Team’s study printed in public health journal

A study that highlights the benefits of early childhood immunization among Oregon Health Plan clients is the subject of an article in the May 2006 edition of the prestigious American Journal of Public Health.

The study was conducted by a team of DHS Office of Medical Assistance Programs (OMAP) employees in partnership with a former OMAP staffer who now teaches at Western Oregon University.

They are Jessica Henderson of Western Oregon University, Susan Arbor, Steve Broich, and Jean Hutchinson of OMAP, and Judy Mohr-Peterson of the DHS Forecasting Unit (formerly of OMAP).

Oregon’s ALERT Immunization Registry, part of DHS Public Health, was an essential partner in the study as a source for immunization data.

“This study underlines the importance of the Oregon Health Plan’s emphasis on preventive care,” said DHS Director Dr. Bruce Goldberg, himself a former public health physician. “And it also shows the value of our community health plan partners and the coordination of data between our public health programs, which are mainly community-oriented, and our medical assistance programs, which are mostly client-oriented.”

The results were also presented at the National Immunization Conference in Washington, D.C., and at the Western Regional Maternal

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Team study continued


“It is important for a child’s immunization series to start on time,” said Susan Arbor of the study’s main conclusion. “Children who start their immunizations on time are more likely to be up-to-date at 2 years old — which is a standard of care.”

A national target set by the federal Healthy People 2010 initiative is that 90 percent of 2-year-old children be fully immunized by 2010, she added.

The majority (84 percent) of the OHP infants in this study started their immunizations on time. The most important factors for timely immunization were:

• if an infant’s OHP coverage began within the first month of life;

OMAP also:

• if the mother was covered by OHP on the day her infant was born.

“Studies sometimes list Medicaid coverage as a ‘risk factor’ for various negative health outcomes, when low income is likely the risk factor,” Arbor said. “This study shows that among OHP infants, the earlier an infant or mother is covered by OHP, the greater the likelihood of timely immunization initiation — a positive health outcome.”

As a result of the study, OMAP developed a handout for caseworkers, outreach workers and exceptional needs care coordinators. It is distributed at regional OHP meetings and is available on the DHS Web site at: http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/healthplan/tools_staff/main.shtml

OMAP also:

• puts a message once every quarter on the Medical ID card that reminds pregnant women to enroll their newborns in OHP;

• sends regular reminders to all birthing hospitals to prompt staff to notify OMAP whenever a baby is born to a mother on OHP;

• and continues to partner with the MothersCare program in the DHS Office of Family Health. MothersCare is an outreach program for pregnant women; its main service is OHP application assistance.

For more information, contact Susan Arbor, (503) 945-5958, susan.a.arbor@state.or.us or Jessica Henderson, (503) 838-8486, hendersonj@wou.edu

Gary Whitehouse: (503) 945-6934; gary.whitehouse@state.or.us

Your mission: Integrate core values

Integrity, Stewardship, Responsibility, Respect and Professionalism – words heard and spoken daily in our work and personal lives. What do they mean to us as an organization?

The department has defined the values.

• We maintain the highest standards of individual and institutional integrity.

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• We maintain the highest standards of individual and institutional integrity.

• We are accountable in action and attitude for the stewardship of the public trust.

• We take responsibility for our actions.

• We respect the dignity and the diversity of our colleagues, communities and people we serve.

• We maintain the highest standards of professionalism.

Your mission – not impossible – is to take the mission statement off the wall and define how your work supports our mission. Also, identify how the values should (and do!) guide your work and keep this a part of your everyday conversations. Our organization is committed to doing the same.

Continue the good work and dedication to making the values part of your work life.

Lisa Harnisch, Core Values Project Manager: (503) 945-6304, lisa.s.harnisch@state.or.us

Correction

Marie Collins was the recipient of the “Leadership Academy Award” for Professionalism, at the DHS Leadership Academy graduation ceremony in April.
Path of recovery leads to DHS position

Claudia Wilcox’s path of recovery from Ontario in Malheur County brought her to DHS in Salem, where she’s working to change Oregonians’ perceptions about addiction and recovery, one community at a time.

Wilcox is a policy and program development specialist for the DHS Office of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OMHAS). She is also a recovering addict, in recovery now for nine years.

“I started using alcohol regularly when I was 15,” she says.

