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Open Doors to Health Demonstrated at Legislative & Business Breakfast

CONCORD, NH – Executive Director Tess Stack Kuenning welcomed a crowd of well-over 200 legislators, commissioners, executive councilors, state agency officials, and business leaders to Bi-State Primary Care Association’s Annual Legislative and Business Breakfast on Feb. 3 to celebrate the work of New Hampshire’s Community Health Centers.

Among the featured speakers was Governor John Lynch, who said “I have enormous respect and admiration for the Community Health Centers; I’ve visited nearly all of them. The quality of health care is truly extraordinary and they do it with limited resources. We need to continue to work with them because they represent the model for the future of how health care can be delivered at reduced costs,” he said. “It’s important to come together in all parts of the system; our goal is to deliver high quality health care to the people of NH,” he said.

Vanessa Santarelli, Bi-State’s NH director of public policy, presented “Open Doors to Health: Profiles in Quality, Efficient Health Care for All” a 2010 calendar designed to demonstrate the scope of services and important role of Community Health Centers from the perspective of patients, providers, and staff.

A former patient of Child Health Services Teen Health Clinic (CHS), Tina Verville, said she is “forever grateful” to CHS for being there for her when she had no insurance and a low-wage job.

From Ammonoosuc Community Health Services, Inc., Nicole Fischler, APRN and the Director of Integrated Behavioral Health Services Stephen Noyes, MSW, LADC, LICSW gave an example of how integrated care had a positive impact on a particular patient with a high risk of cancer who needed medical and mental health services. Initially unable to sit in the waiting room or get a mammogram due to severe anxiety, the patient has made tremendous progress and her prognosis is good thanks to the integrated care provided by her team of providers.

Janet Atkins, executive director of Avis Goodwin Community Health Center spoke about the economic impact of CHCs in NH. By employing more than 1,000 residents through dozens of health center sites statewide, the economic impact of CHCs is nearly \$60 million.

Bi-State Primary Care Association is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to improving access to health care, especially for low-income residents.

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