

ENTERPRISE & COMMUNITY RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

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& Technology**
Phone: 662-325-3141**Community Resource Development**
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Phone: 662-325-2160**Newton Regional Hospital Strategic Planning Effort Underway**

The Community Resource Development (CRD) Department of the Mississippi State University Extension Service is expanding the breadth of the Health Connect program to include strategic planning for rural hospitals and other healthcare providers. The Balanced Scorecard system is being incorporated to evaluate and measure the progress of the strategic plan.



This effort is currently being piloted with Newton Regional Hospital (NRH). The management team charged with the development of the strategic plan includes Tim Thomas (Hospital Administrator), J.W. Chapman (Assistant Administrator), Jo Ann Adams (Director of Human Resources), Kay Howard (Director of Nursing), and Cassandra Gibbs (Director of Quality Assurance).

The team has completed mission, value, and vision statements for the hospital and is currently in the process of developing strategies in the areas of Patient Health, Community, Human Resources, Physician Satisfaction, Clinical Care Processes and Outcomes, and Service Management and Development. The strategic planning process will continue through May and development of the hospital's Balanced Scorecard is anticipated to begin in June.

According to Mr. Thomas, "Our organization is very excited about the Balance Scorecard system. I think having a performance system that is strategic, integrated, balanced, and measurable holds great potential for any entity. We are pleased that the MSU Extension Service has selected Newton Regional Hospital as a pilot and are partnering with us in this effort."

Newton Regional Hospital has been a valuable partner of CRD in developing the Health Connect program. The hospital is also a member of the East Central Health Network (EC HealthNet), a consortium of approximately twenty community agencies addressing the health concerns of Clarke, Kemper, Neshoba, and Newton Counties. The EC HealthNet has also received a planning grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) that was designed to develop a basis for creating a network for providing improved healthcare to the residents of rural areas.

Agri-Tourism at "Pumpkin Patch"



Just off Highway 7 close to the Humphreys County line is a wonderful experience waiting for you. It's the Simmons Farm, also known by many school age children as the "Pumpkin Patch." Mark and Peggy Simmons own the farm and they have been opening their fall farm experience to area school children (and adults) since 1992. A visit to the Simmons' farm finds scarecrows, witches, a hay bale spider, and pumpkins by the hundreds. A tour of this farm signals the arrival of Halloween, and much more. Children are treated to a hayride on a large trailer filled with hay pulled by a bright orange tractor. The hayride pulls the excited children out to a field full of pumpkins of various sizes. The children unload and are allowed to roam through the field of pumpkins to locate just the right one to take home. The hayride ends back at the main house where children are introduced to a variety of animals. A miniature horse, calves, pigs, horses, and rabbits are just some of the animals children and visitors can pet. Other treats include the haunted barn, farm equipment and a mechanical cow, along with plenty of hay bales to climb on. The Simmons pumpkin patch has been a popular spot for many area schools and church groups for a number of years.

Now the Simmons are planning to expand the experience to a spring fling event. Several years ago, Mr. Simmons was exploring his property and discovered what may be the World Champion bald cypress tree. The tree is so big it contains several rooms inside its massive trunk. Each area (room) inside the large tree trunk is capable of holding several grown adults at the same time. Mr. Simmons has been busy working with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, to ensure the protection of the massive tree. He has worked hard to develop a nature walk to allow visitors to experience the big tree first hand. The giant cypress will become the center point of the spring fling event at the Simmons Farm.

So what are you waiting for? Come on down to Humphreys County and see one of mother nature's biggest treats and while your there take a hayride and experience a down-on-the-farm good time!

