

**1999-2000  
SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES  
OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH**

**I. ARTICLES PUBLISHED IN BOOKS AND JOURNALS**

A. Full-length published articles.

R.M. Benjamin. Council on Graduate Medical Education Physician Workforce Policies: Recent Developments and Remaining Challenges in Meeting National Goals. Council Member, COGME 14<sup>th</sup> Report, March, (1999).

R.M. Benjamin. Update on the Physician Workforce. Council Member, COGME Resource Paper Compendium, August (2000).

B. Articles in press.

R.M. Benjamin. COGME 15<sup>th</sup> Report Council on Graduate Medical Education Financing Graduate Medical Education in a Changing Healthcare Environment. Council Member (2000).

**II. PUBLISHED ABSTRACTS**

None.

**III. BOOKS PUBLISHED**

R.M. Benjamin. Committee Member. The Unequal Burden of Cancer: An Assessment of NIH Research and Programs for Ethnic Minorities and the Medically Underserved. M. Alfred Haynes and Brian D Smedley (Eds.) Committee on Cancer Research Among Minorities and the Medically Underserved. Institute of Medicine. (1999).

**IV. PRESENTATIONS**

R.M. Benjamin. Commencement Address. Birmingham Southern Graduation, Birmingham, AL (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Keynote Address. Robert Wood Johnson Southern Rural Access Program Grantees Meeting, Tunica, MS (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Plenary Speaker. Addressing Disparities: Minorities, Disadvantaged Groups, and Communities. National AHEC Organization Leadership Conference, Fort Worth, TX (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Keynote Speaker. Winter Graduation Breakfast, University of Nebraska Kearney, Kearney, NE (1999).

R.M. Benjamin. Keynote Address. National Health Service Corps Valentine to the Nation, LeFlore High School, Mobile, AL (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Keynote Address. East Carolina University Medical School Rural Health Leaders Award Dinner, Greenville, NC (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Graduation Address. University of Alabama at Birmingham Family Medicine Residency Program, Birmingham, AL (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Panel Participant. Consumer Driven Healthcare Conference, Harvard Business School, Boston, MA (1999).

R.M. Benjamin. Panel Participant. Race, Ethnicity, and Medical Care: Improving Access in a Diverse Society. Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, Mobile, AL (1999).

R.M. Benjamin. Panel Participant and Reactor. Family Medicine Keystone III Conference, Colorado Springs, CO (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Keynote Address. Xavier University Homecoming Alumni Dinner, New Orleans, LA (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Symposium Participant. Federation of State Licensing Boards, Medical Licensure in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Washington, D.C. (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Keynote Address. Intercultural Development Research Association Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX (2000).

R.M. Benjamin. Featured Speaker. Community Foundation of Southern Alabama Annual Meeting, Mobile, AL (1999).

R.M. Benjamin, R.M. Matens, and L. O'Connor. Office of Rural Health (1999). Kaiser Family Foundation Media Fellows, Mobile, AL (2000).

K. Deakins and D. Hicks. USA Telemedicine Demonstration (1999). Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation Media Fellows, Mobile, AL (2000).

D. Hicks. Workshop Series. USA Telemedicine VTel HS2000 Training. Mobile County Health Department, Gorgas Clinic, Mobile, AL (2000).

D. Hicks. Distance Learning: A Guide to Video Conferencing Training Workshop. (1) Jackson Memorial Hospital, Jackson, AL; and (2) Evergreen Medical Center, Evergreen, AL (2000).

R.M. Matens. Cultural Competency Issues for Health Care Providers: The Provision of Quality Care for Ethnically Diverse Communities. Covering Kids Program. (1) Troy State University School of Nursing; and (2) University of Alabama Birmingham, Birmingham, AL (2000).

L. O'Connor, R.M. Matens, D. Hicks, and R. Adams. USA Telemedicine and the Alabama AHEC Program. Charles M. Baugh Biomedical Library Info Fair, Mobile, AL (2000).

L. O'Connor and D. Hicks. USA Telemedicine Exhibit. MASA Annu. Mtg., Destin, FL (2000).

L. O'Connor. USA Telemedicine. Lions Club of Mobile, Mobile, AL (1999).

T.S. Trainor and D. Hicks. USA Telemedicine and the Baldwin Abuse Network. Television Interview and Demonstration, WALA, Mobile, AL (2000).

T.S. Trainor. Breaking Barriers, 100% Access – Zero Health Disparities: The Alabama AHEC Program. Ala. Primary Health Care Assn. Annu. Mtg., Orange Beach, AL (2000).

## V. NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

Dr. Regina Benjamin, Associate Dean for Rural Health, received the following honors: Smithsonian Computerworld 2000 Medal for Advances in Medical Technology; M. Taylor, *A Voice for Patients: At Home in Rural Alabama, She's Still Setting Milestones in Medicine* Modern Healthcare, May 22:34-35 (2000); Cover Clarity Magazine 2 (5): 20 (2000) N.B. Henderson *A 1999 Women of the Year - Dr. Regina M. Benjamin*; Honorary Degree, Morehouse School of Medicine, Atlanta Georgia; Member Institute of Medicine, National Academies of Science; Member Council on Graduate Medical Education (COGME); Member United States Medical Licensing Exam Step 3 Committee; Commissioner, Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured; Member Governor's Task Force on Children's Health; Member Robert Wood Johnson Southern Rural Access Program, National Advisory Committee; Member Advisory Committee, National Center for Medical Ethics, Tuskegee; Member Advisory Committee, UAB School of Public Health; Member Rural Medical Scholars Program Third-Year Review Team; University of Alabama School of Medicine; Continues to serve as a member of the Board of Censors Medical Association State of AL; AL Board of Medical Examiners; State Committee of Public Health; and the Federation State Medical Licensing Boards; Member Board Physicians for Human Rights; and received the Health Management Technology What Works Award, Honorable Mention (1999).

