

Volunteer Profile Article - Eleanor Clifton

by Katie Coombes and Claudia Lennhoff

Eleanor Clifton has been volunteering with CCHCC for more than a decade. She became involved with CCHCC during the campaign to create a county-wide public health department. In 1995, Eleanor became an active member of the Friends of Public Health Coalition, which was the county-wide coalition dedicated to creating a countywide public health department through voter referendum.



After the referendum passed, Claudia said, "Many volunteers and activists fell away, but Eleanor continued her involvement, and as I recall, became even more active!" Even as Eleanor continued to volunteer her time with the Friends of Public Health, she also got involved in other CCHCC activities, including attending community meetings on various topics, and participating in both the Medicare Task Force and the newly created Health Care Access Task Force. Ever active, Eleanor shared her current goals; "I hope that more people are willing to serve on the County Board of Health which can be extremely important in increasing access to health care for residents in our community."

Eleanor said, "Working with CCHCC through the years, we've had our ups and downs, but when we can celebrate a victory after months and sometimes years of effort there is a grand sense of accomplishment. I encourage people to get involved with CCHCC to work for increasing health care access in our community."

Eleanor is a dedicated health care activist who can always be counted on for her help and involvement, and she is always a pleasure to work with. Eleanor is understated in her demeanor, but everyone who knows Eleanor knows she is kind, dedicated, intelligent, compassionate, gracious, and always brightens any room she is in and she always makes others feel good for being there! All of us at CCHCC are fortunate to know and work with Eleanor, and to consider her a friend.

Update: Campaign for Access to Emergency Contraception – by Allison Jones

CCHCC's community organizing on women's health issues has continued with the Campaign for Access to Emergency Contraception. Since it began in 2004, the Campaign for Access to Emergency Contraception has advocated for greater access to emergency contraception at the local, state, and federal levels.

Emergency contraception (EC) is a safe and effective form of back-up birth control that can prevent pregnancy when taken up to 120 hours, or 5 days, after unprotected sex, contraceptive failure, or sexual assault. EC can only prevent a pregnancy and will not cause an abortion. Because EC is more effective the sooner it is taken, timely access to the drug is essential.

In the fall of 2006, the US Food and Drug Administration approved Plan B, the brand name of EC, for sale over-the-counter for women 18 years of age and older. Women's health activists had been advocating for over-the-counter EC for women of all ages for years, and this victory, although partial, was very important. Women who are 18 years of age can now access EC directly from a pharmacy without a prescription from a physician. Although EC is over-the-counter for this age group, women can only access EC from a pharmacist and must show proof of age in order to purchase it over-the-counter. The price of over-the-counter EC at the pharmacy is usually around \$35 to \$45. Women who are 17 years of age and younger are still required to get a prescription for EC from a physician and then get the prescription filled at a pharmacy. Many groups, including the Campaign for Access to Emergency Contraception, are continuing to advocate for over-the-counter access for EC for women of all ages. To learn more or to get involved, please contact Allison at (217) 352-6533 or email allison@healthcareconsumers.org.