The Arkansas Minority Health Consortium is a collaboration of approximately 30 entities united to increase awareness of minority health and community issues that impact minority health. In addition, the Consortium members are advocates for resources to tackle the vast minority health disparities in Arkansas. The primary goal of the Consortium is to make an impact on public policy that affect minority health by researching, developing, and implementing legislative initiatives to address health and community policy concerns that will benefit all Arkansans.

The Arkansas Minority Health Commission (AMHC) has facilitated this growing alliance of health care, health policy, and community based organizations since 2001. The Consortium meets monthly and, therefore, works towards inclusive discussions on all levels to focus on the well documented disparities facing minority and underserved citizens in our state.

In August of 2010, the Consortium undertook a notable project of compiling all of the members’ mission, vision, and minority health programs into a directory. The Arkansas Minority Health Consortium 2011 Directory is a tool for elected and public health officials to identify the state agencies, non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations and businesses in their community that are addressing the health concerns of our citizens through the Consortium. This project is a result of collaboration with the Consortium members and the dedicated staff and Commissioners of the Arkansas Minority Health Commission. The directory will be available for distribution in January 2011.

“We are excited about this directory and the important information it provides for state leaders and the community about the extensive resources available in Arkansas,” said Dr. Idonia Trotter, AMHC Executive Director. “The directory highlights the remarkable organizations that work diligently everyday to undertake the innumerable minority health issues that face our underserved and disparate communities in

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Arkansas,” she said.

In addition to member support, the directory has letters of endorsement from the Honorable Governor Mike Beebe, Dr. Idonia Trotter (Executive Director of AMHC), Senator Tracy Steele (Arkansas Black Caucus), and Senator Jack Crumbly (Chair, Senate Subcommittee on Minority Health).

Moreover, during the 88th Arkansas General Assembly’s legislative session, the Consortium members are hosting weekly breakfast forums for our legislators to educate and inform them about the minority health policy initiatives being proposed during the 2011 session.

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**Minority Health Consortium Legislative Breakfast Forums at the Capitol**

The 88th Arkansas General Assembly has arrived! The Arkansas Minority Health Commission (AMHC) gladly announces the start of the Minority Health Consortium Legislative Breakfast Forums.

The breakfast forums will be held during the legislative session on every Tuesday, (beginning January 18, 2011 – February 22, 2011), 7 am – 8 am, at the Capitol Café located in the basement of the Arkansas Capitol. The public is also encouraged to attend.

Each Tuesday will highlight a different member of the Consortium and address a minority health issue and possible legislation affecting Arkansans. For more information contact Kendal Booker at kbooker00@yahoo.com or call 501-563-0731 or Pamela Hayes at 501-686-2732.

**Consortium Breakfast Forums:**
- Tuesday, January 25th – Coalition for a Tobacco Free Arkansas (CTFA)
- Tuesday, February 1st – Women’s Council on African American Affairs (WCAAA)
- Tuesday, February 8th – ADH/HHI (tentative)
- Tuesday, February 15th – AARP Arkansas

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**Watch for the Consortium Directory coming this month!**

In this directory you will learn about members of state government, nonprofit and grassroots organizations that are dedicated to improving the health of all Arkansans.
Arkansas Minority Health Consortium Vision

The Arkansas Minority Health Consortium is commissioned to:
* Influencing the development of policy;
* Leveraging opportunities to maximize our affect on eliminating minority health disparities in Arkansas;
* Enhancing the quality of life for underserved communities through effective outreach and broadening collaborations; and
* Strengthening all Arkansans through education of the vast resources available to their holistic care, physical, mental and social conditions in the treatment of illness.
As we embark on the new year, many of our lives will be impacted by our state elected officials as he/she begins setting policies and procedures to ensure our welfare. During the 88th Arkansas General Assembly, the Arkansas Minority Health Commission (AMHC) will work tirelessly with state legislators in advocating for policies which are designed to address health disparities in the minority populations of Arkansas.

Most Arkansans and healthcare providers rely on entities such as AMHC to help direct our state government by providing additional information for services to be rendered to minority Arkansans. AMHC has a team of experts who see the need daily as we work in communities all across the state. Then, with careful studying and gathering data through survey which shows the racial and ethnic minority disparities in health and healthcare, AMHC recommends changes to our elected state officials in ensuring ways to better enhance the quality of life for many minorities through healthcare initiatives.

AMHC works independently yet interdependently with the Arkansas Department of Health and other public health organizations in the state. One of the commission’s main focus is to promote health awareness to the community in a variety of forums that will heighten knowledge of medical issues known to cause many premature deaths in the minority population. Diseases such as sickle-cell anemia; diabetes; hypertension; HIV/AIDS and other sexual transmitted diseases are on the rise in minority Arkansans.

Community awareness and education are key functions of the AMHC. It is vital to bring services to the public through effective outreach mechanisms such as health fairs, public forums, seminars and literature.

The Arkansas Minority Health Commission is available to meet the needs of local organizations including schools, civic organizations or churches which desire to improve health education in their community. Information is available on the AMHCs website: www.arminorityhealth.com. Also visit our Facebook page at facebook.com/arminorityhealth.

Sandra Kennedy-Mitchell
Appointed to the Arkansas Minority Health Commission in 2010. She works as an Office Manager for Joe Harris, Jr. Trucking Inc. and Piney Ridge Mental Health Facility. She resides in Mississippi County (Osceola).

Interested in a career in Health Information Technology?

