



*Strengthening Oklahoma's Safety Net,
One Community At A Time*

Board Bulletin

Volume 6, Number 11 • November 2008

New Look to Reach New Heights

2008 marks the fifteenth anniversary for Oklahoma Primary Care Association (OKPCA). Celebration was the theme of this year's annual conference – honoring the past, appreciating today and embracing tomorrow. As author Pauline R. Kezer so aptly states, “Continuity gives us roots; change gives us branches, letting us stretch and grow and reach new heights.” The observant have already noticed a changed logo and the addition of ‘K’ in the association’s acronym. These two changes, accompanied by a revamped website by 2009 and ‘affordable’ added to the mission, were strategic moves to enable OKPCA to best accomplish the mission of strengthening access to *affordable* community-based health care for Oklahomans. While it is sometimes difficult to leave the comfortable, change is necessary to move forward and reach new heights. Another author’s quote worth review comes from Irene Peter “Just because everything is different doesn't mean anything has changed.” It is not enough to update the website or change the logo, mission and acronym. Change for the sake of change accomplishes little unless a sound strategic plan is developed in tandem that outlines a clear vision. Community health center (CHC) board members will be instrumental in making these changes result in forward movement.

OKPCA Strategic Plan: April 1, 2009 – March 31, 2012

In June 2008, eleven Oklahoma CHC grantees participated in the two-day retreat that included an intensive SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis. Technology, growth, resource development and education were identified as strategic priorities. Four goals with associated objectives were established:

- *Growth Strategies to Increase Membership and Visibility* – includes development of a statewide expansion plan, strengthening advocacy efforts and increasing local support of CHCs through statewide education
- *Strengthen Health Centers and Improve Performance* – includes enhancing OKPCA training and technical assistance offerings using online technology and updated guidance books, strengthening quality improvement activities to improve health outcomes and demonstrate CHC effectiveness, leveraging resources to build capacity and workforce development
- *Develop Shared Resources Program* – includes development of a “Health Educators” program for all CHCs, exploration of an ‘After Hours’ call service for all CHCs, and development of group purchasing programs that allow CHCs to share and lower costs
- *Build Networks to Support Systems of Care* – includes coordination of an OKPCA-driven Health Information Technology (HIT) program that promotes CHC interoperability and assessment of local health care systems to aid CHCs in network development that will increase access and address emergency preparedness

One of the objectives associated with growth and visibility is to increase advocacy contacts to 3,000. In the coming months, CHC board members will be asked to take a more active role in grassroots advocacy efforts. CHC success depends on having a strong, unified voice at the state and national level.

Access for All Oklahomans

The National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) issued its *Access for All America* plan in February 2008 that includes CHCs reaching 30 million patients by 2015. NACHC challenged each PCA to follow suit with respective state-specific plans. *Access for All Oklahomans*, to be released in December 2008, reflects OKPCA strategic goals and will be used to leverage resources for CHCs to increase access and reduce health disparities. As board members, you will be asked to take the state access plan message to legislators, foundations, and other stakeholders to encourage investment into Oklahoma’s CHC program.

According to politician Harold Wilson, “He who rejects change is the architect of decay. The only human institution which rejects progress is the cemetery.” Help make these changes mean something to not only the health centers you govern but for all Oklahomans! To review OKPCA’s entire *Board Bulletin* series, visit the ‘CHC Boards’ section of www.okpca.org.

Oklahoma Primary Care Association
4300 N. Lincoln Blvd., Ste 203, OKC, OK 73105
(405) 424-2282, Ext. 104 • Fax (405) 424-1111 • www.okpca.org