Food as a Business Conference

The Rankin County Extension Service was the location for the most recent Food as a Business Conference. Mrs. Sonia Hancock, County Director hosted the event. The morning began with a welcome from the Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Gale Martin. Experts from the Food and Fiber Center and Department of Food Science, Nutrition, and Health Promotion presented information focusing on legal issues, labeling, marketing, sales, e-commerce, profits and costs and business plan development. Representatives from the Mississippi Development Authority, Mississippi State Health Department, and Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce also assisted with program presentations. Mr. Steve Stolk, owner of *Magnificent Products* in Brandon, Mississippi was the guest luncheon speaker. Mr. Stolk shared his struggles and successes as he birthed his company. This portion of the program allows the participants the opportunity to hear a "real life story" and ask questions from someone that has been there and done that! Another featured speaker was Mr. Tom Batzing, General Manager of The Everyday Gourmet in Jackson, Mississippi. Mr. Batzing presented tips about customer/retailer relations which was most informative since he is a retailer himself and knows exactly what the retailer wants and needs from the specialty food manufacturer. The day ended with a question and answer session where participants had the opportunity to seek one on one advice from the experts. A total of 23 participants attended the day long session.



Steve Stolk, owner of *Magnificent Products* was the guest luncheon speaker.

Water Interactive Notebook (WIN)

The Community Resource Development Department is working with other partners to develop a supplemental training curriculum for rural water system board members. The Water Interactive Notebook (WIN) is an online/CD-based library of information that will provide a comprehensive and interactive addition to the rural water system board member training mandated by the state of Mississippi and coordinated by CRD.

CRD is coordinating the project in partnership with the Mississippi State Department of Health, the Mississippi Rural Water Association, the Mississippi Water and Pollution Control Operators' Association, and the Community Resource Group of the Rural Community Assistance Program with technical assistance provided by Emily Shaw of the Southern Rural Development Center. Once the planning phase is completed, the Computer Applications and Services unit of the Mississippi State University Extension Service will program the curriculum using interactive internet and CD technologies. The curriculum will then be distributed to all rural and small municipal water systems in the state as well as all future participants in the rural water system board member management training.

Helping Those Without Health Insurance In Mississippi

Health insurance coverage for residents of Mississippi is at a critical point. The state has the 10th highest percentage of uninsured residents as compared to other states in the nation. While this is alarming enough, trends indicate that the picture is becoming even bleaker. Between 2000 and 2003, Mississippi had the second highest increase in the percentage of uninsured residents. Additionally, Mississippi has the highest percentage of residents on the Medicaid rolls of any other state. Given the frailty of that system in recent months, the need to address the health insurance issues is imperative.

The Mississippi Division of Medicaid received a grant from the Health & Human Resource Services Administration (HRSA) to explore the needs of the uninsured in the state and to develop a proposal to address these needs. Medicaid's approach was to divide the state into four regions and recruit local stakeholders to help design plans specific to each region, considering local needs, resources, and values. Medicaid contacted Mississippi State University Extension Service and asked if LeadershipPlenty, a community action training curriculum developed by Pew Partnership for Civic Change, might be used as a tool to walk each group through to the end product. MSU-ES agreed to facilitate the process in each of the four regions and adapt the material to fit the need. It worked beautifully.

During a series of five meetings in each region from February to April 2005, participants examined state and regional data on the uninsured that was collected under a previous grant initiative. Building upon this foundation, the participants developed region specific plans that involved:

- Determining a target audience
- Identifying potential partners
- Mapping available assets
- Deciding upon the most appropriate approach for the region
- Developing a logic model
- Writing a plan of action
- Designing the foundation for a marketing plan
- Planning an evaluation process for measuring success
- Proposing next steps in the arenas of data collection, policy development, and progress toward implementation

The results of the planning process will be reported to HRSA in a final report due in August 2005. After that time, the Division of Medicaid will begin seeking support for funding the initiatives.



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discriminate on the basis of race, color,
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Upcoming e-Commerce Workshop

If you want to learn about selling on the Internet and specifics about electronic retailing, this is a “must attend” workshop for you. Come and learn how to position your business for success in the new Internet economy.

August 23, 2005 —Meridian, MS

**MSU—Meridian Campus, Kahlmus Auditorium
Registration begins June 1, 2005**

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