## VI. BRIEF SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS

The Office of Rural Health supports medical education and health delivery components for South Alabama including medical education, primary health profession students, medical residency training, and continuing medical education. The Office of Rural Health also provides support for rural and/or isolated providers, patient access to health education, patient access to specialty care, and communities' access to the medical information resources of the USA Biomedical Library.

In pursuit of these activities, the Office of Rural Health managed and oversaw five grant programs during FY2000: (1) Alabama AHEC Program – \$1.4 million per year; (2) Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) Bureau of Health Professions [Approval for three-year grant period]; (3) USA Telemedicine – \$1.3 million [HRSA Office for the Advancement of Telehealth]; (4) Alabama Family Practice Rural Health Board – \$10,000; (5) DeltaNet Practice-Based Research Network – \$15,000 [Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality to establish a Practice-Based Research Network and electronic medical record in southwest Alabama, in partnership with Dartmouth Medical School]; CME Video Library – \$13,000 [ Charles E. DeBakey Foundation to establish a CME Video Library to serve physicians and other healthcare providers throughout the state.

### **The Alabama AHEC Program**

The mission of the Alabama AHEC Program is to improve the quality and accessibility of health care for the communities of Alabama through a system of community-academic partnerships whose central purpose is the recruitment, education, and retention of primary health care providers.

The Alabama Area Health Education Center Program (AHEC) is a system of community-academic partnerships designed to provide the following services: primary care preceptorships, multi-disciplinary training, professional recruitment and retention, continuing medical education, rural residency training, learning resource centers, continuing education, community health education, and encouragement of youth and minorities to pursue careers in healthcare.

The Alabama AHEC Program provided oversight to four area Health Education Centers within the state (Southwest Alabama AHEC, Southeast Alabama AHEC and West Alabama AHEC, Tuskegee Area Health Education Center).

During the 1999 – 2000 program year the Alabama AHEC program and local centers sponsored or provided the following: (1) 619 continuing education programs; (2) 5351 providers participated in the programs; (3) 118 distance learning programs; (4) 584 community based training sites; (5) 274 medical students trained in underserved sites; (6) 1063 health professions students trained in underserved sites; and (7) 578 preceptors participated in the community based training sites.

The Alabama AHEC Program maintains cooperative agreements with the following colleges, schools, organizations and/or programs across Alabama: (1) USA College of Medicine, College of Nursing, College of Allied Health Professions; Charles M. Baugh Biomedical Library, and Biomedical Enrichment and Recruitment Program; (2) Auburn School of Pharmacy; (3) University of Alabama School of Medicine, College of Community Health Sciences, and School of Social Work; (4) Troy State University; (5) University of Mobile; (6) Beville State Community College; (7) Shelton State Community College; (8) Morehouse School of Medicine; and (9) Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System.

### **USA Telemedicine**

Telemedicine is the delivery and integration of medical education and specialty healthcare services to patients and providers in rural and medically underserved areas through the use of advanced telecommunications technology. USA Telemedicine serves three primary groups: underserved patients, health care professionals, and health profession students. The USA Telemedicine Program supports seven hub sites and six spoke sites.

USA Telemedicine hub sites include: (1) USA Computer Services Center; (2) USA COM Medical Sciences Building; (3) USA Health Services Building; (4) USA Medical Center; (5) USA Children's and Women's Hospital; (6) USA Springhill Avenue Campus; and (7) USA Knollwood Park Hospital.

Spoke sites include: (1) Mobile County Health Department - Gorgas Clinic; (2) Mobile County Health Department - Calcedeaver Clinic; (3) Mostellar Medical Center; (4) Southwest Alabama Health Services; (5) Jackson Medical Center; and (6) Evergreen Medical Center.

USA Telemedicine distance learning accomplishments for FY2000 include: (1) 264 distance learning opportunities have been offered to healthcare professionals in spoke sites; (2) 4483 participants; (3) 104 programs; (4) 132 hours of Continuing Medical Education (CME) have been offered to participants using the video conferencing system; (5) Establishment of the Ernest G. DeBakey CME Video Library. Videotapes have been provided to one hundred seventy nine (179) healthcare professionals in rural areas across southwest Alabama; (6) Four Diabetic Patient Education workshops conducted, 58 patients participated; (7) Satellite capacity added to the USA Telemedicine program providing educational opportunities from such programs as the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH); and (8) Ophthalmology Grand Rounds - Weekly residency training program collaborated with Oschner Clinic.

USA Telemedicine clinical developments for FY2000 include: (1) Working with USA Teleradiology to link Jackson Hospital, Evergreen Medical Center and Thomasville Hospital to the USA Telemedicine Program; (2) Working with the Baldwin Abuse Network to develop child and adult sexual abuse telemedicine consults in Baldwin County; and (3) Working with Mobile County Health Department Gorgas Clinic, Southwest Alabama Health Services, and USACOM Infectious Disease Division to implement a Bi-weekly HIV Telemedicine Clinic.