

COUNTY OF DUKES COUNTY
VINEYARD HEALTH CARE ACCESS PROGRAM
ANNUAL REPORT
FY 2013

Client Services: The Access Program's core service is connecting the Island's lower to moderate income residents with affordable health insurance and helping them to retain this coverage. We provide public benefit health care program application, enrollment and retention services; information, referral and advocacy; referrals to medical providers; make appointments and help clients manage medical debt; and we facilitate access to services like specialty care, dental care, vision care and prescription medication assistance. The Senior Assistance Program provides application assistance, benefits counseling and program navigation for low-income Island seniors. We are also a liaison agency for other public benefits including Food Stamps (SNAP), emergency cash assistance, and Social Security disability claims.

In FY2013 the Access Program provided enrollment assistance to **2,075** households to complete MassHealth-related applications resulting in coverage approval for **2,357** individuals; we provided MassHealth/Commonwealth Care related support and follow-up, including for benefit retention, **5,054** times; and we completed other medical, dental, prescription and referral assistance **1,974** times.

The **David Kurth Memorial Fund** provides emergency financial assistance to Islanders with medical-related expenses that they cannot afford, primarily prescription medication. ***In FY2013, we assisted over 114 uninsured or underinsured Islanders to get 153 prescription medications and related assistance by providing \$4,552 in financial assistance.*** Contributions in FY2013 came from the Rotary Club; the United Methodist Church; individual donors, and local businesses. This fund has provided over \$55,000 in financial assistance to help Islanders get needed medications since its inception.

The Access Program is engaged in a collaborative health insurance enrollment project with the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head/Aquinnah called **KIDSWIN** for Native American children and their families. This grant was due to end April 2013 but was extended for one year due the efforts of the Tribe's Health Services Director. We are also working with the Vineyard Nursing Association and Island Health Care on a chronic disease prevention and self-management pilot program, the **MV Partnership for Health (MVPH)**, which has enabled us to maintain and expand our **Healthy Vida** community health education activities. **MVPH** offers diabetes education, health coaching and other wellness and health promotion services (information available at vineyardhealth.org).

General program outreach is ongoing in the form of distribution of fliers, brochures and cards throughout the community; school mailings; presenting to adult education classes; networking with health and human service agencies; and newspaper advertisements. Enrollment services are provided to clients of the Dukes County House of Corrections and the Community Corrections Program.

Vineyard Smiles provides school-based mobile dental services and dental education for children in Head Start, Project Headway preschool and grades K-12; monthly dental hygiene clinics for seniors; and care facilitation for adults with unmet oral health needs. ***In SY 2013, 335 children received dental care at 445 dental visits including exams, cleanings, fluoride treatment, sealants and fillings.*** Clinics for low-income seniors are held once per month on average at senior centers and Island Elderly Housing. In FY2013 ***80 elderly and disabled patients received services.*** These services are made possible by funding from the Town Boards of Health for health promotion services through the Vineyard Nursing Association. The VHCA provides the coordination for the program and outreach (scheduling the clinics and the providers).

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Local and Regional Initiatives: Access Program employees have been involved in a number of additional health care initiatives including:

- The Dukes County Health Council
- The MassHealth Training Forum
- The Oral Health Excellence Coalition
- MV Partnership for Health/Healthy Vida
- Elder Care Providers Work Group

Technical Assistance and Training: The Access Program provides trainings including a MassHealth program updates and overviews to staff at MV Community Services and MV Hospital. We also offer a seminar titled “Understanding Medicare” via ACE MV.

Funding: The agreement between the County and Towns to share a portion of the program’s budget entered its last year in FY2013. The County provided 10% of \$105,882 (\$10,558) and the six Island Towns providing 90% (\$95,294), or slightly more than one third of the total budget of \$273,758. The Island Towns further provided additional funds in order to ensure that the program was able to maintain its level of service to the Island community. This additional support, a total of \$58,914, was needed due to a reduction in grant funding. In addition to the County and Island Towns, FY2013 funding sources included the US Department of Health and Human Services via a grant to the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head/Aquinnah, the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Foundation, Elder Services of Cape Cod and the Islands, United Way of Cape Cod and the Islands, and local funders including the Permanent Endowment Fund of Martha’s Vineyard, Rotary Club, local businesses and individual donors.

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