After more than 20 years of using all kinds of drugs, she ran afoul of the law, first on a cocaine charge, then for meth, when she was 37 and a mother of three children. Kicked out of residential treatment, she spent six weeks in jail and was facing a possible 18-month prison sentence.

“That’s when I did some soul searching and began to look at life differently,” she says. “Prison was not where I wanted to live for the next 18 months.”

She got serious about recovery, following the 12-step program, the judge’s instructions and the conditions of her probation “to a T.” She left her two daughters and son in the care of their father in order to focus on her own recovery: inpatient treatment, “after care,” transitional housing, simply building a solid foundation in recovery.

Since then, she has regained custody of her children and risen through the ranks of substance-abuse treatment. She started as assistant manager of the women’s transitional housing program she had lived in, and worked full time as she studied to receive her credentials as a counselor. She worked with adolescents and women in Ontario, then with women in the Malheur County’s drug court, became a contract alcohol and drug specialist for DHS, and founded a methadone treatment program in Ontario.

The latter involved a lot of partnership-building, according to Tracey Coffman, acting director of Malheur County Community Corrections.

“The latter involved a lot of partnership-building, according to Tracey Coffman, acting director of Malheur County Community Corrections.

“Claudia faced major opposition in our rural, predominantly conservative community in regards to getting the methadone clinic up and running,” Coffman says. “She took it upon herself to educate the community on the reality and benefits of methadone and single-handedly changed the minds of many people.”

That’s the approach Wilcox intends to use in Salem, the Willamette Valley, and ultimately the rest of the state.

“I’m going to do more of what I’ve already done, at a different level,” she says. “I’m taking the message of recovery to a bigger community, both personally and professionally.”

One project in the works is “Faces of Recovery,” in which people in recovery share their stories. “You see all of the bad part, you see the labs, you see the kids, but you don’t see the people who are recovering, and there are a lot of them all over the state, and they all have wonderful stories.

“Recovery is the invisible part of the addiction. People need to know that people get better with treatment and become tax payers again instead of tax users,” she said.

Another approach will be to work toward sustaining recovery through funding support groups in the communities, so people in recovery have a network to rely on once they finish their mandated treatment activities. Another aim is to get more state funding for drug courts in various counties throughout the state.

A toolkit (see sidebar, p. 4) for local communities will be available through the OMHAS Web site.

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Claudia Wilcox
Training - June and July 2006

Here is a list of classes available for June and July. For more information see DHS Training on the Staff Tools Web site: http://www.dhs.state.or.us/training/index.html

Coaching Excellence
July 12 and 19
Register for Coaching Excellence. https://dhstraining.hr.state.or.us/Training/

Conflict Resolution
June 21
Register for Conflict Resolution. https://dhstraining.hr.state.or.us/Training/

Dealing with Hostile Situations
July 18
Register for Dealing with Hostile Situations. https://dhstraining.hr.state.or.us/Training/

Diversity: Disability, Culture and Awareness
June 20
Register for Diversity: Disability, Culture and Awareness. https://dhstraining.hr.state.or.us/Training/

Facilitating Effective Meetings
June 21
Register for Facilitating Effective Meetings. https://dhstraining.hr.state.or.us/Training/

Personal Styles
June 7 and 20
July 11 and 20
Register for Personal Styles. https://dhstraining.hr.state.or.us/Training/

If you have any questions about these classes or have difficulty registering, contact Cheryl Weidner of DHS Training and Development, (503) 947-5457

Kit offers methamphetamine resources to communities

The DHS Office of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OMHAS) has produced a Methamphetamine Community Resource Kit. It draws together all kinds of meth-related information produced by DHS and other agencies, for use by communities and groups in tackling this substance-abuse problem.

Among the resources in the packet are:

• “Prevention Works” CD containing 10 Word documents and a PowerPoint presentation relating to all aspects of meth
• Three brochures from the department’s Clandestine Drug Lab Cleanup program
• A meth fact sheet aimed at teens, produced by The Scholastic and federal scientists
• A set of fact sheets from the Partnership for a Drug-Free America
• And other DHS fact sheets about meth, its clinical effects and its impact in Oregon.

More information about the resource kit is available on the DHS Web site: www.oregon.gov/dhs/addiction/meth/main.shtml or by calling (800) 822-6772.