



# The **MCIC** Chronicles

*MCIC: Formed in 1996 to work toward improving the long-term health of all Mississippians. Over 140 members representing 100 public & private organizations*

**June 2009**

**Mississippi Chronic Illness Coalition Newsletter**

**Vol. 6, No. 2**

## ***MSDH Office of Emergency Planning and Response to Host June 17 Meeting***

The MSDH Office of Emergency Planning and Response (OEPR) is sponsoring the MCIC June 17 meeting. The OEPR provides technical assistance to local jurisdictions when planning, training and responding to emergencies that have the potential to affect public health.

Dorothy Gaston, Emergency Preparedness training director for the at-risk project, and Kim Abrams Magee, Emergency Preparedness grant coordinator, will share information on the project.

“We are looking forward to the meeting on June 17 and hope to include your organization in our At-Risk and Volunteer programs,” said Ms. Gaston.

## **MCIC Annual Awards Luncheon Honors Three Outstanding Health Leaders**

The contributions of a legislator and two physicians for the creation of a healthy Mississippi were the focus of the May 28 MCIC luncheon held in conjunction with the 4th Annual Empowering Communities for a Healthy Mississippi Conference. Erin Pickens of WJTV-Channel 12 served as mistress of ceremonies for the event.

Rep. Alyce G. Clarke of Jackson, Dr. Clay Hays of Jackson, and Dr. Alfio (Al) Rausa of Greenwood were named the outstanding health leaders by MCIC membership before a capacity audience at the luncheon. The awards were announced along with a photo presentation of the three honorees.

Rep. Alyce Griffin Clarke, originally from Yazoo City, made history when she became the first African-American woman elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives in 1985. Alyce represents District 69 of Hinds County.

Dr. Clay Hays, who is board certified in internal cardiovascular disease and interventional cardiology, graduated cum laude with an undergraduate degree from the University of Mississippi. He earned his medical degree from the University of Mississippi School of Medicine, followed by his residency in internal medicine at the Mayo Graduate School of Medicine. He completed his fellowship in cardiology at the University of Mississippi School of Medicine. He co-chairs the Governor’s Task Force on Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention and is an advocate for child exercise and obesity.

Dr. Al Rausa is the Mississippi State Department of Health’s District Health Officer for Public Health Districts I and III that includes 18 counties. Born in New York City, he completed his undergraduate work in New York and graduated from Bologna University Medical School in Italy, the oldest medical school in the western world. After a year’s internship, he served with the United States Public Health Service. He was among three other commissioned officers assigned to implement the Delta Pilot Project in the Delta.

(See page 3 for more information on the recipients.)

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## **MCIC Meeting Agenda June 17, 2009 11:00—2:00 Osborne Auditorium**

**Welcome/ Introductions.....**Mary Helen Conner  
Chair

**Emergency Preparedness . . .** Dorothy Gaston  
Emergency Preparedness Training Director, At-Risk  
Project

**Drug Safety Points . . . . .** Sarah Miller, RN,  
MSN, IQH Project Coordinator

**HISPC Extension . . . . .** Mary Helen Conner, MPH,  
BSN, CHES, IQH Project Coordinator

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## **Mark Your Calendars Now Upcoming Meetings for MCIC**

- September 23, 2009**
- November 18, 2009**
- February 17, 2010**



## HISPC Efforts to Continue through July

A four-month extension of the Health Information Security and Privacy Collaboration (HISPC) will carry efforts sharing the benefits of health information technology (HIT) through July 31 in the state. IQH represents Mississippi in HISPC, a multi-year project launched in 2006 by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. MCIC members heard details of HISPC at the February meeting when Mary Helen Conner, project coordinator, shared information and materials.

In the extension phase of HISPC that began in April, IQH is working in a multi-state collaborative focused on outreach and education of healthcare providers and consumers on the benefits of health information technology (HIT) and health information exchange (HIE). Other participating states include Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Missouri, and Tennessee.

IQH is using materials from a virtual toolkit developed by the HISPC Provider Education Toolkit (PET) Collaborative. This toolkit can be found at [www.secure4health.org](http://www.secure4health.org). The toolkit materials introduce electronic health information exchange (HIE) to providers and consumers, increase their awareness of the privacy and security benefits and challenges of electronic HIE and address any privacy and security concerns. The collaborative is working with medical and nursing associations, societies, and consumer-oriented organizations. The goal is to help reduce or eliminate barriers to the electronic exchange of health information. The Mississippi Web site for additional tools and information can be found at [www.mshispc.com](http://www.mshispc.com).

If you have questions or need additional information, contact Mary Helen at 601-957-1575 ext. 219.

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### MCIC's Capitol Day



Shown at the Jan. 15 Capitol Health Awareness Day observation are Rep. Mary Coleman of Jackson, who is a faithful visitor to the MCIC exhibit; Mary Helen Conner, MCIC chairman; and Margrett Davis, MCIC co-chair. Next year's special day at the Capitol has been set for Jan. 21, 2010, which is also Health Awareness Day.

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### Save the Date

Next MCIC Meeting to be held:

**June 17, 2009**

**11 a.m. - 2 p.m.**

Osbourne Auditorium Health Department



*The MCIC CHRONICLES* June 2009

Prepared courtesy of

Information & Quality Healthcare (IQH),

James S. McIlwain, MD, President

Carole Kelly, IQH Communications, Editor,

MCIC Public Relations/Membership Chair

The Mississippi Rural Health Association (MRHA) serves as the fiscal agent for MCIC.

