

# *Building Bridges Between UMass Medical School and the Community*



Program Development  
Education and Training  
Community Consultation  
Cultural Competency Programs

Office of Community Programs

# Innovative Solutions for Health Care Challenges in Your Community



The University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester is a local, regional and national health resource that sponsors educational and service programs in health care throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States. The mission of the Medical School is to serve the public through national distinction in health sciences education, policy, research and public service.

The University of Massachusetts Medical School was placed #4 in *US News & World Report's* ranking of primary care medical schools in 2006.

UMass Medical School's Commonwealth Medicine division applies knowledge to improve health outcomes for those served by public health and human service agencies. Innovative consulting and service models provide our public sector colleagues with unparalleled academic, research, management and clinical resources.

The University of Massachusetts Medical School is widely recognized as a national leader in health professions education, policy, research and public service. Its extensive resources range from cutting edge research to in-depth knowledge assets—all backed by a strong dedication to public health and public service.

Such resources would be of limited value without a way to apply them directly within the community for the benefit of vulnerable individuals. The Office of Community Programs (OCP), part of the Medical School's Commonwealth Medicine division, serves this important function. OCP is a vital bridge between the knowledge and resources of the Medical School and community-based health care programs throughout the Commonwealth and New England.

Today's health care challenges faced by local communities can be daunting. Whether facing cultural barriers, a lack of personnel or insufficient funding, communities turn to OCP for help. Working closely with state agencies, community-based organizations and other stakeholders, OCP ensures that individuals, in all walks of life and every income level, have access to quality health care.

## What We Do

Strategic consultation is at the heart of what we do. Our dedicated and experienced staff works closely with state Medicaid programs, health professionals, government agencies and community-based organizations to identify areas where there may be barriers to care. We then develop strategic, practical solutions based on Best Practices and the latest health care policy and research from the Medical School or the community. The end result of this close collaboration is a greater number of communities able to implement innovative health care services and health education programs.

The foundation for all our services includes comprehensive program development, management and implementation, as well as curricula and material development. Our complete range of services and programs includes:

- **Community Health Center Initiatives** Having well-staffed, adequately funded health centers in urban neighborhoods or rural areas is an essential part of providing quality care. This is why OCP devises strategies that support the development and sustainability of federally qualified Community Health Centers. The staff works closely with the Massachusetts League of Community Health Center on these critical activities. To date, OCP has helped Community Health Centers become a reality in eleven communities.

- **Dental Services, Training and Capacity Building** OCP is committed to improving the oral health of Massachusetts's most vulnerable populations through two complementary programs: MassHealth Access Program Dental Services and the Central Massachusetts Oral Health Initiative. These programs help community-based organizations improve and expand their dental services, provide newly trained dentists with financial support in return for working in a community-based facility, and improve patient access to oral health services statewide.
- **MassHealth Training Forum** The MassHealth Training Forum (MTF) communicates accurate, timely information about Massachusetts Medicaid (MassHealth) operations and policies to health care organizations and community agencies serving MassHealth members, the under-insured and the uninsured. Program components range from regional meetings with expert presentations to email updates on program and policy changes. Following health care reform legislation in Massachusetts, MTF is involved in activities to support new health insurance options.
- **Cross Cultural Initiatives** Patients with limited understanding of English are often unable to communicate their health care needs. OCP's Medical Interpreter Training (MIT) program identifies, recruits and trains multilingual individuals working in MassHealth settings to bridge the communication barrier between health care provider and patient, while addressing issues of cultural sensitivity. The Massachusetts Area Health Education Center Network, another program of Commonwealth Medicine, serves as the dissemination system for MIT programs, and provides specialized document translation and health literacy services.
- **Community Service & Service Learning** OCP facilitates internship programs and special projects, such as the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship, that allow health professions students to continue their training over the summer and throughout the year in real-world situations in local community programs. There is simply no substitute for working at a community center to experience hands-on health care, an experience that helps future doctors, nurses and practitioners become active in public service and advocates for quality medical care to those most in need.

## Why Choose Us?

OCP offers an unparalleled breadth of innovative services dedicated to increasing access to health care in communities, and improving health care outcomes for vulnerable populations throughout Massachusetts and New England. We have a long and successful history of collaboration with public agencies responding to and anticipating health concerns and community needs, as well as proactively seeking solutions. We share a mission-driven philosophy with our public sector clients and community partners, and are committed to finding practical solutions that work.

**For further information about our programs, or to discuss how we can help you, please visit us at [www.ocp-map.org](http://www.ocp-map.org), call us at (508) 856-3255 or e-mail us at [ocp@umassmed.edu](mailto:ocp@umassmed.edu).**



### A Message from Mick Huppert

One of the reasons for the Office of Community Programs' (OCP) success in developing programs and services is that we work collaboratively with our state and community partners. The work we have done has helped us better understand the systems of care, the work of state agencies and the community-based health programs serving Massachusetts citizens.

OCP staff is as comfortable traveling to community sites as we are working with fellow University of Massachusetts Medical School and Commonwealth Medicine colleagues. That is testament to our belief in building strong bridges—between the academic community, state agencies committed to human services and community-based organizations—all working together to improve access to health care.

We look forward to strengthening these relationships and continuing to develop programs on behalf of vulnerable and at-risk populations.

*Mick Huppert, M.P.H.  
Director and Associate Dean  
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