



Meet the Network

The HCH Clinicians' Network is a national membership association and “professional home” for hands-on care providers who are dedicated to combating and preventing homelessness and to improving the health and quality of life of homeless people. Organized in 1994 to provide peer support to clinicians from various disciplines, the Network actively:

- Shares information and experience to enhance clinical practice;
- Promotes clinical research; educates clinicians, communities, homeless people and policymakers on the interrelationship between homelessness, health and public policy issues; and
- Collaborates with other clinical networks, professional associations and groups that serve homeless people.

Mission

These underlying principles form the basis for the Network's mission:

- The conviction that homelessness in the United States is an intolerable health and social problem;
- A commitment to confront the multiple and complex problems associated with homelessness by using an interdisciplinary approach;
- A commitment to improve the health status of homeless people by providing quality health care services in a holistic manner;
- A commitment to enhance homeless people's ability to care for themselves;
- A commitment to develop our leadership abilities, share information, and foster collegiality among clinicians serving homeless people;
- A commitment to honor the diversity of the homeless people we serve; and
- A commitment to speak out on homeless issues, educate the public and inform public health policy.

The National Health Care for the Homeless Council operates the Network. The Council began in 1985 as an element of the 19-project HCH demonstration program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Pew Memorial Trust. We are now almost 110 Organizational Members and over 500 individuals comprising the Network. Other Council members include grantees and subcontractors in the federal Health Care for the Homeless funding stream, members of the Respite Care Providers' Network and the National Consumer Advisory Board, and others. Homeless and formerly homeless people who formally advise local HCH projects comprise the National Consumer Advisory Board and participate in the Council's governance.

The Council's mission is to help bring about reform of the health care system to best serve the needs of people who are homeless, to work in alliance with others whose broader purpose is to eliminate homelessness, and to provide support to Council members. In the Council, agencies and individuals, clinicians and advocates, homeless people and housed people come together for mutual support and learning opportunities, and to advance the cause of human rights.

Improving Health Care for the Homeless | 2008-2009 Accomplishments

- Participated in planning workshops, round table discussions, plenary sessions and other events for the National Health Care for the Homeless Conference
- Maintained a website on homelessness and health care featuring clinical resources on general topics as well as specific diseases and conditions
- Published and distributed 6 issues of the newsletter *Healing Hands*, 2 issues of the e-newsletter *Healing Kids*, 6 issues of the e-newsletter *Network News*
- Published 2 case reports illustrating health care issues or services for homeless people that have educational value for the field of homeless health care
- Revised 4 Adapted Clinical Guidelines previously developed by the Network
- Implemented a special project on poverty and health care, resulting in a model curriculum for professional schools to modify and adapt for their own use

Increasing Member Involvement

The Membership Committee planned the 14th Annual Network Membership Meeting that was held in conjunction with the 2009 National HCH Conference on June 25. Linda Barnet, the outgoing Network Chair, gave a brief report on the accomplishments for 2008-2009 and described planned initiatives for 2009-2010.

Caring. Conscience. Compassion

The Award for Outstanding Service recognizes members who sacrifice their time to go beyond their job description to improve the health and quality of life of our homeless neighbors. These hands-on care providers use creativity and tenacious perseverance to address the challenges of homelessness in their communities and beyond. For the 14th straight year, the Network recognizes those who work in health care for the homeless. With the presentation of this award, the Network strives to foster peer-to-peer recognition of the dedication and passion we see so frequently in hands-on care providers working with homeless families and individuals. The following individual received an award in June 2008:

AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE:

- *Kelvin Silver, Med, LCADC, CRC, LPC, Director of Addiction Service at HCH, Inc., Baltimore, MD*

Membership Profile

- Members reflect the range of clinical disciplines among those who work in homeless health care: Physicians (27%), nurses (20%), advanced practice nurses (22%), social workers (13%), and others including case managers, physician assistants, outreach workers, behavioral health specialists, oral health providers, and program administrators
- 536 members for the 2008-2009 membership year
- 55% of 2007 members renewed in 2008
- 58% of HCH projects nationwide have staff who belong to the Network
- 72% are women; 28% are men
- Members are from across the United States, Canada and Australia!

