Introduction

The Migrant Health and Education Program (MHEP) began as a result of increased recognition in the variety of groups and organizations with similar goals and no methods of communication or collaboration; particularly, in the effort to reach out to immigrant and migrant communities and provide access to health and educational services free (or at very low cost) of charge. In addition, the MHEP will attempt to identify gaps in services and act as a provider to generate novel solutions.

Overview of the Program

The principle collaborations began between the Equal Access (EAC) and Mobile Outreach Clinics (MOC) of the University of Florida (UF) College of Medicine, and the UF Department of Education and Multi-County Migrant Education Department (School Board of Alachua). The Migrant Education Department has worked in the past with the MOC to provide migrant-centered health fairs. It was then realized that these same populations were lacking in access to educational services, while those workers at the provided English courses were not being seen by medical professionals. Thus, the MHEP was originally created, not as a completely new organization but as a method by which resources can be brought together and better distributed; and as a manner by which exchange of ideas and resources can take place with greater facility. Ultimately, it seeks to augment current programs with partnerships in different areas of need (ex: provide mobile clinic visits to English course locations, and vice versa).

Outreach Programs and Goals

Recently, in recognition of the lack of rural health outreach programs, the MHEP is organizing a Rural Outreach Project which seeks to provide primary care services and health screenings in hard-to-reach areas, in effect extending the Mobile Clinic’s reach through mobile volunteer efforts.

The following short term goals have been instituted:

-Identify populations and areas of need

-Mobilize primary healthcare resources for primary surveillance and treatment

-Collect data on population needs and available resources

-Establish locations and interested populations for adult ESL courses (English as a Second Language)

Long term goals include:
- Establishing consistent contact with frequently returning migrant workers and with local immigrant populations

- Begin forming contacts with out-of-state providers in similar fields for the maintenance of care along the migrant farm workers’ yearly movement

- Establish the MHEP as a reliable means by which community and university resources can be organized and best effect positive change in the migrant and immigrant communities

- Establish the MHEP as a model which other Universities can adopt to better serve their communities

- Publish data and bring attention to the needs of migrant and immigrant populations nationally

Contact

For more information or how to become involved, visit our website at: http://outreach.med.ufl.edu/migrant-education-and-health/, or contact the program director, Matt Getz, at mgetz@ufl.edu.