



### HWTF Mission

*The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission invests in programs and partnerships to address access, prevention, education and research that help all North Carolinians achieve better health.*



HWTF Chair  
Governor-Elect  
Beverly E. Perdue

### UNC Report Lauds Historic Strides of NC's Tobacco Programs

The first comprehensive report on N.C.'s tobacco programs, released by University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill researchers, has identified major successes in North Carolina's efforts to combat tobacco use. The report states that the gains made by HWTF's multiple tobacco programs are models for other states to follow. "The Trust Fund's initiatives to prevent, fight and cease tobacco use have been held up in an independent report as a model for America," said Governor-elect Bev Perdue, HWTF Chair. "This report acknowledges our successes, motivates us to keep moving forward, and shows that we are on our way to North Carolina's first tobacco-free generation." HWTF spends \$17 million annually to fund tobacco use prevention and

cessation programs for teens and college students, as well as QuitlineNC, a telephone support service for people who want to quit using tobacco.

Successes cited in UNC's report include:

- The rate of decline in teen tobacco use more than doubled since HWTF began funding community/school grants and media campaigns in 2003. From 1999 to 2003, cigarette use among high school students declined by 14%; from 2003 to 2007, the rate of decline accelerated to over 30%.
- In 2008, the historic accomplishment of the adoption of the 100% tobacco-free policy in all 115 North Carolina school districts, largely due to efforts by HWTF and their grantees.
- North Carolina's tobacco-free colleges program hailed as a "national leader." HWTF's Tobacco-Free Colleges Initiative led to 17 North Carolina colleges adopting comprehensive tobacco-free campus policies by June of 2008.
- Since the HWTF Teen Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation Initiative began, nearly 2,000 youth and their community supporters have helped promote the adoption of more than 700 tobacco-free policies in youth-frequented public venues.
- More youth and young adults that smoke contacted QuitlineNC in 2007 and 2008 for smoking cessation assistance than ever before.

A copy of the report is available at:  
[www.HealthWellNC.com](http://www.HealthWellNC.com)  
(search under "News.")

CONTACT US AT 919-981-5000

N.C. Wellness Watch



## HWTF Awards Nearly \$24 Million in Grant Funds for Youth Tobacco Prevention and the Elimination of Health Disparities

At the December 5<sup>th</sup> HWTF Commission meeting, nearly \$24 million in grant funds for Youth Tobacco Use Prevention and the Elimination of Health Disparities were awarded to 68 organizations across the state. Nearly \$17 million in funding was approved for Phase IV of the Teen Tobacco Use Prevention and Cessation (TTUPC) Initiative and over \$7 million was approved for Phase II of the Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative (HDI). Health disparities and teen smoking are serious problems in our state. Fortunately, with the help of HWTF funds, North Carolina is gaining ground on these problems and improving health throughout the entire state. TTUPC grant awards range from \$172,000 to \$1,350,000 for a 36-month period beginning July 1, 2009.

HDI grant awards range from \$161,000 to \$870,000 for a 36-month period beginning July 1, 2009.

The full list of grant awards can be viewed at [www.HealthWellNC.com](http://www.HealthWellNC.com)



## CheckMeds NC Program Saves an Estimated \$10 Million in Health Care Costs

On October 25, 2007, HWTF launched *CheckMeds NC*, an innovative, statewide program to provide Medication Therapy Management (MTM) services for North Carolina seniors. During the first year of the program more than **15,000** NC seniors received MTM, saving an estimated **\$10 million** in health care costs and avoiding countless health problems to those receiving services. "*CheckMeds NC* is a groundbreaking program for North Carolina seniors that not only saves them money, but also improves their health and can

even save their lives," said Governor-Elect Bev Perdue, HWTF chair. "The fact that so many seniors have taken advantage of this free service in its first year of operation is a testament to the fact that our seniors need this kind of counseling." Services include a comprehensive "brown bag review" session between the senior and the specially-trained *CheckMeds NC* pharmacist. This initial review consists of a one-on-one meeting where the senior is asked to bring all his/her prescription, over-the-counter and

herbal medicines, vitamins and supplements. The review may result in advice, patient education and/or follow up for the prescribing physician to discuss medication changes that may be helpful to the senior. North Carolina is the first state in the nation to launch such a service for seniors.

For more information, please visit [www.checkmedsnc.com](http://www.checkmedsnc.com).



## \$2 Million in HWTF Grant Funding Available to Address Dental Care

On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund announced the availability of \$2 million in grant funding over three years to increase access to oral health care for low-income, high-need populations. In 2006, roughly 32% of North Carolina adults reported not visiting a dentist within the last year. Among specific race/ethnic groups, the

number was even lower. In 2007, nearly half (43%) of NC children ages 1-5 already had tooth decay, and 20% of children entering kindergarten had untreated tooth decay. Applicants may apply under two funding categories:

(1) expanding access to oral health care services for low-income, high-need populations

(2) developing workforce training opportunities for special populations.

Interested applicants can obtain a copy of the Request for Proposal and other application materials by visiting [www.HealthWellNC.com](http://www.HealthWellNC.com).

