

CHAMPAIGN COUNTY HEALTH CARE CONSUMERS

NEWSLETTER:

813 N LINCOLN, URBANA, ILLINOIS 61801

MARCH 1979

RUNNING FOR HEALTH mini-MARATHON

Running is quickly becoming one of the most popular forms of exercise in the United States. To encourage more consumers to take an active part, CCHCC will join the Frances Nelson Health Center and other community organizations in sponsoring Champaign-Urbana's First Annual RUNNING FOR HEALTH mini-MARATHON. Scheduled for Saturday May 5 at Crystal Lake Park in Urbana, the mini-MARATHON will also help raise money for CCHCC programs and the other sponsoring organizations. You can participate in two ways - as a runner or as a sponsor. If you are interested in running in the mini-Marathon, you should register with CCHCC as soon as possible. However, if you are unable to run or will be out of town on May 5, you can still help out by sponsoring one of the runners. We are encouraging all runners to find their own sponsors, but if you are unable to find a sponsor give us a call. We will try to compile a list of potential sponsors for that purpose. If you are interested in being a runner or sponsor, please fill out the coupon on page 3 and mail it in today!!!

VERMILION COUNTY RESIDENTS PLAN FORUMS

Residents of Vermilion County have begun meeting to discuss what they could do to address health concerns in their community. Residents attending these meetings included representatives from labor unions, minorities, public agencies, migrant farm workers, community organizations, women's groups and others. Among the issues identified by residents are lack of information about services available, lack of access to health services for low and moderate income consumers, and lack of consumer participation in health planning. To increase public discussion of these issues, residents have organized two community forums for the Spring. The first is entitled Can You Afford To Be Sick? and will be held on Monday, April 16, in the Palmer American Bank Community Room, 2 West Main, Danville. It will be followed by another forum scheduled for early May in Hoopston. If you are interested or would like more information please contact Otis Hillsman 443-2705.

PROJECT REVIEW WORKSHOP ATTRACTS LOCAL REGIONAL CONSUMERS

In March consumers from throughout east central Illinois attended a day long workshop entitled Increasing Consumer Effectiveness in Project Review. Helping to lead workshop sessions were Andrea Rozran, consumer member of Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board, Mark Kleiman, Executive Director, Consumer Coalition For Health, Phil Chinn, consumer President, Suburban Cook-DuPage County HSA, and Eli Beeding, staff of Illinois Health Facilities Planning Board. The workshop was aimed at helping consumers, who sit on HSA boards and committees, better understand the project review process and how it can be used to work toward achieving consumer goals.

HEALTH CONSUMERS MOVE FORWARD ON STATEWIDE COALITION

Representatives from consumer groups, senior citizens, and labor unions throughout Illinois met on March 17 to discuss the potential for establishing a statewide coalition around health issues. The first activity will be to find resources to hire a staff person who can identify all those groups throughout the state who would be interested in participating, and to organize a conference to bring all participants together. For more information contact Jackie Kendall, Illinois Public Action Council, 59 E. Van Buren, Chicago, IL 60605, (312) 427-6262.

CONGRESS RAPS EXCESS SURGERY

One of the factors contributing to the rising cost of health care is unnecessary surgery. The following article was published in the January 1979 issue of the Consumer Health Action Network (CHAN) Newsletter.

During 1977, there were approximately two million unnecessary surgical procedures, wasting over four billion dollars and over 10,000 lives, according to a recent report by the House Commerce Committee Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations. The report concludes more than three years of investigations and hearings by the Subcommittee, which set off a storm of controversy with the AMA when it charged in 1975 that 17 percent of all surgery in the U.S. was unnecessary (the more recent figures are based on about a 13% rate). The Subcommittee found that "contentions by organized medicine that unnecessary surgery cannot be defined as diversions and obfuscations which serve to be counterproductive."

