



Area Health Education Center

Capital Connection

W I N T E R 2 0 0 9



Together Rx Access

In the State of Texas, more than 5.8 million residents,* many of whom are living in rural areas, do not have healthcare coverage. To help individuals without prescription coverage access the medicines they need, many of the nation's leading pharmaceutical companies sponsor the Together Rx Access® Program. This free prescription savings program helps eligible individuals and their families gain access to immediate and meaningful savings on prescription products right at their neighborhood pharmacy.

Most cardholders save 25 to 40 percent‡ on brand-name prescription products. Savings are also available on a wide range of generic medicines in the program including those used to treat high cholesterol, diabetes, depression, asthma, and many other common conditions.

Individuals may be eligible for the Together Rx Access Card if they do not qualify for Medicare, do not have public or private prescription drug coverage, have a household income of up to \$30,000 for a single person or \$60,000 for a family of four (income eligibility is adjusted for family size), and are legal residents of the United States or Puerto Rico.

There are three easy ways to enroll with no documentation required.

- Visit TogetherRxAccess.com
- Call 1-800-250-2839
- Complete an application and return it by mail

A Together Rx Access quick start savings card is also available. Potential enrollees simply detach the card from a brochure and call the toll-free number to find out if they are eligible, enroll and instantly activate their card. To receive a supply of quick start savings cards, contact Amy Niles, Chair, Medical Relations and Advocacy, Together Rx Access at amyniles@aol.com.

For more information, visit TogetherRxAccess.com.

*State Health Facts website: www.statehealthfacts.org accessed January 5, 2009.

‡Each cardholder's savings depend on such factors as the particular drug purchased, amount purchased, and the pharmacy where purchased. Participating companies independently set the level of savings offered and the products included in the program. Those decisions are subject to change.

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Program Updates

Health Career Promotions

Capital AHEC is currently in the planning stages of the 2009 Health Career Summer Camp. The five day overnight camp will be held June 22nd through the 26th and is designed to encourage students to consider a career in healthcare.

During the camp students will participate in hospital tours, experiment in the simulation lab, and shadow a local health professional. Each student is given the opportunity to learn about the different careers in healthcare while receiving hands on experience in those fields.

High school students entering 10th—12th grade within our service area are eligible to apply for camp. Registration forms are currently available online at www.capitalahec.org and are due March 27th.

The camp is designed to immerse interested students from low-income, high minority schools in health professions therefore we try to keep costs at a minimum for students. This year each student will be charged \$50 for the five day overnight camp. This fee is assessed to ensure program attendance but does not cover the entire cost per participant.

Capital AHEC relies heavily on our sponsorships to ensure a successful summer camp each year and cover the majority of the cost. If you are interested in sponsoring the 2009 Health Career Summer Camp please contact Ashley King at aking@capitalahec.org.

For more information please visit our website.

Community Based Education

Many Austin area physicians have helped UTMB this year by volunteering their time as preceptors to medical students and Residents. Capital AHEC would like to remind UTMB preceptors of a few perks offered by the University.

UTMB Appointment

Preceptors who teach for the primary care 3rd year medical student clerkships will receive an appointment with UTMB as a Clinical Assistant Professor. This appointment is reviewed annually and renewed as you continue to volunteer as a UTMB preceptor.

Category II CME

Every one hour of teaching time is equivalent to one hour of Category II CME. UTMB will send you a letter in August which will list the number of students you taught during the prior year and the number of hours you can self declare.

Moody Medical Library Access

Multiple online resources are available to preceptors who accept UTMB students throughout the current academic year. The Moody Medical Library offers physicians resources such as the Cochrane Library, MD Consult, and Harrison's Online. A form is required for access to the UTMB Library. Please contact Brian Sullivan for a copy of this form.

CME Opportunities

There are three annual primary care review courses conducted at UTMB in Galveston. Complimentary registration fees are available on a first come first serve basis to UTMB preceptors.

Capital AHEC is very grateful to every healthcare worker that will give back to their profession by teaching the healthcare workers of tomorrow. Please contact us if you are interested in becoming a preceptor.

