Gulfcoast South AHEC Honors Community Partners

By Ansley Mora
Community Education Coordinator, GSAHEC

Gulfcoast South Area Health Education Center (GSAHEC) held a recognition ceremony this spring to honor the outstanding contributions of the following community and academic partners: Sarasota County Health Department, Penny Kurtz with the DeSoto County Health Department, State College of Florida, and Dr. Lee Ratliff with Charlotte High School. Both Sarasota County Health Department (SCHD) and State College of Florida were selected for their collaboration with the AHEC Tobacco Training and Cessation (A.T.T.A.C.) program.

The Sarasota County Health Department (SCHD) was recognized for their exceptional efforts to institutionalize the A.T.T.A.C. program in all three of their clinic locations. As a result of these efforts, GSAHEC’s Tobacco Cessation Specialist trained SCHD healthcare providers and clinicians on the Public Health Services Clinical Practice Guidelines which support the treatment of tobacco dependence. The entire health department staff has made this an everyday part of practice, and are to be commended for their diligence and passion. SCHD also offers quit smoking programs for their patients in partnership with the GSAHEC A.T.T.A.C. program; both agencies assist patients in obtaining FDA approved medications for use in quitting smoking. SCHD is also a tobacco free campus which is a CDC Best Practice Policy for addressing tobacco use. Accepting the “Excellence Award” on behalf of the SCHD was Marielle Kantzler, LMHC, Tobacco Prevention Specialist.

The State College of Florida (SCF) was recognized for their outstanding commitment in implementing the student-training component of the A.T.T.A.C. program for their nursing and allied health students. Recognizing the importance of training our future health professionals on how to successfully intervene with tobacco dependent patients, SCF has integrated the A.T.T.A.C. program into their curriculum. Through their hard work, this collaborative effort has trained over 300 nursing students and 75 allied health students this year. Accepting the “Excellence Award” on behalf of SCF was Dr. Bonnie Hesselberg, ARNP, Provost of Lakewood Ranch Campus, Dean of Nursing & Health Professions.
The Observed Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) Experience

By Aimee Johnson
Tobacco Cessation Specialist
USF AHEC

Have you ever heard the saying, “You don’t know what you know until you have to teach it to someone else?” This was my experience when I evaluated the Observed Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) for the third year primary care clerkship students. The OSCEs prepare medical students for real world situations with patients. Students receive information about the kind of cases that will be evaluated prior to the exam. Cases range from tobacco dependence, specifically hookah, patients with disabilities, and geriatric patients. Although I had hours upon hours of Tobacco Cessation training and Motivational Interviewing (MI) training both through tobacco CME’s and hands on experience, it wasn’t until I evaluated the clerkship students that I truly understood the dynamics of MI and how it can effectively get a client to a place of readiness for quitting.

Motivational Interviewing is a technique for establishing rapport with a patient and assisting the patient with engaging as his or her own advocate for a healthy lifestyle. Primary to MI is empathic understanding as demonstrated by reflective listening. However, this technique doesn’t end at empathy. It is imperative that the clinician meet the patient where he or she is and bring them to a place of readiness.

Many of the third year clerkship students did a great job with their tobacco case, but Chad Rudnick did an outstanding job utilizing MI. I had an opportunity to talk with Chad about this experience. He indicated that he felt very prepared for the OSCE as our USF AHEC Program provides several hours of in-class training and he had many opportunities to practice during his first three years. He believes that MI is “an effective means of communication on multiple fronts. First, MI is just that, it is a way of talking with a patient in such a way that the physician becomes an active listener as well as an active speaker at times. MI enables the patient to feel empowered, that they are truly being heard. This is possible because the physician will use confirmations and reflections during the interview, something that is not done enough during a normal patient-physician visit. Once patients feel comfortable that their healthcare provider truly understands their concerns and reasoning, I believe it causes them to “let their guard down” about whatever topic they are discussing, be it tobacco use or other. This, I believe, is one of the first hurdles the patient must clear in order to “kick the habit.” While some physicians have the personality type in which they have been using a type of MI in their everyday practice, others do not, and MI provides the conversation outline to ensure that patients are being spoken to in a way that is most effective to help them quit tobacco.”

