



Louisiana Rural Health Association

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LRHA Update

Partial funding for this publication is provided through a federal grant from the Office Rural Health Policy (HRSA) and the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Bureau of Primary Care and Rural Health

Volume XII, Issue XII

December 2005

LRHA Mission Statement:

To serve as a unified voice for the promotion of rural health care through advocacy, education, and leadership.

Louisiana Rural Health Association Elects New Members to Board of Directors

On Monday, December 12 in Lafayette, LA, the membership of the Louisiana Rural Health Association (LRHA) elected nine new members to the Board of Directors. A slate of potential appointees to the Board of Directors was presented to and voted upon by the over one hundred and fifty members of LRHA present at the annual business meeting of the association held in conjunction with the annual conference.

LRHA members newly elected to the Board of Directors are: T. Bradley Keith, Christopher Vidrine, and Vernon Stevens.

Keith joined the staff of Senator Mary Landrieu following a position as director of communications and public affairs for the Louisiana Health Care Review. During Sen. Landrieu's terms as State Treasurer, Keith served as her Assistant State Treasurer for Communications. He has also worked as a newspaper reporter for the Patriot Leader in Quincy, Massachusetts, the News-Star in Monroe, Louisiana, and New Orleans City Business Magazine. He attended De La Salle High School in New Orleans and received his bachelor's degree in journalism from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge.

Vidrine, Policy Analyst for the Louisiana Hospital Association, joined LHA in 2003. He serves as staff support for the Legislative, Regulatory and Policy Council (LRPC), assisting in the development of LHA policies, overseeing research projects and providing support for advocacy and regulatory initiatives at the state and federal level. Chris performed his undergraduate work at Louisiana State University where he earned a bachelors degree in Political Science and minor in Marketing. Subsequently, he went on to earn a Masters in Business Administration with a Healthcare specialty from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Before joining LHA, Chris served as the PHO Administrator at Cincinnati Children's Hospital. Prior to that, he was employed at Aca-dian Health Care Alliance as the Operations Manager and at Ville Platte Medical Center as the PHO Administrator.

Vernon Stevens has served as Administrator of Riverland Medical Center for over eighteen years. Prior to joining Riverland, Stevens worked at the Natchez Community Hospital in Natchez, MS. Stevens graduated from LSU College of Business Administration in 1971 and served in the active Army as well as in the Louisiana National Guard for over twenty years, retiring with the rank of Major in 1993.

These three newly elected members of the board will serve three year terms and may serve no more than two terms in succession as detailed in the association by-laws.

LRHA members continuing service on the Board of Directors for a second three year term are: Milton Bourgeois, Administrator, St. Anne General Hospital; Arthur Fort, MD, LSU Health Sciences Center; Chris Kohlenberg, CPA, Langlinais and Broussard; Evalyn Ormand, Administrator, Union General Hospital; Scott Stafford, CEO, DeSoto Regional Hospital; and Christopher Williams, Quality Improvement Specialist, LA HealthCare Review.

A View from the Field . .

On behalf of the LRHA Board of Directors, I thank you for supporting the efforts of LRHA in 2005. Your continued support and participation in the association are crucial to our success; I hope you will join us in 2006 as LRHA continues to make progress in the mission of providing leadership on rural health issues through advocacy, communication, and education.

*Donna Newchurch
Executive Director*

In the last twelve months, LRHA has:

- offered more and better opportunities for learning and communicating with colleagues through coordination of over twenty-five conferences, trainings, forums and educational offerings;
- launched Operation Against Smoking / Inhaling Second-Hand (OASIS) in rural hospitals, rural health clinics, and federally qualified health centers;
- initiated the Rural Health Quality Advisory Panel with rural health professionals from within the membership representing all segments of rural health delivery;
- introduced Medicare Part D training and enrollment opportunities to over 4,500 rural residents and health professionals through the Rural Enrollment Initiative and the Health Access Planning Network;
- provided expertise and comments to CMS and legislators on RHC, CAH, and Medicare issues in the form of formal written comments and consistent interaction;
- improved our system of member, partner, and legislative communication by implementing a professional web based approach; and
- effected positive change in Louisiana's rural health system by active participation on several committees and advisory councils.

As always, your efforts are appreciated, and I believe that together we can improve the health and health care of rural Louisiana.

I would also like to take this opportunity to wish you all a wonderful holiday season and successful 2006,

Donna Newchurch

EMS Focusing on Rural Parishes for AED Placement

For the past two years, the Bureau of EMS has secured monies from the Rural Access to Emergency Devices grant through HRSA to buy AEDs, train the agency's employees and distribute AED's to the rural parts of Louisiana.