Program Updates

Practice Entry and Support

AHEC Professional Corp: A Strong Employee Recruiting & Retention Tool

The AHEC Professional Corps is a solid tool to help recruit employees while at the same time retain “critical” motivated new employees who are interested in furthering their education.

What’s the catch? There is no catch but there are guidelines for both the employers and employees.

Employers

There is an investment of \$500 for each employee enrolled in the AHEC Professional Corp. The facility where the employee works must be underserved, 50% or more of the clients must be funded by either Medicare or Medicaid and the facility must provide orientation, supervision and salary. AHEC Professional Corp employees must work at your facility 1,700 hours, complete 3 online training modules (45 minutes each) and participate in a 12-hour service learning project – all within 365 days.

Enrolled employees

Participants must be a full time employee and have worked at the facility less than 90 days. They must complete 1,700 hours of full time employment within one year and complete on-line continuing education modules (Federally Qualified Health Centers/Health Policy/Cultural Competencies – 45 minutes max each including assessment). A service learning project of the participants choosing is also required which must be 12 hours within 365 days. This project will be coordinated by local AHEC staff. If the participant meets these guidelines they will receive \$4,725 which can only be used to either repay a current student loan or fund future education. Students may earn a maximum of \$9,000 in 2 educational awards in a two-year period; these funds can be banked for up to 7 years.

For more information contact Lynn Heimerl.

Health Literacy Ventanilla de Salud Project

The Ventanilla de Salud is a health outreach program which aids vulnerable immigrant and Latino communities. Implemented in Southern California in 2004, the program has met with measurable success and spread to new areas. There are now twenty-nine Ventanillas de Salud located in Mexican Consulates across the nation. Texas alone has seven in major cities and prominent border towns.

Our local Ventanilla de Salud, Austin has been growing rapidly. With the continued support and guidance of our primary agency, Capital AHEC, we are now entering our ninth month of service. In addition to the health education, information and referrals offered on a daily basis through the Ventanilla de Salud; in October we expanded services to include a monthly health fair.

Every third Wednesday, six varying agencies offer preventative health services in the lobby of the Mexican

Consulate. Thanks to the collaboration of our partner agencies, as well as media exposure by Univision, we have had great turnout and outreach at these events. Below are some highlights from the November and December health-fairs:

November:

178 people received health screenings including blood glucose and blood pressure as well as child and adult immunizations from the Austin Health Connection. The 49 with above average results were provided health information and referred to low-cost health clinics.

December:

39 people received acuity and glaucoma checks from Prevent Blindness Texas. For the 33 people with vision challenges, enrollment into a program offering free or low-cost glasses and optometry appointments was provided.

Legislative Update

Message From the Director

As part of my duties for the Capital AHEC contract with the Texas Rural Health Association I serve as the State Association Counsel chair for the National Rural Health Association (NRHA). In that capacity I was recently in Washington DC for a NRHA Policy Institute.

It was exciting to be in Washington less than a week after the historic inauguration of Barrack Obama. The excitement in the air was palpable. Since my trip a significant stimulus package has passed the congress and been signed into law by the President. It remains to be seen how this package will affect the bottom line of health care but here are some of the main components.

- \$87 billion to help states with Medicaid costs by increasing the Federal Medicaid match rate (known as the FMAP) through FY 2010
- \$6 billion in broadband and wireless services in rural and underserved areas
- \$20 billion for health information technology
- \$4.1 billion to provide preventative care
- \$550 million to modernize and upgrade aging Indian health service facilities
- \$600 million to train additional primary health care providers through the National Health Service Corps and the Title VII and VIII programs
- \$950 million for veterans' medical facilities
- \$1.5 billion for Community Health Centers, including \$500 million to increase the number of uninsured Americans who receive health care
- \$200 million to support grants and loans to rural community facilities, including health care
- \$8.6 billion to provide 100 percent Federal funding through 2010 for Medicaid coverage of individuals who are involuntarily unemployed

For additional information on the Stimulus Package please contact Capital AHEC.

Upcoming Events

TRHA Advocacy Day
March 3-4

**Health Career Summer Camp
Applications Due**
March 27

**Capital AHEC
Board Meeting**
April 8

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