Chad has used MI with patients in the clinic and plans to use it in the future. For him, the most important elements of the technique are asking open-ended questions, making eye contact and engaging your patient rather than “talking at” your patient. Reflection is an important component of MI to make sure that the client knows that you truly understand what they are saying. Chad was skilled in his use of the reflective technique and made the patient feel as she was heard, not reprimanded for her tobacco use. I was truly impressed with Chad’s use of MI and his ability to address the issues of tobacco dependence with his patient in an empathic manner. I believe this will serve him well in his chosen field of Pediatrics. Good luck Chad! You are well on your way.

By Aimee Johnson
Tobacco Cessation Specialist
USF AHEC

For more information about the OSCEs, and how you can participate, please contact:
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For more information on Tobacco Cessation Services, please contact:
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Chad Rudnick
The New Dangers of Tobacco

By Vanessa Travieso
Tobacco Training Coordinator, GNAHEC

Florida’s Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) have been working tirelessly to spread the message about the dangers of tobacco. Health professions students receive training on how to help their patients quit smoking and they speak to kids in efforts to prevent them from ever becoming smokers. The Tobacco Cessation Specialists receive call after call from people desperate to quit smoking. There are cessation groups taking place continuously throughout our service areas. More and more facilities in the community are going smoke free. Cigarette smoking is under attack but the fight is still young.

The tobacco companies have been searching for loopholes in order to combat lower cigarette consumption. As smoking becomes more stigmatized, alternatives are being provided. In an article by Denise Mann from Health.Com, the dangers smokeless products pose to children are discussed. Flavored tobacco products that look like breath mints or breath-freshening strips may be life threatening for children who mistake them for candy, according to researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Products that look like Tic Tacs or M&M’s can be very tempting for young children. As parents try to find an alternative to smoking cigarettes, they may be placing their children’s lives in danger.

Dr. Greg N. Connolly, the Director of the Tobacco Control Research Group at Harvard School of Public Health, led a research team which found that smokeless tobacco products are the second most common cause of nicotine poisoning in children, after cigarettes. The researchers reviewed data from 61 poison control centers and identified 13,705 cases of tobacco ingestion between 2006 and 2008, the vast majority of which were in infants. Smokeless tobacco was involved in 1,768 of the cases.

AHEC’s fight against tobacco is young, but we are all committed to the cause.

To read more about the research or the complete article, visit Health.com.

One Day at a Time: The Day I Quit Smoking

By Doreen Shockley

Today is day 75; I have NOT smoked 1,518 cigarettes; I have saved $379.99 and added 5 days to my life expectancy.

I was a smoker for just about 30 years. I tried quitting by using the patch, various gums, acupuncture, hypnosis, wellbutrin, chantix, etc. Nothing seemed to work. I despised the smell of my fingernails, the smell of my hair and was embarrassed to be seen smoking by nonsmokers. I hated the way my clothes smelled and I really hated that people I knew were being diagnosed with lung cancer.

Despite all of my attempts and all the reasons I had to quit, I was just about resigned to the fact that I would die a smoker. TV and magazine commercials and billboards across the country were sending quite bold and clear message—quit smoking and choose to live.

Therefore, 75 days ago I quit cold turkey. I was certain that this would be the last time I would attempt to quit so it needed to be the first time I would be successful at quitting. My biggest fear was gaining weight. My husband and I decided to spend the money on a gym membership so that I could exercise more regularly and keep the weight off.

The first three days were difficult, very difficult. I was surprised that it did get easier and with each passing day, the temptation was reduced. We had to do all the ‘normal’ things like clear all apparatus from the house, no ashtrays, lighters, etc. Our back porch was the usual place for me to smoke; I avoided going there for the first month and a half. Behavior and patterns had to change dramatically to avoid triggers. I can say that I am very proud of myself and, at times, still surprised I did it. I can also say with certainty that I could not have been as successful without the support of my husband, family and friends.

