Foundation Funds Rural Health Projects

The Greater Rochester Health Foundation has awarded close to $1.5 million to five rural health departments over a three-year period to improve the health of their residents. According to John Urban, president and CEO of the Foundation, the board of directors approved a strategy to allocate $500,000 a year to public health agencies in the rural counties in which GRHF is chartered, a geographic area representing close to a half-million people.

"The rationale is that there is no single strategy that can address the health issues of such a geographically and economically diverse region. To apply the strategies in which the Foundation has invested in Monroe County to rural counties is not a reasonable approach. These counties have different health department structures and different approaches to community issues. Through our grant proposal process, the rural counties had the opportunity to apply for funds for what they have identified as their pressing health issues," says Urban.

Wayne County Rural Health Network and Wayne County Department of Health received $300,585 to set up two, free dental clinics to serve 1,950 of the approximately 18,500 Wayne County residents who are uninsured or underinsured. One of the clinics will be conducted in a mobile van beginning in the third year of the grant.

Wyoming County Department of Health has been awarded $42,939 to develop a county-wide Health and Wellness Strategic Plan. The project’s goal is to reduce duplication of services by using existing data to identify and plan for current and future health needs of the approximately 43,000 county residents.
The S2AY network that includes Ontario, Yates and Seneca Public Health Departments has received $515,433 for The Healthy Living Partnership. They will work with employers to make environmental changes to support their workforces to make healthy lifestyle choices and address heart disease, diabetes, cancer, and cerebral vascular disease.

Lake Plains Community Care Network will assist Genesee and Orleans County Health Departments in developing, implementing, and maintaining an Enterprise Geographic Information System through a grant of $330,000. Funds will be used to train staff on the system and to document and monitor 2,500 existing and 1,000 newly installed wells and sewage systems to improve water safety.

The Livingston County Department of Health will use its grant of $216,000 to reduce obesity in children and youth ages 5-17 by increasing physical activity, increasing consumption of fruits, vegetables and low fat milk, and decreasing computer and TV time. Funds also will support a HIP HOP program, an after-school walking club and a sports/nutrition initiative.

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