Infrastructure and Access to Care In Rural Georgia

House Rural Development Council/J. Patrick O’Neal, Commissioner/Sept. 7, 2017
Mission Statement

- Prevent disease, injury and disability
- Promote health and well-being
- Prepare for and respond to disasters
Georgia Department of Public Health

159  County Health Departments
159  County Boards of Health
18   Public Health Districts
18   District Health Directors
1    Commissioner
1    Board of Public Health
Primary Care and Health Care Delivery
Public Health Department Services

- Child Health
- Women’s Health
- Immunizations
- Ryan White Clinic
  - HIV-AIDS Program
- Children with Special Needs
  - Clinical and support services
- Communicable/Infectious Disease
- Women’s Infants and Children (WIC)
- Environmental Health
Environmental Health Services

- Swimming pool inspections
- Tourist accommodation inspections
- Insect disease surveillance
- Rabies control
- Individual water system inspections
- Septic system permits

- Food safety inspections
  - Restaurants
  - School cafeterias
  - Caterers
  - Vendors
Epidemiology Services

• Notifiable disease reporting/surveillance
• Influenza surveillance
• Infection control and disease surveillance during emergencies and disasters
• Drug resistant disease tracking and reporting
• Immunization program assessment

• Works with
  o Hospitals
  o Schools
  o Physicians
  o Nursing homes
  o Law enforcement
  o Government agencies
Specialized Services

Specialized services provided in *some* health departments

- International Travel Clinics
- Centering Programs
- Farm worker’s Programs
- Telehealth/telemedicine
- Oral Health
Expanding Access

- County health departments serve all Georgians
- Payment is accepted based on sliding scale fees
- DPH is working to expand the number of contract providers and the number of billable services
Current Private Insurance Contracts

- Aetna/Coventry
  - All commercial products
  - All covered services
- Cigna
  - All commercial products
  - All covered services
- United Healthcare
  - All commercial products
  - All covered services
  - Includes SHBP members
- Blue Cross Blue Shield
  - All health departments contracted to provide immunizations to HMO and PPO members (Includes SHBP and Board of Regents members)
  - Contract implementation in progress to reimburse all covered services and commercial products
Enterprise Systems Modernization
Enterprise Systems Modernization

- Create person/family-centric services
- Strengthen fee-for-services effectiveness to reduce reliance on government funding
- Provide robust self-service capabilities for clients, providers and retailers
- Reduce administrative time spent on tasks and workarounds
- Create a more effective, adaptable and seamless organization
- Improve data standards, stewardship, governance, and quality
- Create richer, more meaningful information that can be easily shared
- Make DPH the trusted data source
Telehealth and Telemedicine
Telehealth Network
Telehealth Overview

Network Hub (Blackshear, GA)
• Housed in DPH Southeast Health District
• Administrative staff located in Waycross and Atlanta

Providers and Presenters
• Our goal is to connect patients to providers in their local community and not extract business/medical services from the local economy
• We will look to surrounding counties or metropolitan areas if providers are not available
• Presenters must be an RN, LPN, or CNA
• Presenting sites bill for $20.52 per encounter
Telehealth Projects

Children’s Medical Services
• Developmental & Genetics
• Endocrinology
• Nephrology
• Neurosurgery
• Pulmonology
• Sickle Cell

Infectious Disease (HIV/AIDS)
• Patients at local clinics see DPH Infectious Disease specialist
• Mobile presentations from home or community setting

High Risk Ob Clinic (Centering Pregnancy)
• Ultrasound/Colposcopy
• Consult w/ Maternal Fetal Medicine Specialist

WIC Nutrition
• Breast feeding support
• Nutrition education
• Staff training/development
Additional Telehealth Projects

- Collaborative school-based behavioral health telemedicine pilot in Lamar County Schools
- Sickle Cell Telemedicine Clinics
- Diabetes Self Management/Therapy
- Breast Cancer Genomics Project
- Teledentistry
- Teledermatology
Telemedicine Partners
Community Partnerships

- DPH is committed to increasing access to care by fostering collaboration between public health and other providers as part of its strategic plan.
- DPH hosts an annual partnership summit where districts can learn from new and established partnerships in other districts.
- Over half of the districts have identified fostering partnerships as a priority in their strategic plans.
2017 Partnership Survey Results

- 100% of health districts are collaborating with hospitals, family and general practitioners, pharmacists and OB/GYNs
- 95% of health districts partner with schools
- Approximately 40% of the health districts reported having established at least 5 new partnerships in the areas of Health Promotion and Emergency Preparedness within the past year
- All 18 health districts are working on innovative ways to utilize telehealth and telemedicine
Example: Wheeler County

• BOH/Health Department reducing lack of access to primary care by providing primary care services in addition to public health services

• April 2016, two APRNs began providing the following services two days per week:
  o Chronic disease management (e.g. diabetes, hypertension, hypercholesterolemia, asthma)
  o Upper respiratory infections
  o Nutrition counseling
  o Triage / screening for other disorders / conditions (e.g. Inflammatory Arthritis, Endocrine, and Neurologic disorders)
  o Minor injuries
  o Medical exams for commercial truck drivers
Sustaining and Expanding Services for Rural Georgia
Sustaining and Expanding Services for Rural Georgia

- Telehealth infrastructure and initiatives to support innovations in health care delivery and increase access to care for rural Georgians
- Enterprise Systems Modernization to collect statewide data on services provided through county health departments
- Workforce development for public health workers with specialized skill sets to protect the public from illness and infectious disease
Thank You