Center

Chris Allen – Executive Director/CEO, Detroit Wayne County Health Authority



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