

Teleconferences and Guidelines Update

by Barbara Smith



These are exciting times for ANGELS. The program, over the past several months, has been in the spotlight with new grant announcements and national honors bestowed upon Curtis L. Lowery, M.D., Professor and Chair, Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology; Director, Maternal-Fetal Medicine & ANGELS; and Executive Director, Center for Distance Health. One of the most recent grants is from HRSA, titled Delta Interactive Solution to Collaborate Over Video for Education and Resources (DISCOVER) for Maternal Child Health (MCH) Leadership, awarded in July, to ANGELS. The three-year grant plans to provide new educational outreach opportunities for the eight-state Mississippi Delta Region which includes Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, Missouri, Illinois, and Kentucky. DISCOVER will build upon the foundation of ANGELS which began offering antenatal and neonatal guidelines and interactive video continuing education opportunities to Arkansas' providers in 2003. While Arkansas has been the geographic epicenter for the ANGELS target audience, this dynamic MCH distance learning effort will expand its reach to participants from the entire Mississippi Delta Region. It is in the Delta where healthcare professionals are all too familiar with the health care disparities and barriers in caring for their patients. To help overcome the region's disparities and barriers, DISCOVER will accomplish the following goals:

- 1 Develop distance learning curricula fostering MCH leadership, competencies, and evidence-based practices, specifically addressing topics relevant to MCH professionals in the Delta to include racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse themes;
- 2 Increase attainment of MCH continuing education (CE) in the Delta through distance learning opportunities, specifically targeting outreach among racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse MCH professionals;
- 3 Increase understanding and comprehension of MCH evidence-based practices among participants in the Delta; and
- 4 Improve translation of MCH evidence based practices into care provided by participants.

This series of interactive video conferences, including other ANGELS teleconferences, such as the long running and popular High-Risk Obstetrics Teleconference, are ideal for expanding to the broader Delta region their emphasis on the evidence-based care and best practices realistic to rural and underserved regions.

The following list two core venues which many of our readers have attended:

- **Obstetrics and Gynecology (OB/GYN) Grand Rounds:**

Held weekly, this teleconference provides a forum for discussion of OB/GYN case studies.

- **ONE Team – Maternal, Neonatal, and Pediatric Nursing**

Exchange: Held weekly, this teleconference invites nurses practicing in obstetric, neonatology, pediatrics and related disciplines to discuss best practices in maternal child nursing.

When you tune in on one ANGELS teleconferences in the near future, we hope that you will help us welcome a wider audience of fellow physicians and nurses from the Mississippi Delta Region.

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the ANGELS REPORT

ANTENATAL & NEONATAL GUIDELINES, EDUCATION AND LEARNING SYSTEM



SUMMER 2010

Maternal-Child Health Leadership Academy

Stephanie Wyatt and Sarah Rhoads were selected to participate in the Maternal-Child Health Leadership Academy offered by Sigma Theta Tau International, in conjunction with Johnson & Johnson Pediatric Institute, LLC. The 18-month mentored leadership development experience challenges nurses to improve the health of mothers and babies by preparing them to influence practice and patient outcomes. Multilevel learning is achieved through content in leadership self-assessment and development, interdisciplinary team development, project development, management and evaluation, and dissemination of lessons learned as well as project outcomes

Wyatt under the direction of Rhoads and the faculty mentor will design, implement and evaluate a program over an 18 month period. Billie Bitkowski, APRN, MSN, Associate Professor at Northwestern State University of Louisiana will serve as the diad's faculty mentor.

Titled "RN IVs Leading the Way", Wyatt's program will include a 9 month mentoring program for RN IV obstetric and neonatal nurses at UAMS and ANGELS. These nurses are already eager to fulfill this newly designed role at UAMS and are actively seeking out opportunities to enhance their professionalism and leadership skills. The goal is to see more RN IVs 1) joining their specialty organization 2) becoming certified in their specialty 3) speaking at local, state and eventually national / international conferences 4) taking part in their local specialty organization through leadership positions, etc. These statistics will be tallied at the end of the program and will serve as the program evaluation. While not measured for this program, the proposed outcome will be increased job satisfaction thus retention, that will translate to improved patient outcomes.

Rhoads and Wyatt met for a week in July in Indianapolis as a group and will again in March in Scottsdale, Ariz. for in-depth leadership training, time to work on projects with faculty mentors, and for networking. "This is the single-most rewarding experience I have taken part in during my nursing career to date!" says Wyatt.



Stephanie Wyatt, MNSc, WH-APNC, Sarah Rhoads, DNP, WHNP, APN (both standing) and of Billie Bitkowski, APRN, MSN, Associate Professor of Northwestern State University of Louisiana

"This is the single-most rewarding experience I have taken part in during my nursing career to date!"

Outreach-Back on the Road Again

by Michael Manley



John F. Kennedy stated, "Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."