**Final applications must be received by February 16, 2009.**

## Barbara Roole Receives Social Change Award

On December 3<sup>rd</sup>, Barbara Roole, Health Disparities Program Officer, received the NC Community Shares' (NCCS) "Advocate for Social Change" award. NCCS is part of a national network of organizations that connect, fund and raise awareness for community groups fighting for fairness and equality. Roole said she felt "surprised and humbled to be honored in such a way." When asked if one particular accomplishment sticks out in her mind, she responded, "I don't think I was selected for this award for any one particular accomplishment, I believe it was for my efforts behind the scenes advocating for the financial support of social justice organizations across North Carolina."

**Congratulations, Barbara!** We are proud that you bring your commitment to social justice into your work on behalf of health disparities!

## NC Legislative Obesity Task Force Update

Recently, state activities at DHHS, DPI and HWTF were reviewed to develop a comprehensive statewide strategic plan with recommendations for preventing childhood obesity. Vandana Shah, HWTF Executive Director, gave an in-depth presentation on HWTF's on-going obesity initiative. The goals of the strategic plan are to:

- Provide healthier food to students
- Improve the availability of healthy foods at home and in the community

- Increase the frequency, intensity and duration of physical activity in schools
- Encourage communities to establish a master plan for pedestrian and bicycle pathways
- Improve access to safe places for children to play
- Develop activities or programs that limit children's screen time, including limits on video games and television

## HWTF Announces Phase I of Its A+ Fit School Designation and Grants Program

On November 24<sup>th</sup>, HWTF released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for Phase I of its *A+ Fit School* designation and grants program. With North Carolina having the 5<sup>th</sup> highest childhood obesity rate in the nation, this issue has become a growing priority for HWTF. The *A+ Fit School* program is further supported by evidence linking physical activity and healthy eating to improved academic performance.

All North Carolina public schools, K-12 are eligible to apply for the designation. Schools chosen for the *A+ Fit School* designation will receive:

- A banner
- A plaque for the principal's office
- Recognition on the Fit Kids Web site
- Use of the *A+ Fit School* designation logo



Also, one-year grants of \$7,500 will be awarded to schools that demonstrate need, proven capacity and opportunity for positive change in addressing physical activity and/or healthy eating.

For more information, please visit [www.FitKidsNC.com](http://www.FitKidsNC.com).

**Applications will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on February 20, 2009.**

## HWTF Announces Its First Class of Health Disparities Fellows

The Health and Wellness Trust Fund in partnership with the Duke Global Health Institute has created the NC Health Disparity Fellowship Program to empower and equip young professionals to better address health disparities in their communities. The two-year program will include

three weeks of course instruction led by faculty at Duke University and NC Central University during the first year. Faculty mentors will also assist Fellows with the development of a community-based project in the second year of the program.

### Meet the first class of fellows:

Vicke Collie-Akers, MPH, MA  
Valerie Collins Russell, DHS  
Crystal Vinson Dempsey, BS  
Jennifer Fisher, MPH  
Joseph Martinez, JD

**Vandana Shah**  
Executive Director

CONTACT US AT 919-981-5000

**Mailing Address:**  
7090 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-7090

**Physical Address:**  
Wood Oak Building  
1100 Navaho Drive  
Suite 203  
Raleigh, NC 27609

**Phone:** 919-981-5000  
**Fax:** 919-855-6894

“ Investing in a Healthy NC ”

#### Health Observances

January 18-24 is Healthy Weight Week

January is National Glaucoma Awareness  
Month

February is Heart Health Month

[www.HealthWellNC.com](http://www.HealthWellNC.com)

## Initiative Updates

### Health Disparities

On October 9-10, grantees from Phase I of the Eliminating Health Disparities Initiative met at the Friday Center in Chapel Hill for the second annual grantee meeting. The theme of the meeting was “Strengthening and Sustaining Successful Community-Based Models for Combating Health Disparities.” Keynote speaker Dr. William “Bill” Jenkins used the Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment to challenge the audience to be mindful about ethical responsibilities when working in ethnic and racial minority communities. Other breakout sessions over the two days focused on culturally relevant care, social marketing, recognizing and overcoming challenges in eliminating health disparities, policy change and advocacy, and achieving sustainability through partnerships and collaboration.

### Teen Tobacco

The 100% Tobacco Free Colleges (TFC) annual grantee meeting in Chapel Hill was a tremendous success. Grantees representing 50 colleges learned about the revised college web site ([www.tobaccofreecollegesnc.com](http://www.tobaccofreecollegesnc.com)) and a new online store providing TFC and QuitlineNC branded materials. Representatives from schools with TFC policies shared their tips for educating students, promoting cessation resources and troubleshooting issues related to policy implementation. Recently, HWTF has given presentations about TFC to several statewide organizations including the NC Association of Community Colleges and the NC Independent Colleges and Universities. As of early December, 22 of NC’s colleges have comprehensive tobacco use prevention policies, the most of any state.

### Obesity/Wellness

The NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund Commission continues to expand its obesity initiative in order to sufficiently address North Carolina’s obesity epidemic. HWTF recently added two programs under the obesity umbrella: the *A+ Fit School* initiative, a school grants and designation program and *IN4Kids*, a clinical obesity initiative. The Fit Community program is currently in its fourth phase and is now accepting applications from towns and counties for the designation and grant funding. Under HWTF’s Fit Kids initiative over 38,543 teachers have been trained on incorporating physical activity into their daily lesson plans, the largest single teacher training in the history of the state. As the obesity rates in NC continue to rise, the Commission will continue to seek innovative programs to stem the tide on this epidemic.