



## Ohio Chapter Mission Update *September 2009*

*A periodic update on March of Dimes mission news and resources*



### **March of Dimes hosts successful advocacy day event**

On May 13, Ohio March of Dimes hosted its annual advocacy day, which featured legislative visits and a meeting of the Ohio General Assembly's Prematurity Caucus. In total, March of Dimes volunteers from across the state visited more than 20 key legislative offices. Volunteers provided information about the March of Dimes, shared their stories, and specifically discussed the Mothers and Infants Safety Net Services line of the General Revenue Fund. This line provides critical safety net services in most of Ohio's counties.

In the afternoon, Prematurity Caucus Co-Chairs, Senator Keith Faber and Representative Tim DeGeeter, called a meeting of the Caucus. Both chairs reiterated the importance of the Caucus and welcomed testimony from Nationwide Children's Hospital neonatologist Ed Shepherd and mission mom Jill Brekke. Many thanks to our volunteers, PAC members, families, and legislative partners for a productive day of visits.

### **New HHS HRSA grant will fund development of an electronic genetic and family history record for doctors' offices**

A new electronic tool that will put family medical history at doctors' fingertips – alerting them to a patient's increased risk for birth defects or pregnancy complications – will be developed through a three year cooperative agreement with a \$1.2 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration, Genetic Services Branch.

The National Coalition for Health Professional Education in Genetics (NCHPEG) will lead the project and will work with the March of Dimes, the Genetic Alliance, and the Newton Wellesley Hospital of Partners Healthcare to adapt or create a new tool doctors can use to gather a woman's consistent family history information and analyze it immediately to improve patient care.

"This project allows us to use state-of-the-art technology and apply a sophisticated understanding of genomics and family history to give more Americans a healthy start in life," said Alan R. Fleischman, MD, senior vice president and medical director of the March of Dimes. "We hope doctors will use this new family health history tool to identify women at risk for having preterm labor or an infant with a birth defect."

Patients in doctors' offices will fill out a standardized family history questionnaire using a computerized tablet, instead of paper

*(continued on reverse)*

## New HHS HRSA grant (*cont from front*)

and pen. The information will be analyzed electronically, and the tool will provide red flags and recommendations for health care providers based on current professional guidelines.

The tool also will encourage health care providers to update and use family history data throughout the lifespan of any female patient. The long-term goal is for the family history information to be combined with the patient's other medical information into an electronic health record (EHR). The proposed health history tool will focus on existing prenatal and women's health topics, including newborn screening, and will be compatible with the U.S. Surgeon General's family history tool, the "My Family Health Portrait" Web-enabled program.

The partners say their goal is to help women have full-term pregnancies and healthy babies by educating providers and the public about the importance of family health history. They plan to disseminate the tool to increase access to the latest genetically based health care as part of good preconception and prenatal care.

The March of Dimes is the leading nonprofit organization for pregnancy and baby health. With chapters nationwide, the March of Dimes works to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality. For the latest resources and information, visit [marchofdimes.com](http://marchofdimes.com) or [nacersano.org](http://nacersano.org).

## Ohio reaches 29!

As of July 1, 2009, Ohio is now screening for the 29 core conditions recommended by the American College of Medical Genetics and endorsed by the March of Dimes. Ohio achieved this goal by adding tryosinemia to its newborn screening panel. Ohio joins 32 other states and the District of Columbia in testing the 29 conditions.

## The Mission Update is going electronic

We appreciate your interest in the March of Dimes *Mission Update*. We will be distributing the *Mission Update* electronically in 2010. If you would like to continue receiving this update, please email Lisa Holloway at [lholloway@marchofdimes.com](mailto:lholloway@marchofdimes.com).

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## March of Dimes now accepting registrations for November conference and nominations for Health Leadership Awards

Ohio March of Dimes will host a conference, Improving the Grade, on November 16 and 17 at the Columbus Airport Marriott. Keynote speakers include Brian Jack, Dean Coonrod, Beth Hill-Karbowski, Art James, Jay Iams, James Collins, and Terese Verklan. The conference is approved for 10 CMEs and will offer continuing education credits for nurses, social workers, dieticians, and community health workers. For more information, email [bjohnson-rescola@marchofdimes.com](mailto:bjohnson-rescola@marchofdimes.com) or visit our website at [www.marchofdimes.com/ohio](http://www.marchofdimes.com/ohio).

**Nominate a champion  
for babies!**

In addition, Ohio will host its annual Health Leadership Awards during the conference on November 17. For seven years, this prestigious award event has been focused in Central Ohio; this year, we are accepting statewide nominations. We are seeking nominees in the following categories:

- Health Care Support
- Physician — Community
- Physician — Academia
- Nurse
- Advanced Practice Nurse
- Public Health/Community Service
- Corporate

For more information, contact [bmcfarland@marchofdimes.com](mailto:bmcfarland@marchofdimes.com).

## Free Resource Available

March of Dimes is piloting a new educational resource for physician's offices. We offer an Educational Toolkit to provide medical offices with our latest preconception, prenatal, and risk reduction materials. If you are interested in receiving a free Educational Toolkit, please contact Brianne McFarland at [bmcfarland@marchofdimes.com](mailto:bmcfarland@marchofdimes.com).

The mission of the March of Dimes is to improve the health of babies by preventing birth defects, premature birth and infant mortality. For more information, to be removed from this mailing list, or to update your contact information, please contact: **Becky Johnson Rescola** ([bjohnson-rescola@marchofdimes.com](mailto:bjohnson-rescola@marchofdimes.com)), State Director of Program Services, March of Dimes – Ohio Chapter, 216-643-3330.

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