And change is continuing. With the submission of the Department of Commerce grant for the state, it has been great travelling across it once again. We are very excited about our newest ANGELS High Risk clinic at the AHEC in El Dorado. Dr. Martha Garrett-Shaver and Kelly Cook have done an excellent job in ramping up this clinic with us. Not only is this a first for them, but also the first clinic for our own Dr. Pat Magann and Stacie Ford. We are lucky to have the expertise of Dr. Magann and Stacie in order to serve more patients across the state. We are in the process of wiring and assessing our next two clinics in Pine Bluff and Russellville, with the discussions of a possible additional two in NE and NW Arkansas. Seven years ago when we started we were having to battle to get clinics going; now we can't get them up soon enough!

On the same track nationally we have been designated as the Telemedicine Training Provider for Cisco/Tandberg. We will be offering training modules interactively for other health care programs that are starting or expanding telemedicine in their state. The word is getting out quickly about the Telehealth statewide success and presence here in Arkansas. Each module will be detailed specifically for the needs of each individual program, and will draw from a myriad of telehealth resources here at UAMS and others.

All this can be attributed to the ANGELS team and hard work that happens every day for the patients and providers here. We are very lucky to work for and with some of the most progressive visionaries in health care. We are continuing to make change in order to make things better!



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS FOR MEDICAL SCIENCES

Call Center Update

by Donna Williams



The Call Center has recently said goodbye to one of our nurses, Kristi Thompson RN. Kristi worked in our Physician Call Center (PCC) division for a little over a year, and will truly be missed. She has moved back to Mississippi to be close to her family. She will be beginning a job at UAMMC as the lead nurse with a huge task of starting up a new pediatric cardiology program. This will really be a good use of Kristi's experience and talents!

I would like to welcome the following nurses to ANGELS Call Center:



Suzanne Thornton— comes to us from E6. Suzanne has been a nurse for nine years and has experience in labor and delivery, high risk antepartum/postpartum, nursery, and emergency department. She still works PRN at Mena Regional in the labor and delivery.



Stacy Noble—comes to us from outside UAMS as the co-owner/manager of a home health care business. Stacy has been a nurse for 13 years: working in L&D, critical care, preop /recovery, and home health. For the past 1 ½ yrs she has been



Kay Ward—comes to us from the NICU. Kay has been a nurse for 14 years and has experience in L&D, NICU, the main OR, and travel nursing.



Lisa Morris—comes to us from F6. Lisa has been a nurse for 13 years and has experience in high risk OB (antepartum/postpartum), infectious disease, cardiology, and the emergency department.



Pam Reed—comes to us from E6. Pam has been a RN for 15 years, and was an LPN for many years. She has experience in labor and delivery, High Risk antepartum/postpartum, NICU, and the emergency department.

The Call Center is also excited to report the addition of IT video support stationed within the Call Center after hours to support all of our telemedicine needs. The new IT video support employees are...



John Ritchie



Deborah Baldwin



Willis Findley

I am very excited to add these new employees to our work family! We welcome wealth of experience that they bring with them.

Awards

UAMS AWARDED \$102 MILLION FROM BROADBAND TECHNOLOGY OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

ANGELS has become known for its big ideas and far-reaching efforts, but one dream has been long brushed off as impossible, merely a fictional tale of "what could be." However, in the summer of 2010, dreams became reality.

On August 27, 2010, Rick Wade, advisor and deputy chief of staff at the U.S. Department of Commerce, announced a landmark grant award to the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences: in response to their proposal for funds from the Broadband Technology Opportunities Program, UAMS was awarded \$102 million to support a statewide \$128-million broadband infrastructure. The Arkansas Healthcare, Higher Education, Public Safety, & Research Integrated Broadband Initiative will provide upgraded bandwidth, connection to a fiber backbone, and/or equipment to 474 entities located throughout each of the state's 75 counties. The Principal Investigator of this award is Curtis Lowery, the Director of ANGELS and the Center for Distance Health, and the grant was prepared by his team of ANGELS and Center for Distance Health dreamers.

In its most basic form, this grant will offer two primary benefits to its partnering facilities: 1) increased bandwidth and 2) added equipment. Some facilities will receive significant upgrades in bandwidth, so they may participate in healthcare technology activities over the statewide telehealth network. Many partners will carry out activities, much like ANGELS does, in their desired fields of medical disciplines, while others may seek other applications, like home health, electronic medical records, and other technological exchanges. Some facilities will receive interactive video equipment to enable them to participate in teleconferencing and telemedicine, as ANGELS does daily. This new equipment will welcome a host of entities into the network with the capabilities to communicate with all the 474 partners, including ANGELS. No matter what level of bandwidth or type of interactive video

equipment an entity receives through BTOP funding, tremendous new possibilities are now open to Arkansas's citizenry and its healthcare workforce.

This grant is for everyone in Arkansas, not only UAMS, ANGELS, or the Center for Distance Health. It stands as an achievement for our state for which everyone in and affiliated with ANGELS can be proud. The partners that comprise the near-500 participating sites and other supporters include the following entities.