By 2015 everyone will be required to have Electronic Health Records (EHR). The work required to reach this goal is expected to create a high demand in several types of Health Information Technology (IT) professions.

National Park Community College has implemented a non-degree educational program designed to provide a pool of qualified workers with both medical and information technology knowledge. The electronic health record project will provide quality and efficiency, while maintaining privacy and security of medical information.

The HealthIT program is designed to be completed in six months or less for full time students and it allows the student to focus on workforce roles such as:

- Practice Workflow/ Information Management Redesign Specialist
- Clinician/Practitioner Consultant
- Trainer
- Implementation Support Specialist
- Implementation Manager
- Technical/ Software Support Staff

Students will need to meet pre-assessment criteria before entering this program and will need previous experience or training in either the healthcare/medical field or information technology. The cost of the program is $500 but will be returned in the form of a stipend upon completion of the program. Additional information and requirements can be found at http://npcc.edu/community/health/healthIT.htm. AMHC encourages anyone interested to participate in this opportunity!!!
The Senate Subcommittee on Minority Health Disparities conducted meetings and public forums around the state from June 2009 through October 2010. The meetings and public forums were held in counties where the average life expectancy was 10 years less than residents of the County with the highest life expectancy (Benton County). The counties were Phillips, Sevier, Dallas, St. Francis, Pulaski and Mississippi.

The purpose of the public forums was to educate residents in selected counties about their health statistics and the existing resources available to them; inform residents about the importance of behavior changes that would improve their health; and, listen to residents’ voice their needs and concerns on how best to move them toward better health.

In reviewing the comments made at the various public forums, reoccurring themes, concerns and needs were expressed. Regional similarities existed in the need for prescription assistance, preventive services and screenings with follow-up provided. Screenings should be comprehensive and should include prostate and vision screenings when possible.

The biggest concern in De Queen (Sevier County), with the high Hispanic population, was the need for additional health screenings and follow-up. The following are a few examples of concerns and needs expressed by the community: Contaminated drinking water and soil, improving the nutritional value of school lunches, Regional prevention and wellness Center for health education/prevention information is needed.

The acquired information led to the following recommendations:

- All state agencies, commissions and boards receiving state dollars, tobacco settlement funds and/or funding towards improving the quality of health in the State of Arkansas should renew and increase focus and presence of their coordinated and comprehensive efforts in counties with greatest need. They shall annually report to the Senate Subcommittee on Minority Health and the Joint Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee on efforts. The efforts shall include Prostate, HIV, Diabetes, Mammograms, Sickle Cell, Glucose, and Hypertension.

- Require coordinated and comprehensive health fairs that provide screenings and public health forums by state agencies, commissions and boards at least once a year in each county where life expectancy at birth is at least 10 years less than the counties with the highest life expectancy. The State agencies, commission and boards’ screenings shall include Prostate, HIV, Diabetes, Mammograms, Sickle Cell, Glucose, and Hypertension.

- Expand dental sealants for lower income families in the Delta Region and other underserved areas by targeting schools with a high minority population in underserved areas of the state through a school based dental sealant program.
Public Health Fair

Little Rock, Arkansas

Monday, Jan. 24, 2011
10:00AM - 2:00PM

The State Capitol Rotunda
Little Rock, Arkansas

Free health screenings!
Blood pressure, glucose, cholesterol…and more

Health information provided by local health organizations

Idonia L. Trotter, JD, MPS, Executive Director

For more information, contact the Arkansas Minority Health Commission
501.686.2720
1123 S. University, Ste. 312
Little Rock, Arkansas
arminorityhealth.com

Putting Your Tobacco Settlement Dollars to Work!
PRESENTS A
PUBLIC FORUM

NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR

MONDAY, JAN. 24, 2011
6:00PM - 8:00PM

NORTH LITTLE ROCK COMMUNITY CENTER
2700 WILLOW STREET
NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR

ATTENDEES WILL BE PROVIDED:
• Information on services available
• Information on how health reform will impact minority communities

ATTENDEES ARE ASKED TO PROVIDE THEIR VIEWS ON:
• Services needed
• Health Concerns
• Use of Existing services
• Gaps in Services

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT THE ARKANSAS MINORITY HEALTH COMMISSION
501.686.2720
1123 S. University, Ste. 312
Little Rock, Arkansas
arminorityhealth.com

Dinner Provided by the Arkansas Minority Health Commission
Putting Your Tobacco Settlement Dollars to Work!

Idonia L. Trotter, JD, MPS, Executive Director
Health Care Access: 28% of nonelderly African Americans and 40% of nonelderly Hispanics are uninsured in Arkansas. Source: Kaiser Family Foundation

82% (114,844) of black children live in low-income families

Quality Health Care: More minorities state that people like themselves are treated less fairly when seeking health care, specifically, 40% of urban blacks, 29% of rural blacks and 25% of Hispanics. 42% (199,879) of white children live in low-income families

Source: Statistics based on 2008 National Center for Children in Poverty, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University

Behavioral: More than 73% of African Americans are overweight or obese; compare to 66% of all Arkansans. Source: 2008 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System-Arkansas

Watch for the new edition of Bridge coming in April 2011!

Tune in February 15th for the next show! February is Heart Disease Month & Dental Hygiene Month

We will have special guests who will discuss the disparities in heart disease/stroke disease and dental health.

Listen as we give legislative updates on activities pertinent to minority health such as what bills passed/failed in January and February.

Every Third Tuesday on the Broadway Joe Morning Show 7am-9am

Listen to 92.3 KIPR Power 92.3 JAMS

Post questions @ www.power923.com