

Rural Health Week-2018 Summary

This year the Office of Primary Care and Rural Health conducted NJ Rural Health Weeks, a statewide celebration from September 16 through September 30, 2018. These weeks are periods in which the Office of Rural Health collaborated with partners & stakeholders during NJ's harvest season with small towns and farming communities celebrating rural uniqueness, providing resources and health care services in their back yards.

During this time rural communities partnered with local health departments, Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC), hospitals, media and other community groups to provide health educational information, screenings and other health & social services. The Office of Primary Care and Rural Health Staff members at the state level attended and presented a proclamation signed by Governor Phillip Murphy to show support. Here are a few examples of our partnership events:



September 15, 2018- Community Health Festival- Putting Prevention into Action at Pine Grove Plaza- Acme Parking Lot in Browns Mills, NJ with Friendship AME Church, Burlington Co. Health Dept, Sister Will You Help Me: Breast Cancer Support - Cooper University, Strive Physical Therapy, Pemberton Township schools, and the Honorable Mayor David A. Patriarca and many other health and wellness providers with health and education materials, resources and services. Over 100 people participated.



September 18, 2018- Lead Testing for Migrant families at PathStone- a community organization who delivers health education, workforce development, children day care services and housing services to migrant farm worker families. This partnership consists of the Cumberland County Health Department providing lead screening testing to over 25 individuals and connecting them to a medical home with CompleteCare, a Federally Qualified Health Center that is around the corner from PathStone.



September 19, 2018- Access to Care (including free health screenings), Health Education information and resources. Health Screening consisting of free glucose, cholesterol, blood pressure, body mass index and weight screening held at two locations (Atlantic County Health department in Hammonton and at the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center in Newtonville) in Atlantic County by the Atlantic County Health Department in partnership with the Atlantic/Cape May Coalition for Health and the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center targeting food Pantry patrons and other members of the local community. There were over 100 people in attendance at these events.



September 22, 2018- Hopewell Township held its 3rd annual Hopewell Day at the Greater Bridgeton Amish Market in Bridgeton. Many health, social and activities for rural resident of Cumberland and Salem county residents. Health screenings and health educational materials sponsored by the Cumberland County Health Department. Over 300 people were in attendance.



September 24, 2018- Quality Insights , Premier Health Associates and the Sussex County Main Library in Sussex County in Newton partnered for NJ Rural Health Weeks to conduct a Diabetes Self-Management workshop for their community. Their mission was to bring people and information together to improve health. The Diabetes Self-Management Program (DSMP) is a program for people with diabetes; developed by Stanford University, the program helps individuals deal with the symptoms of diabetes and teaches them how to eat healthy, be active, monitor blood sugar levels,

take medication, problem solve, and reduce risk for other health conditions. There were 25 participants in attendance.



- September 27, 2018- ". Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers (SJFMC) unveiled a Rural Health Art Exhibit titled, "From Our Hands to Yours." The exhibit highlighted the work of local farmworkers across Southern Jersey (Burlington, Atlantic, Camden, Gloucester and Salem Counties) profiling the farmer workers contributions to our agricultural system. They showcased the exhibit as a traveling/showcase of farmers telling their story of gratitude to be receiving quality health care services from a "community friendly & caring centers". It began on 9/24 in Salem, 9/25 in Hammonton and ending on 9/27 with a kick off event with a presentation from the CEO, Linda Flake to the Farmworkers who took part in the exhibit who was presented with photos of themselves in appreciation of their service to millions of Americans and ended the presentation by unveiling the art exhibit. After the exhibit they hosted a farm stand outside of the FQHC center where we all helped to distribute produce from local farms to community member for free to highlight both the work of local farmworkers and SJFMC Farmacy Program that provides healthy vegetables to patients in food deserts. Over 100 participated in this event.

Quote from Linda Y. Flake, SJFMC President/CEO:

New Jersey, the Garden State, where over 40% of its own residents aren't sure why this nickname is on every license plate in the state, has approximately 715,000 acres dedicated to agriculture and farmers produce 100 different kinds of fruits and vegetables in rural areas that extend from southern New Jersey to points north. Agriculture is the state's third largest industry and is valued at well over a billion dollars!

Something else many New Jerseyans don't know! While most may be privileged to have access to abundant, affordable produce year-round, many of us don't know from where that food comes? Who tends and harvests the crops? Each year, millions of farmworkers and their families labor in orchards, vineyards, and fields across the country to provide us with fresh fruits, vegetables, and other agricultural products. Farmworkers are comprised mainly of immigrant labor. While some farmworkers are permanent workers, almost 30,000 farmworkers

leave their homes in Puerto Rico, Haiti, Jamaica, Mexico, and other Central American countries to follow the Eastern Migrant Stream from Florida through Maine, stopping along the way in New Jersey every year, many working the rural areas of Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Salem Counties. They handpick blueberries, peaches, tomatoes, cranberries, strawberries, corn and other fruits and vegetables grown in the area. The agricultural industry relies heavily on farmworkers, and while they provide invaluable and necessary goods and services, they often earn low wages and face job instability as their employment depends upon weather conditions, the health of crops, and immigration policies. Agricultural workers endure many job-related hazards and risks associated with the manual nature of their work and working conditions including: outdoor work in the rain and blazing sun; strained muscles and bones due to constant bending and stooping; exposure to pesticides; skin disorders, and infectious diseases. They also work extremely long hours, from sun up to sun down. Most live in isolation, away from their families, and face linguistic, cultural and social barriers, as a way of life. Many suffer chronic health conditions including diabetes and hypertension. While they work to provide nutritious food to our tables, they generally live in close quarters, eat in groups at migrant camps, and seldom have control over their own diet. Due to the many extreme conditions and challenges agricultural workers encounter, many farmworkers suffer poorer than average health and without the help of Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers Migrant Outreach Team, our providers, clinical support staff, and health center, our local farmworkers would lack access to health care, education and other services. At SJMFC we are committed to helping farmworkers in any way we can and enhancing their lives by providing them with compassionate healthcare and empowering them through health education and promotion. We find that their positivity, pride, and determination are admirable! As they work hard for better lives for themselves and their families, we ask you to do your part. Understand the life of a farmworker. Recognize and appreciate their various cultures and contributions to our communities and say thanks to the helping hands that put food on our plates. This photo exhibit, *From Our Hands to Yours*, is Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers way of showing our respect and appreciation for the migrant and seasonal farmworkers. ~ Linda Flake



September 28, 2018-Flu Clinic at Halveyville Elementary School, Port Norris, NJ. Cumberland County Health Department provided free flu shots, Horizon NJ Health provided Blood pressure & glucose testing, NJCEED provided cancer screening information and nutritional counseling to over 100 participants.