

WVPBRN & COMMUNITY NEWS

A monthly newsletter brought to you by the Community Engagement Core of the West Virginia Clinical and Translational Science Institute

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SPOTLIGHT: WVCTSI engages communities in health discussion

The West Virginia Clinical and Translational Science Institute (WVCTSI) recently held three public town hall meetings in the Greenbrier Valley, New River Valley, and the Mid-Ohio Valley. These public forums provided community members with an opportunity to discuss the health concerns they feel are most important in their communities and the role research can play in addressing those concerns.

At each of the three events, attendees spoke to the many health disparities affecting West Virginia. Common challenges raised by community members were cancer, drug abuse and chronic pain management, access to healthcare, and geographic isolation.

“At WVCTSI, we have a responsibility to foster research that directly impacts the people of West Virginia,” said Sally Hodder, M.D., director of WVCTSI. “Engaging people with diverse perspectives from these communities is essential for us to perform this duty.”

“We already had, in this first meeting, quite a few sectors represented,” said Melanie Seiler, executive director of Active Southern West Virginia. “That’s what we need, everybody at the same table working towards the same mission of improving the community’s health.”

Several community members believe this type of inclusive discussion is rare, but crucial to improving the health profile of West Virginia.

“If anything major is going to be changed in West Virginia, it’s going to happen in these communities. It’s those champions who know the culture of the community and can be their advocates,” said Stamatiki “Matina” Clapsis, youth activities coordinator with the Family Refuge Center in Greenbrier County.

During the Mid-Ohio Valley Town Hall event, Drema Mace, Ph.D., M.S.P., executive director of the Mid-Ohio Valley Health Department, shared the outcomes of their recent needs assessment survey and improvement plan to provide more background for the conversation.



Some of the ideas raised to address the identified challenges included increasing the focus on youth prevention initiatives, improving rural access to clinical trials, and expanding genomics to better understand pre-dispositions to common health issues.

After the success of these events, WVCTSI will continue to create more ongoing conversations and partnerships throughout the state.

“The perspective we gained from engaging these diverse voices is invaluable as we continue to support research that can truly help the people of this state,” said Hodder.



STORY: Learning Collaborative surveys med school residents in WV

The healthcare climate in the US is changing dramatically. These practice transformation initiatives required clinics to undergo systems changes to improve health outcomes, enhancing access and quality, and reducing healthcare costs. As many providers are adapting to the changes, it can be difficult to incorporate new education and experiences given to medical students in their residency programs. Residents will need new knowledge and skills to adapt to the significant changes.

The WVPBRN is working with resident advisors from various institutions on this pilot idea to examine residency programs by assessing skills, confidence, and attitudes toward current residency programs’ research and quality improvement requirements in preparation for practice transformation implementation. The participating programs include WVU Family Medicine, WVU Eastern Division, United Hospital Center, and West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine’s State-wide Campus. The goal is to determine areas of improvement within the residency curriculum and to increase the preparedness of new clinicians in practice transformation abilities. Current residency programs’ research and quality improvement training was assessed through an anonymous survey, given during a regularly scheduled residency meeting.

The survey results showed 76% of primary care residents in the network residency program sites felt that quality improvement projects are beneficial to clinical practice. However, only 64% had conducted or worked on a quality improvement project. The majority of the residents (40%) were moderately satisfied with their program’s current research/quality improvement curriculum. Forty percent (40%) of the residents were only ‘somewhat confident in their ability to perform a quality improvement project.

These results allowed the collaborative team to discuss ways to address the curriculum requirements and needed confidence in primary care residents. The team recruited one resident from each program site to participate in a call with each other and discuss quality improvement strategies from the various locations.

The learning collaborative team aims to use these discussions to guide the resident representatives to becoming more engaged in quality improvement, expand to include other residency programs and collectively work on a project to span these residency programs across W.Va.

REMINDER: Rural Health Conference Networking Event

The WVPBRN will be hosting a networking dinner on Thursday, October 20th, 2016 at 6:30 p.m. during the Rural Health Conference at Chief Logan Resort. This event is open to all WVPBRN members in attendance and includes a dinner buffet.

This networking event will provide WVPBRN members with another opportunity to communicate with other sites across the state. If you plan to attend the event, contact Jay Mason (jd Mason@hsc.wvu.edu) by September 30, 2016.

Full conference and one-day registrations are available through the West Virginia Rural Health Association. For more information on the conference, visit the their website at WVRHA.

A full WVPBRN Retreat will be held in the spring of 2017 and will focus on network goals, researcher and community partners, patient engagement strategies, and result dissemination.

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