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Letter from the Executive Director



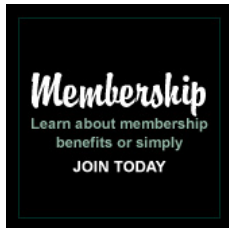
John Lozier, MSSW

This was a good year for the National Health Care for the Homeless Council. Our core programs of advocacy, research, and technical assistance and training prospered and grew. We found new partners and established new collaborations in every aspect of our work, and we strengthened the invisible but palpable bonds of friendship and shared commitment that make the Council a true home for many in the struggle against homelessness.

The National HCH Council's activity and success are evident throughout this newsletter and everywhere in our extensive website and social media. [READ THE LETTER.](#)

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UPCOMING TRAINING EVENTS

EARLY REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

Register for the 2013 National Health Care for the Homeless Conference and Policy Symposium now through January 13 to take advantage of advanced registration discounts.



Health Care for the Homeless providers will gather March 14-16, 2013, in Washington, D.C., to learn from their peers and other leaders and HCH advocates. Conference attendees will have access to dozens of accredited workshops, professional networking opportunities, engaging presentations, rejuvenating social encounters, and inspiring plenary sessions with federal officials and leaders in the HCH field. Pre-Conference Institutes will be held on Wednesday, March 13.

[REGISTER NOW](#) and [FIND OUT MORE.](#)

This event is jointly sponsored by the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine and the National Health Care for the Homeless Council.

WEBINARS

Jump start your New Year with three free, interactive webinars from the National HCH Council:

- **Self-Care for HCH Providers** | Jan. 8, 1 p.m. East. | [REGISTER NOW!](#)
- **Tailoring Outreach for the HCH Field** | Jan. 29, 1 p.m. East. | [REGISTER NOW!](#)
- **A Structural Framework for Meaningful Use of EHR in the HCH Setting** | Jan. 31, 1 p.m. East. | [REGISTER NOW!](#)

View the Council's [webinar page](#) for more information.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE HIGHLIGHT

PROGRAM OFFERS CHANCE TO HEAD OFF EVICTIONS

During a TA site visit to Sioux Falls, Council members Larry Gottlieb and Heather Abrams facilitated a training session on homelessness prevention at the Minnehaha County Health and Human Services Center and led a brainstorming session on how aspects of their Massachusetts-based program might work in South Dakota community. Read more about their visit in [the Argus Leader](#).

POLICY & ADVOCACY

LETTER FROM THE POLICY DIRECTOR

2012 was a whirlwind for the Council's policy team, with the direction of health care policy lurching from the June Supreme Court decision that upheld the Affordable Care Act (but made Medicaid expansion optional) to the November national election that did not resolve ongoing budget concerns or Congressional tensions. All year there was a constant stream of impending budget disasters, proposed federal rules and implementation guidances, think tank analyses, and media hype. Closer to home, every state had some combination of debate & negotiation, task forces & councils, decision-making & decision-avoidance - on a spectrum ranging from political gridlock to early implementation of Medicaid expansion. It's exhausting and exciting at the same time.



[READ THE LETTER.](#)

NEW POLICY BRIEF ON MEDICAID EXPANSION

This [policy brief](#) provides a brief overview of the newly eligible population and provides recommendations for the HCH Community to consider when working within their state to ensure decisions include the needs of those experiencing homelessness.

HHS GUIDES STATES ON ESSENTIAL HEALTH BENEFITS AND MEDICAID

Be aware of [additional guidance](#) HHS has issued to states clarifying that all Medicaid plans for those newly eligible need to include the ten categories of essential health benefits (which include prescription drugs and coverage for mental health and substance abuse services).

RESEARCH UPDATE

IN FOCUS: HIV AND HOMELESSNESS

Recognizing World AIDS Day on December 1, the National HCH Council released a review of recent literature regarding HIV/AIDS among persons experiencing homelessness. In the December 2012 issue of In Focus, special attention is given to research on HIV risk behaviors, predictors of HIV testing utilization, and promising HIV testing strategies for both youth and adult populations experiencing homelessness. Click [here](#) to read the latest issue.



HCH QUALITY LEADERS CASE STUDY

With increased focus on quality of care and improvement processes, the Council identified four HCH grantees leading the way in key quality measures. This [case study](#) highlights these high-performing grantees, the practices they have instituted to improve and support quality of care, and the techniques they use to track, evaluate, and improve their performances. Read the case study [here](#).

ORGANIZATION SPOTLIGHT

Charles Drew Health Center is one of the 10 Health Care for the Homeless projects working with the National HCH Council on the project "Community Health Workers and HCH: A Partnership to Promote Primary Care". Over the past few months, Pat Christopher, Homeless Clinic Coordinator/Behavioral Health Supervisor, has worked hard to collaborate with two local hospitals in Omaha, Nebraska, to hire two capable individuals, ReColla Rimmers and Moses Stephen Loli.



[READ MORE.](#)

JENKINS IN RECENTLY PUBLISHED JOURNAL

Contributing to "Health Status and Health Care Experiences among Homeless Patients", Darlene Jenkins, DrPH, Research Director for the National Health Care for the Homeless Council, was recently published in the journal *Health Services Research*. The investigators sought to examine health status and health care experiences of homeless patients in health centers to compare them with their non-homeless counterparts.



[READ MORE.](#)

HCH CLINICIANS' NETWORK NEWS

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD

Nominate a deserving colleague for the Clinicians' Network's annual Award for Outstanding Service, to be presented in March at the [2013 National Health Care for the Homeless Conference](#). Nominations are due January 2, 2013; click [here](#) for full details and the nomination form.



RESPITE CARE PROVIDERS' NETWORK NEWS

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE NOMINATIONS

The Medical Respite Award for Excellence recognizes outstanding contribution to the field of medical respite care by a person/team/agency as determined by their impact on improved health and quality of life for people experiencing homelessness. Contributions in the field can include (but are not limited to) clinical care, program development, policy change, advocacy, community collaboration, innovations in research, etc.



Nominees are due December 14, and the winner will be announced at the 2013 National Health Care for the Homeless Conference in March in Washington, D.C. Click [here](#) to nominate a colleague today!

NATIONAL CONSUMER ADVISORY BOARD NEWS

LEADERSHIP PARTICIPATES IN NATIONAL STUDY

In October of this year, researchers at UCLA invited NCAB leadership to participate on an Enabling Services research panel. Enabling Services are non-medical services that are delivered by primary care practices to facilitate low-income patients' access to healthcare services. Former-NCAB Chair Amy Grassetto flew to Sacramento, California, to participate in the first panel on Enabling Services on November 14.



[READ MORE.](#)

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