



NEW JERSEY

The **Preventive Health and Health Services (PHHS) Block Grant** provides funding to support a variety of preventive and public health programs designed to assist New Jersey in reaching its *Healthy New Jersey 2010* objectives. The PHHS Block Grant provides 100% of the state's funding for violence prevention, hip fracture prevention among the elderly population, and cardiovascular disease. It provides supplemental support to the EMS program, Diabetes Prevention and Control program, Local Public Health Practice and Regional Development Systems, and obesity prevention for children. PHHS Block Grant funds also allow New Jersey to leverage dollars to facilitate the uninsured into permanent medical care and management.

PHHS Block Grant funds allow New Jersey to use dollars **where** we need them, **when** we need them to protect the public's health. The following examples show programs that serve our state's unique health needs through the PHHS Block Grant:



Diabetes Prevention and Control Program

PHHS Block Grant funds are used to fund the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CVBI) to increase the availability of screening for diabetic eye disease among low income, uninsured persons with diabetes, specifically within the African American community. This year 671 uninsured individuals and 390 insured persons were screened. Of these, 555 had positive findings of diabetic eye disease. Funding was also allocated to the Southern Jersey Family Medical Center to increase awareness of complications of diabetes and appropriate preventive measures (e.g., eye exams, foot exams, hemoglobin A1c testing, blood pressure, and influenza and pneumococcal immunization). More than 250 individuals received comprehensive screening, of which 32.1% had high blood pressure, 25% had high A1c levels, and 86% received foot exams.



Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

PHHS Block Grant funds enabled EMS to develop and adopt the Specialty Care Transport Unit (SCTU), a new category of out-of-hospital services. As a result, 25 ambulance services have met standards for licensure and have adequately trained staff with proper equipment to handle emergencies. Because of the PHHS Block Grant support, there is designated medical oversight for quality assurance that was not previously available. New Jersey is one of only a few states with a comprehensive set of regulations for this level of care.



Minority and Multicultural Health Initiatives

The Office of Minority and Multicultural Health and Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Services awarded grants to seven Minority Community Based Organizations (MCBOs) to foster outreach, education, and entry into primary care services for uninsured populations in the areas of asthma and diabetes. Each of these agencies, deeply rooted in Hispanic, Korean, and African American communities, identified 250 persons at risk for and/or who have poorly managed their asthma and diabetes. Once screened and identified with poor health outcomes, they were given a "warm transfer" to one of New Jersey's Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) for comprehensive medical care and follow-up.

New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services

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HealthEASE Improves Lives of Thousands of New Jersey Seniors

Issue:

One older diabetic woman had not gone to a doctor in years because she didn't know how she would pay for the appointment. Another woman would not go anywhere that didn't have grab rails in the restroom for fear her limited mobility would leave her stranded on the seat. A third woman was concerned about her husband's memory problems but didn't know where to get help.

Like many older adults, these women faced barriers that kept them from using existing preventive health services. Unfortunately, providers had been unsuccessful in reaching them because of competing agendas, funding limitations, and a lack of administrative coordination. As a result, preventive services were underused.

- In New Jersey, only 34.4% of men and 34.6% of women 65 and older are getting the selected preventive services provided, recommended, and covered by Medicare.
- As a result, in 2002, there were approximately 85,500 preventable hospitalizations among older adults, resulting in roughly 625,000 hospital days and increased costs to taxpayers.

Intervention:

The New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services recognized the need to build local partnerships between the aging and healthcare systems in order to increase older adult access to health information and services. Preventive Health and Health Services (PHHS) Block Grant funds and a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant were used to create *HealthEASE*. This pilot program established partnerships in two counties, Bergen and Ocean, which helped create and deliver health screening/advice events and a 12-session physical activity program for seniors, and health education modules for allied health professionals on six topics of interest to seniors. These programs were promoted by the partnerships and held in community centers, senior centers, town halls, church halls, and other easily-accessible sites.



Impact:

HealthEASE drew seniors into the healthcare system through its screening and education programs. During the 2-year pilot, over 3,000 screenings were completed at 18 separate events. About one-third of the screenings resulted in abnormal findings, and these individuals were advised to follow up with their primary health care provider. Those who participated in the physical activity program demonstrated improved mobility, reach, and balance at the end of the 12-session course. The physical activity and education programs were showcased at a statewide conference and 80% of attendees said they were interested in replicating one or more of the programs in their communities. Perhaps the greatest measure of this program's success, however, is its impact on the individuals who participated, including the three women noted above.

- After participating in *HealthEASE* programming, the woman without a doctor was linked by her Area Agency on Aging to a health care provider who is helping her manage her diabetes. The woman with limited mobility joined, and now leads, a physical activity program. After attending an education session called "Keeping Your Mind Sharp," the woman concerned about her husband's memory lapses recognized the severity of the decline and sought additional medical help for him.

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