# Creating a Culture of Wellness in Mississippi

## **Healthcare Policy: Alyce Griffin Clarke**

Alyce Griffin Clarke's work laid the foundation for Mississippi as one of the states sharing the initial planning grants awarded under the new Drug Court Program, established by the 1994 Crime Act. She is the founder of "Born Free" Drug and Alcohol Treatment Center for pregnant women.

Alyce was raised in the heart of the Mississippi Delta, Belzoni, where she attended high school. After receiving a Bachelor of Science degree from Alcorn State University, she attended Tuskegee University and earned a Master of Science degree.

Her never-ending journey to improve the quality of life for the people she serves has not gone unnoticed. Her honors include "Woman of the Year" from Alcorn State University National Alumni Association; Meritorious Award from Alcorn State University Alumni Council; Family and Children's 2000 Award; Increasing Minority Health Professionals Awards from the Mississippi Medical and Surgical Association; Reverend George Lee Award for Tireless Work in Voter Registration; Jamie Whitten Award from the Mississippi Primary Healthcare Association and many others. Her civic and professional affiliation includes serving on the board of directors for the Mississippi Multiple Sclerosis National Society; Southeastern Educational Improvement Laboratories; Harbor House of Jackson; and Central Mississippi Health Services.

Alyce and husband, L. W., are the parents of a son, Demarquis. She is a member of Cade Chapel Missionary Baptist Church and serves as an usher. Currently she serves as chair of the House Ethics Committee; a member of Juvenile Justice, Education, Joint Legislative Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER), Universities & Colleges, Judiciary B and Ways and Means.

Rep. Clarke has presented updates from the Legislature at MCIC meetings and has faithfully supported Capitol Day efforts each year.

## **Professional Healthcare: Dr. J. Clay Hays Jr.**

Dr. Clay Hays is the governor's appointee to the Mississippi Tobacco Control Advisory Council and Lieutenant Governor's appointee to the Board of Directors of the Health Care Trust Fund and the Health Care Expendable Fund. Active at First Baptist Church in Jackson, he works on the Greater Jackson Chamber Partnership efforts and has served on the Board of Mission First, a nonprofit inner city mission, health, and legal clinic. Dr. Hays gave an update on cardiovascular disease and stroke at the February MCIC meeting.

## **Community/Public Healthcare: Dr. Alfio Rausa**

When Dr. Al Rausa resigned his Public Health Service commission in 1970, he accepted the position of health officer with the Mississippi Department of Health. A community activist in many ways and honored by his community with special awards and recognition, he has served as commissioner of the Greenwood Youth Soccer Association, president of the North Central Mississippi Council on Aging and president of the Board of Directors of the Golden Age Nursing Home. A member of the Greenwood Leflore Hospital medical staff, he has numerous memberships, including serving as secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Association of Public Health Physicians and president of the American Association of Public Health Physicians. He has been an active MCIC member since its beginning, chairing the Advocacy Committee and contributing to Capitol Day activities.

Both physicians were attending the State Medical Association Convention in Oxford and could not be present for the luncheon. Accepting for them were Monica Stinson of the Department of Health for Dr. Rausa and Tobey Houston of the Jackson Heart Clinic for Dr. Hays.

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**Last year's awards event honored Dr. Aaron Shirley, former Attorney General Mike Moore, and Dr. John Bower as outstanding contributors to the health of Mississippians.**

## Looking Back: Highlights from the February MCIC Meeting



*Cassandra Dove, MSDH chronic disease director, shown left, discusses her February update on the Mississippi Delta Health Collaborative with Mary Helen Conner of IQH, who presented information about the Health Care Security and Privacy Collaboration (HISPC).*

The Mississippi Delta Health Collaborative includes the five counties of Washington, Sunflower, Leflore, Coahoma and Bolivar and focuses on heart disease and stroke prevention. Jackie Hawkins of Greenwood is the director.

HISPC represents a multi-state collaborative focused on outreach and education of healthcare providers and consumers on the benefits of health information technology (HIT) and health information exchange (HIE). **Educational materials for organizations to distribute will be available at the June meeting.**



Dr. Clay Hays, Jackson cardiologist, spoke on cardiovascular disease at the February MCIC meeting. Dr. Hays' contributions to health were noted at the recent recognition luncheon.

### February Topics

- \* Delta Chronic Disease Project;
- \* Health Care Security & Privacy Collaboration (HISPC);
- \* Cardiovascular Updates

## Notes from the Chair



First of all, I want to thank everyone who worked so hard to make the 2nd annual MCIC awards luncheon such a great success. After the luncheon, we received positive comments, and several people requested information about joining MCIC.

Thanks to Donna Speed who stepped up early to efficiently and effectively chair the decorations phase. I believe that we will be sponsoring this luncheon as a third annual event next year so please let me know if you have any comments or suggestions to make next year's luncheon even better. Please note that we have set the dates and reserved the Osborne auditorium for the next three general meetings. We also already have a lunch sponsor for the Sept. 23 meeting, so mark your calendars and plan to attend. A thought: With the pivotal business of moving toward the 501c3 status underway, it has been suggested that we have elections in September to ensure continuity. Please let us know your thoughts.

I am truly honored to be working with so many wonderful and dedicated volunteers. Hope to see everyone Wednesday, June 17. Thanks, Mary Helen [mconner@iqh.org](mailto:mconner@iqh.org) or [mbconner@bellsouth.net](mailto:mbconner@bellsouth.net).