

TRAVELING RURAL ROADS TO DELIVER NEEDED HEALTH SERVICES

Mobile unit increases opportunities to reach county residents with important health messages

Public Health Problem

- Most adults in Jefferson and Madison counties in Florida have no health insurance.
- These neighboring counties also have very limited healthcare resources such as hospitals and health departments and the available facilities are often located too far away for many residents to reach.
- These availability and access problems prevent residents from receiving the blood pressure and diabetes screening, health education, and specialty care that they need to prevent and control chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

Program

- The Jefferson and Madison county health departments combined fiscal resources and purchased a mobile health unit to be used primarily to provide dental care to vulnerable groups of children.
- Equipped with two dental chairs and supplies, the mobile unit can also accommodate other healthcare services and it was soon clear that chronic disease services could also be provided. The unit is now used for blood pressure and diabetes screenings and one-on-one consultation. A retractable exterior awning allows health department staff to utilize even outdoor space to provide health screenings and education services in shaded comfort.
- The mobile unit also serves as a moving billboard promoting physical activity and tobacco messages around the state, such as *Just Move Jefferson!*, *Just Move Madison!*, and Florida tobacco quitline information.

Impact

- Health department staff in Jefferson and Madison counties now provides healthcare services such as blood pressure and diabetes screening and tobacco cessation information to residents of areas where these services were not available.
- Piggybacking chronic disease services with dental services uses available resources more wisely, lessens staff travel expense and increase efficiency of service delivery.
- Vulnerable Florida communities now have a healthcare access opportunity to supplement existing services and residents throughout Jefferson and Madison counties are thankful to have this new health resource.

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