- Arkansas Association of Public Universities
- Arkansas State Library
- Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges
- Baptist Health
- Arkansas Center for Health Improvement
- Community Health Centers of Arkansas
- Arkansas Children's Hospital
- Connect Arkansas
- Arkansas Department of Health
- Delta Regional Authority
- Arkansas Department of Human Services
- HomeCare Association of Arkansas
- Arkansas Department of Information Systems
- Mental Health Council of Arkansas
- Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care
- Methodist Family Health
- Arkansas State Highway Commission
- Metropolitan Emergency Management System
- Arkansas Telehealth Oversight & Management
- Pathfinder, Inc.
- Arkansas Hospital Association
- St. Vincent's Health System
- Arkansas Research and Education Optical Network (ARE-ON)
- University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS)

While the grant award will reach and affect the entire population of Arkansas, certain benefits may be seen within ANGELS. One, healthcare professionals who once did not have adequate Internet speed can now participate in and benefit from ANGELS' guidelines, rounds, and teleconferences. In a state with high infant mortality rates, the broadband infrastructure will mean more mothers' and babies' quality of lives improved through specialty clinical consultation and prenatal education. ANGELS' reach into the state's rural areas will greatly increase because of these funds, allowing even clinics with the smallest of budgets to be involved in continuing clinical consultations and clinical education. These new opportunities will allow more rural

providers to maintain their local client base without referring patients to travel hundreds of miles to distant specialists or tertiary hospital, which in turn, saves Arkansas's at-risk women money and time. The record-breaking grant will help so many, including those who partner with and utilize ANGELS' services.

The \$102-million award is the largest federal grant ever received by UAMS, and it is the second largest broadband infrastructure grant awarded so far by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Now, that's an achievement of which to be proud, ANGELS. Congratulations, Arkansas!

ANGELS' DISCOVER MCH LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Mississippi River Delta is one of the poorest areas in the nation, according to the Delta Regional Authority. Because of its economic problems, the Delta suffers from educational, occupational, and perhaps most tragically, healthcare downfalls and shortcomings. ANGELS and the Center for Distance Health (CDH) stand in a unique position to help not only fellow Arkansans, but also those living in other Delta states through their telemedical services. It is because of this unique position that two major grants were awarded to ANGELS and the Center for Distance Health to help mothers, infants, and healthcare professionals throughout Arkansas and the Delta.

The Health Resources and Services Administration's Maternal Child Health Bureau is funding the ANGELS' DISCOVER MCH Leadership Program (Delta Interactive Solution to Collaborate Over Video for Education and Resources for Maternal Child Health). DISCOVER MCH will address the continuing education needs of MCH providers in the Delta by inviting physicians, nurses, and other healthcare professionals practicing in Arkansas and seven other Delta Region states to meet via live interactive video teleconferences to collaboratively discuss best practices and case studies in obstetrical, neonatal and pediatric health. Participants will originate from a range of disciplines with the common denominator of a desire to learn about MCH topics and the racial, ethnic, and cultural healthcare themes within the Delta. The three-year, \$300,000 award will allow the program to foster mutual learning and understanding of rural health care, a feature central to the effort to address Arkansas's own rural healthcare needs. This grant is further discussed in our Teleconferences and Guidelines Update article in this issue.

"The three-year, \$300,000 award will allow the program to foster mutual learning and understanding of rural health care..."

Pediatric Update

by Julie Hall-Barrow and Shannon Lewis



Telenursery is continuing to grow with a total of 22 sites around the state (including UAMS and ACH) with units in their nursery. Since the winter newsletter, we have added Saint Mary's in Russellville, White County in Searcy, and Sparks Health System in Fort Smith. Delta Memorial Hospital in Dumas was added in August 2010. Dr Whit Hall conducts interactive census rounds three days a week to help promote regionalization. Working with these sites helps facilitate appropriate back transports as well as any incoming transports or subspecialty consults.

Adding the telemedicine units to these nurseries around the state has helped not only the smaller nursery feel connected, but has also helped the nurseries that have a neonatologist on staff work with our neonatologist to provide collaboration and best practice intervention with peer review on those difficult cases or anything else that may come up.

The CMS Transformation grant titled the TOUCH (Telemedicine Outreach Utilizing Collaborative Healthcare) grant came to an end in March 2010. TOUCH identified 9 outlying hospitals and installed telemedicine equipment in the Labor and Delivery and in the Nurseries to improve obstetrical and neonatal outcomes through regionalization of care. The team is in the process of collecting, analyzing, and evaluating the programs effectiveness.

Telemedicine Update

by Rosalyn Perkins



We are planning to increase accommodations for fetal echoes in the near future, stay tuned.



Accolades to Gordon Low, APN, for receiving the 2010 AWHONN, "Outstanding Innovative Program Paper Award". We are glad to have you on our local and state team.