My husband has put up with a great deal. I am very thankful for his caring and understanding through this amazing journey.

My colleagues at work have been tremendous support as well. I take a walk with a group of them at least twice a day, which helps us to relieve stress, and we get fresh air. There is also an added benefit of getting to know each other better outside the walls of our stressful environment.

Day 40 and the days after were the worst time for me, and I came very close to start smoking again. At my wits end and not sure what to do, I decided to call Dr. Cindy Selleck, USF Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Director. I picked up the phone and left a message for her, saying, “Hello, remember One Day at a Time...
Meet Our Team: Gulfcoast South AHEC

Kandice Hogan
DMH Tobacco Cessation Coordinator

Kandice Hogan is the new Tobacco Cessation Coordinator for the DeSoto Memorial Hospital (DMH) under their recently awarded grant from the Florida Department of Health. Ms. Hogan will be heading the Tobacco Cessation Program by conducting tobacco cessation counseling for the hospital patients, employees and their family members. She will be working closely with GSAHEC Tobacco Cessation Specialists to increase the provision of tobacco cessation classes, education and training to the DeSoto Memorial Hospital personnel, medical staff, patient population and community at large.

Kandice served as a Director of the Clinical Services at Great Lakes Family Care, a fifteen-physician Rural Health Clinic, in Cadillac, Michigan. After leaving Great Lakes Family Care, she worked for the Council on Aging providing independent living healthcare services to elderly and disabled populations in Cadillac.

Trained as a Licensed Practical Nurse and a former Director of four Rural Health clinics, she brings more than twenty years of experience in health administration, nursing education and direct patient care. She was able to provide on-going training opportunities on core competencies and medication administration that helped clinical staff at Great Lakes Family Care to reduce medical errors. Kandice also worked closely with Dr. Hoda Asmar, an internal medicine and infectious disease specialist, providing health and palliative care to the geriatric population and working with hard-to-reach populations related to substance abuse, HIV and hepatitis C.

Kandice moved to Arcadia last year with her husband, Dan Hogan, DeSoto Memorial Hospital’s Chief Financial Officer and, before accepting the position as Tobacco Cessation Coordinator, she joined OB/GYN Family Practice Group at the same hospital.

Kandice enjoys inspiring and motivating people. She possesses the skills to make an impact on underserved populations, has a passion for teaching healthy lifestyle and helping people who face challenges. We welcome and look forward to working with Kandice to prevent and reduce tobacco use in DeSoto County.
GNAHEC Collaborates with Laurie Ellston to Give a Face-Lift to ICHS Program

By Vanessa Travieso
Tobacco Training Coordinator, GNAHEC

Gulfcoast North Area Health Education Center’s (GNAHEC) Interdisciplinary Community Health Scholars (ICHS) program began on June 8, 2010. Eight students from various schools and health professions were selected to participate in this eight-week program. This year’s ICHS team is composed of medical students, public health students, health education students and dental hygiene students who are interested in working in medically underserved communities on a series of tobacco prevention and education projects. The team is developing and implementing anti-tobacco programs for medically vulnerable populations. This summer the ICHS students are focusing on revamping Hillsborough County’s class for teens who are caught with tobacco products. GNAHEC is collaborating with Laurie Ellston, the Director of the Tobacco Prevention Program in Hillsborough County.

When a person under the age of 18 is caught with a tobacco product, a citation is given and the teen has to pay a fine or attend a tobacco awareness class. The two-hour course provides a lot of valuable information such as the Florida Statues on tobacco possession and minors, harmful health effects from tobacco use, chemicals in tobacco products, middle and high schools tobacco use statistics, pros and cons of quitting, and the benefits of quitting.

