

# Connecticut Office of Rural Health

## 2018 Annual Report

### 2017-2018 Year in Review

This report highlights the CT Office of Rural Health's (CT-ORH) 2017-18 funded initiatives and major activities. For detailed information about these initiatives, please contact the CT-ORH directly.



### FUNDED INITIATIVES

#### **Harwinton Ambulance Association Offers Stop the Bleed Hemorrhage Training to Residents**

The CT-ORH provided funding for a **"Stop the Bleed"** (STB) hemorrhage training to the **Harwinton Ambulance Association**. In addition to providing training to its members, this rural ambulance service also trained the broader community. Nearly 180 individuals received training, including EMS and fire department members, rural community hospital staff, a local day care, high school students, local elected officials, Boy Scouts and rural residents.

The goal of STB is to train community members and bystanders to be equipped to help in a bleeding emergency before professional help arrives, which is crucial in rural areas where emergency response times can be longer. The White House launched the *Stop the Bleed* campaign in 2015.

Notably, Harwinton Ambulance Association will train 15 new STB trainers with this sub-award, and will continue to "train the trainer" for other rural EMS and Fire organizations, thereby expanding the impact of this program. This training is slated to become a standard component of the Harwinton Ambulance Association's on-going quarterly CPR classes for the community.

Further, the ambulance service has plans to partner with the Fire Department in neighboring Burlington to train all staff members of the Region #10 School District, made up of Burlington and Harwinton Schools. The school district is purchasing STB kits for each school in the regional system, where they will be co-located with existing AED devices.

The CT-ORH is looking forward to continuing our partnership with the Harwinton Ambulance Association.

#### **CHCACT Becomes Member of Healthcare Recruitment Initiative**

In support of efforts by the **Community Health Center Association of Connecticut (CHCACT)** to recruit and retain health care providers in organizations that serve CT's underserved populations, the CT-ORH provided funding toward a national rural recruitment service. This effort is a collaboration with the **CT Department of Public Health (DPH) Primary Care Office (PCO)** along with CHCACT to initiate and maintain an active membership with the National Rural Recruitment and Retention Network (3RNet) to address CT's healthcare workforce shortage.

## ACTIVITIES

### Northwestern CT Community College (NCCC) Launches Tobacco-Free Campus Initiative

On behalf of NCCC, the CT-ORH wrote a “**Tobacco-Free Campus Initiative**” grant. The initiative is based on the recommendations of a representative college sub-committee. According to NCCC President Mike Rooke, “The recommendations provide a path to move the campus towards a healthy community for all, but do so in a way that respects all members of the community.” The college will implement its plan to become smoke, vape and tobacco free by July 2019. Funding and technical assistance are provided by a grant funded by **Southern CT State University (SCSU)** and the **CT Department of Public Health**. Key Tobacco-Free Campus Initiatives include –

- Messaging -- vaping and other ENDS (electronic nicotine delivery systems) products, in addition to combustible cigarettes, included in messaging and educational campaign to address current high ENDS usage rates
- Signage – design and production of temporary and permanent signs campus-wide
- Training – Director of Student Activities has been trained in the University of Massachusetts online “Basic Skills for Working with Smokers” course and will oversee the Tobacco Free Ambassador (TFA) program. TFAs will be trained by the SCSU Tobacco Coordinator on ENDS and other tobacco and will assist with supporting students through education and outreach
- Smoking cessation classes -- free smoking cessation classes offered on-campus by Charlotte Hungerford Hospital in Fall 2018 and Spring 2019 for students, faculty and community members
- SCSU technical assistance, including training on Nicotine-Replacement Therapy (NRT) for NCCC Tobacco-Free Campus Committee
- NRT vouchers made available to the campus community for redemption at Beacon Prescriptions, a neighborhood pharmacy
- Tobacco-free webpages, policy and press statements

This initiative will continue in the 2018-2019 fiscal year.



Tobacco-Free Messaging and Signage at NCCC

## Opioid Prescription Training Offered to Connecticut Prescribers

The CT-ORH and the **Litchfield County Opiate Task Force** collaborated to offer a **Safe and Competent Opioid Prescribing Education (SCOPE) of Pain**, an accredited continuing medical education meeting to healthcare providers in Litchfield County on the subject of opioid prescribing.