The report also expresses serious concern about surgical quality, citing studies showing that patients have twice as much chance of dying from an operation in a poor quality hospital as in a good quality hospital and that one third of all unexpected deaths and other adverse consequences of surgery are preventable and a majority of these are surgeon related. The Subcommittee finds existing regulatory mechanisms inadequate and recommends preadmission review of elective procedures, public disclosure of differences in adjusted surgical morbidity from hospital to hospital, and mandatory second opinions for elective procedures such as hysterectomies and tonsillectomies. The report is valuable for pulling together many research studies on surgical necessity and quality. For copies of the report, "Surgical Performance: Necessity and Quality " (Committee Print 95-71) December 1978, and the many volumes of hearings on unnecessary surgery, contact the Subcommittee at 2323 Rayburn House Office Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20515, 202-225-4441. The Subcommittee has also just released a report based on its hearings on reimbursement of physicians by Blue Shield plans controlled by physicians.

CONSUMER SPOTLIGHT - Helen Smith, HSA Consumer Representative

Among the neighborhood residents who let Mercy Hospital know that they were unhappy about the closing of Romine Street was Helen Smith. Helen has a history of involvement in community activities. She was involved in a local welfare rights organization nearly nine years ago and has continued to be active in a number of church and community functions. Last September, she was one of the 13 CCHCC endorsed candidates elected to the Champaign-Ford SAC. Since then she has been elected to the East Central Illinois HSA Board of Directors. More recently, Helen has taken a leading role in the CCHCC Task Force on Equal Access where she hopes to address one of her most pressing concerns - the health problems facing low-income persons.

CCHCC SPONSORS GOOD NEIGHBOR DAYS

On April 12, 13 and 14, CCHCC will join Eisner/Osco Stores in sponsoring Good Neighbor Days to help raise money for CCHCC programs. All you need to do is turn in your Good Neighbor Days coupon (enclosed) at the counter of any Eisner/Osco store when you finish shopping. Then for every \$1 you spend at Eisner/Osco during this 3 day period, Eisner/Osco will donate 5¢ to CCHCC. If everyone who receives the CCHCC Newsletter were to spend just \$15 during those three days, it would raise enough money to publish the Newsletter for one full year. So please help out and shop Eisner/Osco on April 12, 13 and 14. Remember to bring your coupon with you. None will be available at the store!!! You also need a coupon for every trip you make to the store. For more information or coupons please call our offices at 384-4070.

RUNNING FOR HEALTH

Got Spring Fever?

Tired of that Extra Fat?

Come Run With Us — — —

SATURDAY

MAY 5

Please send me more information:

- ☐ I am interested in being a runner. Please send me a registration form.
- ☐ I am unable to run, but would like to be a sponsor.
- ☐ I would like to join CCHCC and receive the CCHCC Newsletter. My membership dues are enclosed (\$1-10 , depending on your ability to pay).

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____

Mail to: CCHCC
813 N. Lincoln
Urbana, IL 61801

DRUG INDUSTRY FORUM DRAWS CROWD

Over 50 consumers participated in a CCHCC forum on the Drug Industry in March. The focus was on the use and abuse of prescription drugs and the increasing tendency of the medical profession to resort to drugs to cure symptoms. Among the panelists were Bill Siler, pharmacist, author, Death By Prescription, Carolyn Cooper, Nurse and Mary Ellen Shanesey, Health Educator. In addition to the panel discussion, copies of A Critical Look at the Drug Industry - How Profits Distorts Medicine were made available to members of the audience. Copies of this six part series are still available from the CCHCC Resource Center for just \$1.00. If you want more information about upcoming forums, please contact Margie Checkoway at 344-5727.

DO YOU HAVE A COMPLAINT?

CCHCC generally has not operated as a consumer complaint hotline, but instead has sought to address health care policy problems. However, consumers increasingly turn to us with problems and complaints about the health care system. CCHCC receives numerous calls and letters from health consumers who have received poor treatment in the health care system. In an effort to educate consumers of such problems, CCHCC has decided to begin publishing letters from health consumers with complaints. If you have had a recent experience that you would like to share, or would like to help someone avoid the troubles you encountered, write to CCHCC, 813 N. Lincoln, Urbana, IL 61801. Names will be withheld upon request.

GEMINI HOUSE/
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY
HEALTH CARE CONSUMERS
813 N. Lincoln
Urbana, IL 61801

Non-Profit Organization
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*Health care is too
important a matter of
public concern to be
left solely to those
who provide it.*