For the past three and half years, the class has been held once a month at the County Courthouse. Although the program is very well received and effective, it was time to revisit the presentation and update pictures, statistics, and add some additional information on new tobacco products and forms of tobacco use such as hookah smoking. In the world filled with distractions like cellular phones, television, computers and flashy advertising, getting a young person’s attention can be very challenging. The ICHS students are facing the challenge and incorporating the facts about tobacco with today’s technical advancements. Utilizing resources such as Facebook, texting and YouTube will bring the program a modern and teen friendly feel. Contemporary videos will be selected; up-to-date research studies will be used and the findings will be incorporated into the development of the program. The goal is to create a strong and sustainable program.

The ICHS students are thrilled to face this challenge and are utilizing their own experiences as young adults to develop a program that will be both contemporary and effective. Their age as well as their wide spectrum of expertise will ensure success. It is important that not only information be provided to the teens, but also that they walk away with the tools to eventually become non-smokers if they desire.
What’s a Hookah?

By Leila Martini
Assistant Director, Tobacco Program, USF AHEC

Recent progress has been made in the area of tobacco control. In 2009, the federal government passed an increase in tobacco tax, as did the state of Florida; FDA gained regulatory power over tobacco products, and locally, USF Health went smokefree.

Despite recent progress, tobacco is still an important public health issue. Every year in the United States, approximately 443,000 people die prematurely from tobacco related illnesses. A new and dangerous trend in tobacco use is emerging, use of the hookah to smoke tobacco.

In essence, a hookah is a water-pipe device used to smoke tobacco. “A typical modern hookah comprises a head (with holes in the bottom), a metal body, a water bowl, and a flexible hose with a mouthpiece.”

According to the CDC, “In recent years, there has been a resurgence of hookah use around the world, most notably among youth.” Many people do not realize that a typical one-hour-long hookah smoking session involves inhaling 100-200 times the volume of smoke inhaled from a single cigarette.

It is important that we educate youth about the dangers of using a hookah. For more information, please visit the CDC’s website at www.cdc.gov/tobacco/.

Sources


Spotlight on: Deidre Orriola, Tobacco Treatment Specialist

I have been doing tobacco cessation counseling for almost two years now, and I have assisted students with quitting tobacco in many forms: cigarettes, chewing tobacco and hookah being the most common.

Early on in my career as a tobacco cessation counselor, I met Sam (name has been changed to protect patient privacy). Sam smoked about one pack of cigarettes per day and needed some assistance with quitting for good. We met regularly over the next three months and he was successful in quitting smoking. I checked on him on the six-month anniversary of his quit date and he affirmed that he indeed had abstained from tobacco use. About a year later, Sam came to my office once again for help quitting tobacco. “Sam, you were doing so well, you hadn’t smoked cigarettes in a long time. What happened?” I asked. He responded with a nervous laugh, “I haven’t smoked a single one. Not even a puff.” Sam was back because he started smoking hookah.

He mentioned to me that he was well aware that hookahs are used to smoke tobacco, but what he was not aware of was their addiction potential. All forms of tobacco contain nicotine, the addictive agent, and carcinogens, chemicals that are known to cause cancer. Initially, Sam did not think that he was really “smoking” since he was not smoking cigarettes. But what he did find out, is that he quickly became hooked on hookah and that it was just as hard to quit as cigarettes; he was smoking hookah on a daily basis. I still meet with Sam regularly and he struggles with quitting tobacco to this day. With high motivation and hard work, Sam is confident he will quit for good one day soon.

Deidre Orriola received her Master of Public Health Degree from the University of South Florida in 2006. She is a Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist providing USF students with tobacco cessation assistance and has worked as a Health Educator at USF Wellness Promotion for three years. She is an instructor at the USF College of Public Health, the Transitional Advising Center, and the USF College of Education. For tobacco cessation resources and information, you can reach her at dorriola@usf.edu
The Unfiltered Reality of Tobacco for Future Healthcare Professionals

By Joan Beatty-Lee, BA
GSAHEC

In March of 2010, the Gulfcoast South Area Health Education Center (GSAHEC) AHEC Tobacco Training and Cessation (A.T.T.A.C.) program staff developed and presented a tobacco education lesson targeting the Recruitment & Educational Assistance for Careers in Health (REACH) students in Charlotte, DeSoto, Manatee and Sarasota counties. The REACH program is designed to provide minority and underprivileged middle and high school students interested in health careers a unique opportunity to explore health occupations and learn about health education topics that may directly affect their careers as future health professionals. One hundred forty four REACH students participated in this tobacco education lesson.

