To provide a better understanding of homelessness in Madison, MEDIC sponsored a noon talk last semester by one of the founders of MEDIC, Dr. Theodore Goodfriend, and Steven Schooler, the executive director of Porchlight, Inc., a non-profit, volunteer agency that collaborates with MEDIC at three clinics: Michelle Tracy, Grace, and Safehaven. Porchlight provides emergency shelter, affordable housing, food, employment services, and counseling to the homeless population of Madison.

Housing in Madison is more expensive than anywhere else in Wisconsin, putting many families at risk for losing their homes and leading to a large population of working homeless. Additional factors leading to homelessness include substance abuse and mental illness. For several decades, deinstitutionalization policies have promoted the transition of increasing numbers of at-risk populations out of state-run institutions. Most corresponding independence-fostering community programs, however, are provided by separate organizations at different locations, making access more difficult. Porchlight’s mission is to provide all of these services through a single organization at more easily accessible locations.

For more information, visit Porchlight’s website: www.thousing.com

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Porchlight’s Service to Madison’s Homeless

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Madison’s Homeless Population: Shelter Use in 2004

2,611 individuals provided with shelter beds
- 464 single women: 21% mental illness, 13% alcohol or drug abuse, 57% physical disability or medical problem
- 614 single men: 15% mental illness*, 13% alcohol or drug abuse*, 10% physical disability or medical problem (*shelters suggest that these values are underreported)
- 432 families: 29% at least one member with mental illness, 12% at least one member with alcohol or drug abuse, 47% at least one member with physical disability or medical problem
- 865 children
- 65 unaccompanied youth

2,484 individuals turned away (80% because of lack of shelter space, 82% were families)

Most Common Reasons for seeking shelter:
- Families: threatened or actual violence (34%), evicted or lease not renewed (23%), low or no income (15%)
- Single Women: low or no income (25%), being in transit or transient (17%), threatened or actual violence (15%)
- Single Men: being in transit or transient (29%), roommate or family conflict (27%), low or no income (15%)
- Unaccompanied Youth: roommate or family conflict (63%), threatened or actual violence (29%)

From 2004 Year End Data on Homelessness, City of Madison Planning and Development Office

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Congratulations to the New 2005-2006 MEDIC Council!
President: Patrick McKenna  Vice President: Ben Heinzen
Drug Reps: Mary Anderson, Ryan Hatchell, Bamidele Adeyemo
Physician Schedulers: Terrah Paul Olson, Janelle Durst
Resident Scheduler: Nicole Fischer
Student Scheduler: Zobeida Diaz  ROR Coordinator: Neil Sandhu
Public Relations: Stephanie Smudde
Referrals Coordinator: Shannon Straszewski
Community Resource Development/Education: Luxme Hariharan
Community Outreach Programs Coordinator: David Vallejo
Data Project Coordinator: Ryan Woods
Sports Physicals Coordinator: Brad Gillman
Safehaven Coordinator: Irisa Devine
Grace Coordinators: Kirke Rogers, Adam Kadlec
Southside Coordinators: Meghan Pesko, Ariel Chairez
Salvation Army Coordinators: Jayna Schumacher, Mark Biagtan
ARC Coordinator: Liz Bonson
Michelle Tracy Coordinators: Andrew Ju, Jimmy Wu

For more information about MEDIC, please visit our website: http://www.fammed.wisc.edu/medic
The ARC Clinic: Serving a Forgotten Population

The ARC House Clinic was started under the direction of Alida Evans, MD, PhD, in September, 2003, with a mission to provide health care for the residents of the ARC Houses of Madison, which are residential facilities for women returning to the community after incarceration. Most of the women are searching for work and do not have medical insurance. Those residents with chronic health concerns are invited to come to the monthly clinic.

The ARC Clinic is unique in that it is the only MEDIC clinic that focuses exclusively on chronic care rather than acute care. Each student volunteer is scheduled for three consecutive clinic experiences with a health care team that sees the same patients each month, which allows students the opportunity to build a deeper rapport with each patient and provides more time to focus on health education and prevention strategies. Additionally, because Dr. Alida Evans is the staffing physician at every clinic, students have a wonderful opportunity to work closely with her over the course of their three clinic experiences.

Since the ARC Clinic opened, there have been approximately 80 patient visits, with most women returning monthly for follow-up care. Common health concerns faced by these patients are significant weight gain, hypertension, diabetes, asthma, carpal tunnel syndrome, hypothyroidism, migraine headaches, and other problems resulting from the lack of resources to adequately address chronic health concerns while incarcerated.

The ARC Clinic has also had the privilege of working with physical therapy student volunteers since July, which has been a wonderful addition to the clinic, allowing a more interdisciplinary experience.

The ARC Clinic also incorporates an additional teaching component by holding an informal session before the beginning of each clinic in which each returning student presents the answer to a question from the previous clinic visit. These questions may be as specific as the mechanism of a medication or as broad as the reasons behind racial disparities between different populations seen at ARC.

Fall 2004 MEDIC Statistics

* Data do not include Michelle Tracy Clinic

Patient visits by clinic (absolute number): ARC, 14; Grace, 145; Safehaven, 36; Salvation Army, 128; Southside, 71.

Most frequent primary diagnosis (absolute number):
Upper respiratory infection, 31; depression, 23; asthma, 15; back pain, 10; hypertension, 10; allergies, 6; headache, 6.

Primary patient language: English, 85%; Spanish, 14%; Hmong, <1%; Other, 1%.

Reach Out and Read

Reach out and Read is a program that brings literacy and a love for reading to children who might not be able to afford new books. Medical student volunteers read to children in the MEDIC clinic waiting rooms at the Salvation Army and Southside and give them prescriptions for reading, stickers, and a new book to take home. In addition, parents are encouraged to read with their children. This program promotes a familiarity with books that will help each child to feel more comfortable with skills they will need to succeed in school.

Volunteers of the Month

We have many wonderful physician and health professional volunteers who provide care for underserved populations in Madison. Their commitment has established a solid foundation for the MEDIC clinics and has led to the care of thousands of patients who otherwise would have nowhere to turn. Please join us in recognizing the following physician and health professional volunteers for their outstanding contributions in the MEDIC clinics.

December 2004  Dr. John Porter
February 2005  Dr. David Meyers
January 2005  Dr. Aaron Dunn

MEDIC T-Shirts Now Available!

$10 for Men’s T-Shirts
$12 for Women’s T-Shirts

Contact Patrick McKenna at:
pamckenna@wisc.edu

Please send donations to:
UW Foundation
1848 University Ave.
PO Box 8860
Madison, WI 53708-8860
Attn: Andrea Engebretson

MEDIC relies on grants, donations and volunteers to keep our clinics open. Our needs include drugs, funds and your time!