2008-2009 Publications

- *Network News* | July 2008 | Supplement: Merit Award Guidelines | Issue 62
- **The Presence Spirituality in Healing** | *Healing Hands* | August 2008
- **Adapting Your Practice: Treatment & Recommendations for Homeless Patients with HIV/AIDS** | September 2008
- *Healing Kids* | September 2008 | Issue 30
- **Tools to Help Clinicians Achieve Effective Discharge Planning** | *Healing Hands* | October 2008
- **Adapting Your Practice: Treatment & Recommendations for Homeless Children with Otitis Media** | December 2008
- **Adapting Your Practice: Treatment & Recommendations for Homeless Patients with Chlamydial & Gonococcal Infections** | December 2008
- **Adapting Your Practice: Treatment & Recommendations on Reproductive Health Care for Homeless Patients** | December 2008
- **The Specter of Liver Disease** | *Healing Hands* | December 2008
- **Decompensated Chronic Liver Disease with Comorbid Treatable Aplastic Anemia in a Homeless Adult Male** | *Homeless Health Care Case Report: Sharing Practice-Based Experience* | December 2008
- *Network News* | January 2009 | Issue 63
- *Network News* | January 2009 | Special Edition | Issue 64
- **Meeting the Challenges of Comorbid Mental Illness and Substance-Related Disorders** | *Healing Hands* | February 2009
- **Mitigating Homeless Children's Risk for Developmental Delay** | *Healing Hands* | April 2009
- *Healing Kids* | April 2009 | Issue 31
- *Network News* | May 2009 | Issue 65
- **Research in HCH Settings: Advancing Quality in Primary Care** | *Healing Hands* | June 2009
- **Mobile Medical Outreach: A Commitment to Service** | *Homeless Health Care Case Report: Sharing Practice-Based Experience* | June 2009
- *Network News* | June 2009 | Issue 66
- *Network News* | June 2009 | Special Issue | Issue 67
- **2008-2009 HCH Clinicians' Network Membership Directory** | June 2009

Order these and other publications on homelessness and health care by calling 615/226-2292 or visiting www.nhchc.org. Readers may download most *Network* publications without cost.

Leadership: 2008–09 Steering Committee

The Steering Committee, elected by Network members, met three times this past year. It determines policies and coordinates the affairs of the Network. Members receive no compensation, but are reimbursed for meeting expenses. The Steering Committee elects officers for the Network, who serve a one-year term. The Network Chair and Chair-Elect sit on the Board of Directors of the National Health Care for the Homeless Council, and two additional members of the Steering Committee represent the Network as part of the Council's Governing Membership. The Network Steering Committee is a standing committee of the National Council's Board of Directors.

Betsy Baldwin, BS, *McKinney Health Care for the Homeless, Bridgeport, CT*

Linda Barnet, BSN, RN, *HCH/Mercy Medical Center, Springfield, MA*

Jan Caughlan, LCSW-C, *Health Care for the Homeless, Inc., Baltimore, MD*

Wayne Centrone, NMD, MPH, *Outside In, Portland, OR*

Bechara Choucair, MD, *Heartland Health Outreach, Inc., Chicago, IL*

Bernie Creaven, MN, RN, *Carolyn Downs Clinic, Seattle, WA*

Isabella Christodoulou, MSW, LCSW, *Tulane Drop-In Health Services, New Orleans, LA*

Bob Donovan, MD, *Health Care for the Homeless Project, Minneapolis, MN*

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Alan Pickett, BSN, RN, *Project Outreach Team, Ann Arbor, MI*

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Pia C. Valvassori, PhD, ARNP, *Health Care Center for the Homeless, Orlando, FL*

Barbara Wismer, MD, MPH, *Tom Waddell Health Center, San Francisco, CA*

2008–09 Standing & Working Committees

Executive Committee, Linda Barnet, Chair

Nominating Committee, Lisa Thompson, Chair

Communications Committee, Jan Caughlan, Chair

Education Committee, Wayne Centrone, Co-Chair

Membership Committee, Alan Pickett, Chair

Pediatric Work Group, Bernie Creaven, Chair

Research Committee, Pia Valvassori & Bechara Choucair, Co-Chairs

Contributors 2008-09

The following individuals made donations to the National Health Care for the Homeless Council during 2008-2009. You can make a donation any time by visiting www.nhchc.org.

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