The lesson plan “Unfiltered Reality of Tobacco: Building Awareness about the Tobacco Industry’s Attempts to Target YOU” was developed by the A.T.T.A.C. program staff to educate teens about tobacco and tobacco marketing and it covers several topics. The topics include tobacco “ingredients,” tobacco print and counter ads, motivational factors behind the tobacco industry’s product placement, the cost and health consequences associated with using tobacco products, information on how tobacco use affects their potential patients and information on how the students could get involved in anti-tobacco efforts at their school.

This lesson plan proved to be effective because the students were not only presented with the facts about tobacco, but it was also explained to them how important it was to know the affects of tobacco use for them to be able to recognize the indicators in their future patients. After the presentations, A.T.T.A.C. program staff asked the REACH students what health careers they were interested in pursuing and what types of tobacco scenarios they thought they might encounter in that profession. This was an eye opening experience for the students since most did not realize that tobacco endangers everyone who is exposed to it. For example, Veterinarians may treat pets with symptoms related to second hand smoke, and Physical Therapists may rehabilitate a stroke patient—one of the leading causes of stroke being tobacco usage.

The success of these presentations was obvious from the evaluations given by the REACH students. For example, Charlotte High School students wrote, “One thing I’ve learned was that tobacco companies pay to get their products advertised in movies. They target us.” “The ingredients in cigarettes are disgusting” and “Tobacco is horrible, the way it can eat away your body.” A Port Charlotte High School student was awed by the realization that, “Smoking kills more people than many other leading causes of death combined.” A YMCA Achievers student was saddened to learn that “Smoking damages almost every organ in your body.” We believe that a Port Charlotte High School student summed it up best when he avowed, “It’s an addiction and it’s deadly, but you can motivate people to stop smoking.”

The A.T.T.A.C. program utilizes trained Tobacco Cessation Specialists who provide free counseling and support services to community members interested in quitting tobacco. We also provide onsite services to employers wishing to complement or implement a worksite wellness program. Please call us at 877.848.6696 for more information or visit our website at www.gsahec.org/html/tobacco/tobacco.htm.

One Day at a Time continued from page 3...

Port Charlotte High School REACH students and Charlene Chirillo (A.T.T.A.C. program staff)

me, I am now a non-smoker on day 40 and I am really scared, I don’t recognize myself or my moods, can you help me?” Within minutes, Dr. Selleck returned my call. I tried to explain that my moods were so unpredictable, how could this be happening this far into my new life? Wasn’t the worst part over? Dr. Selleck was amazing; she talked me through the crying and asked a few questions. She said that someone would be in touch with me soon. Again, within moments Leila Martini contacted me with the names of doctors who could assist me. It was amazing.

Later that day I received another call, this time from Deirdre Dingman from Gulfcoast South AHEC, referred by Cindy Selleck. At the risk of sounding overly dramatic, she was an angel. Her voice was instantly calming as she talked about ways to reduce my anxiety. She gave me guidance on reducing anxiety, feeling better about myself and replacing cigarettes with positive behavior. I carry the notes I jotted down during our long conversation and refer to them regularly. I haven’t had a day as bad as that day again.

Thank you all for your encouragement! For those of you who are considering quitting—make the choice. Don’t do it alone. I hated telling people for fear I would fail AGAIN. Tell the closest to you who are able to support you when you are in need. Then, when you succeed, shout it from the rooftops!
The University of South Florida Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Program inspires, trains, recruits, and retains a diverse and broad range of health professionals to practice in communities where the need is greatest. Your gift will assure improved access to healthcare for Florida’s disenfranchised and medically needy populations.

To learn more about how you can become involved with AHEC, please call Leila Martini at 813.974.5013.

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