Each year the Bureaus of EMS places a dot in the respective Louisiana Parish for each AED that was placed. After reviewing the map showing the placement of AEDs over the last two years, it was noted the following Parishes have not received any or very few AEDs through this program: Concordia, Claiborne, Vernon, Evangeline, Allen, Madison, Richland, Bienville, St. Landry, East Carroll, Avoyelles, Iberia, and Cameron. These Parishes are considered completely rural by HRSA.

In order for the qualifying rural agency to receive an AED from this grant they must meet the following requirements: 1. Secure Medical Direction; 2. Develop AED protocols; and 3. Implement the training program.

If your organization is located in one of the parishes detailed above and you are interested in applying for an AED, please contact Kathy Trenkle at the Bureau of EMS by calling 225-763-5700 or by e-mail ctrenkle@dhh.la.gov.

Paula Walker Elected to AHA Policy Board

Paula Walker, RT, BSN, RN / CEO of Franklin Medical Center was recently elected by the Board of Trustees of the American Hospital Association to serve as a delegate on the Regional Policy Board. This term is effective January 1, 2006 and expires December 31, 2008.

AHA is located in Chicago, Illinois. The national board will meet three times each year with 2006 meetings being held in Oklahoma City, OK; San Francisco, CA; and Little Rock, AR. These board meetings will address national healthcare issues.

Paula Walker stated, "this is an honor being selected to serve on a national healthcare board, and an opportunity for Franklin Medical Center also, because current and accurate knowledge is the key to our continued improvement of quality healthcare for our communities."



Input Wanted & Welcome!

Contributions to the LRHA Update by members are encouraged and welcome. If you would like to submit an article for inclusion in the Update, simply forward your article or comments to Jeanne at gauthreaux@lrha.org.

Rural Health Clinic Education Conference

Resources, Regulations and Reimbursement

& Practice Management Workshop: *Getting to Your Bottom Line*

January 25-26, 2006 Paragon Conference Center ~ Marksville, LA

Sponsored by The Louisiana Rural Health Association

with support from the Louisiana DHH Bureau of Primary Care and Rural Health

In response to member requests, the Louisiana Rural Health Association has developed, and is offering two educational and informative days of intensive learning and networking specific to rural health clinics. This program has been developed with support from, and in conjunction with, the Department of Health and Hospitals, Bureau of Primary Care and Rural Health.

The educational program, designed for administrative staff and providers, will give attendees up-to-date information regarding legislative activities, changes to RHC rules, and new skills to help improve each clinic's performance and bottom line.

Attendees will be provided with toolkits to take back to their facilities and utilize to conduct assessments specific to electronic medical record readiness. Additionally, break-out sessions have been designed to meet the specific needs of both provider based and free standing facilities. The final session of the educational event will be an interactive dialogue between identified experts in the RHC field and Registered attendees. Opportunities to ask questions specific to RHC challenges will be available. We encouraged participants to prepare and submit questions to LRHA prior to the event so that the accurate response to each question can be delivered at the conference. The conference will also provide opportunities to initiate a dialogue with DHH officials who are directly responsible for the RHC application process, to receive the most current information specific to federal legislation, and to communicate challenges to CMS representatives.

To register, visit the LRHA website, www.lrha.org. Questions regarding the Educational Conference may be directed to LRHA Project Coordinator Stacy Fontenot at 985/369-3813.

NRHA **2006 ANNUAL CONFERENCE WEEK**

**13th Annual
Rural Minority
and Multicultural Health Conference**

*Kaleidoscope of Rural Minority and Multicultural
Health Care Issues*
May 15-16

And

Rural Medical Educators Meeting
May 16

And

29th Annual Conference
Pioneering New Frontiers
May 17-19

Nugget Hotel • Reno, NV

★ ★ **Rural Health** ★ ★ **Policy Institute**

Invited Speakers

- Mark McClellan, MD, Administrator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
- David Brailer, MD, PhD, National Coordinator for Health Information Technology
- Marcia Brand, Ph.D., Director, Office of Rural Health Policy

February 27 - March 1, 2006
Washington, DC Grand Hyatt



NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

www.NRHArural.org/conferences

Louisiana Rural Health Association 2006 Calendar of Events

January 25—26	Rural Health Clinic Education Conference Paragon, Marksville
February 8	Board of Director's Meeting & Strategic Planning Session, Alexandria
February 27—March 1	NRHA Policy Institute Washington, DC
March 21—22	Spring Education Event Eldorado Resort, Shreveport
April 5	Board of Director's Meeting Sheraton Hotel, Baton Rouge
May 15—19	NRHA Annual Conference Reno, NV
June 4, 5, 6	Southern Regional Rural Health Conference Pearl River Resort, Choctaw, MS
August 16	Board of Director's Meeting
October 15, 16, 17	Rural Health Golf Scramble and Conference L'auberge de Lac, Lake Charles
October 16	Board of Directors Meeting L'auberge de Lac, Lake Charles

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