The educational meeting was held on April 3 in Torrington, CT. Course faculty were William Becker, MD, Assistant Professor, and Daniel Tobin, MD, FACP, Associate Professor, both of **Yale University School of Medicine**. Over one hundred healthcare providers attended the training, including MDs, dentists, APRNs, PAs, nurses, public health and behavioral health professionals and students. Seven of the eight Connecticut counties were represented by attendees, and a productive Q&A session followed.

SCOPE of Pain is based on the FDA's curriculum known as the *Blueprint for Prescriber Education for Extended Release & Long-Acting Opioid (ER/LA) Analgesics*. The SCOPE of Pain course director is Daniel Alford, MD, MPH of **Boston University School of Medicine**. The CT-ORH provided technical assistance in marketing the training to rural prescribers, and in securing the venue. Introductory remarks were made by Maria Coutant-Skinner, Executive Director of McCall Center for Behavioral Health, and Mary Winar, former Manager of the CT-ORH.

The **Torrington Area Health District (TAHD)** utilized the opportunity to conduct a brief survey regarding the experience of prescribers using the CT Prescription Monitoring and Reporting System. They are one of five local health departments that received a **"Change the Script"** grant from the State. The SCOPE of Pain training event presented a very successful collaborative opportunity for CT-ORH and TAHD.



Course Faculty and Introductory Speakers



Opioid Prescribing Training in Torrington, CT

## **Resilience Documentary**

In the spring, in collaboration with the State's home visiting programs and early childhood development programs, as well as NCCC's **Nursing and Early Childhood Education Programs**, the CT-ORH co-hosted a viewing of the documentary "**Resilience.**" The documentary focuses on the **Adverse Childhood Events**, or **ACEs**, study. The showing was held June 6 with over 50 in attendance. After the viewing, a facilitated discussion was led by a child psychologist and an adult clinician specializing in trauma and addiction treatment. Program evaluations were positive with requests for more information and screenings of the documentary.

## **Litchfield County Opiate Task Force**

The CT-ORH remains an active participant of the **Litchfield County Opiate Task Force**. The mission of the Task Force is to reduce the harm caused by the opiate epidemic in Litchfield County. Recently the CT-ORH attended a pre-screening of the documentary "**Recovering Community**" which is in its final stages of production, and shared comments and editing suggestions.

## **Torrington Area Prevention Partnership**

During this fiscal year, the CT-ORH began participating in the Torrington High School prevention coalition, known as **TAPP – Torrington Area Prevention Partnership**. The CT-ORH is maintaining an electronic mailing list of rural high school prevention coalitions in Connecticut with the goal of creating a means for sharing of information. In the upcoming fiscal year, the CT-ORH plans to hold a forum for rural prevention coalitions to network, take part in trainings, and share project activities and best practices.

## **Letter from Mary Winar, former CT-ORH Manager**

As my last contribution to the CT-ORH annual report, I want to extend my sincerest gratitude to all whom I have worked with these past 19 years. It has been a very fulfilling and rewarding career. The support and interest in rural health has grown over the years. It has been an honor and a privilege serving as a rural voice for CT rural residents and communities and assisting to enhance access to quality affordable health care. ~Mary

## **Connecticut Office of Rural Health**

56 Park Place East, Winsted, CT 06098

P: 860-738-6378 F: 860-738-6443

[www.ruralhealthct.org](http://www.ruralhealthct.org)

**FUNDING:** Projects and initiatives from the CT Office of Rural Health (CT-ORH) are funded through the Department of Health and Human Services through the Health Resources & Services Administration's Federal Office of Rural Health Policy grant program, CFDA #93.913. The grant is awarded to Northwestern CT Community College to maintain the CT-ORH. Projects must be consistent with the CT-ORH's mission to support the planning, enhancement, education or evaluation of rural health care programs.

*This report is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Human Services (HHS) under grant H95RH00151, State Offices of Rural Health \$179,871.*