



News Release

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Final component of Rural Pediatric Education state grant to feature community health education presentations on pediatric and related issues by NMCC EMS and allied health students

Aroostook County - The last in a series of three projects outlined in a state grant awarded to Northern Maine Community College last winter to lay the groundwork for establishing a resource center on the campus for area medical and emergency care professionals in Aroostook County who treat pediatric patients will engage College students and the local community.

Included in the \$12,684 grant from the Emergency Medical Services for Children State Partnership – a division of the Maine Department of Public Safety is support for additional public education on pediatric care issues. The grant application, completed by members of the College's allied health faculty, indicated a portion of the funds would be used to enhance pediatric teaching projects and community health and safety fairs undertaken by NMCC students each semester.

A total of 33 students, eleven enrolled in the emergency medical services program and another 22 taking the fall semester offering of NMCC's introduction to the healthcare professions course, are preparing health education presentations they will share with the community for the first time on September 29 and 30 at the Fall and Winter Sports and Recreation Show at the Forum in Presque Isle.

“Community health education is a critical component in our curricula. Though our graduates certainly are able to care for someone who is ill or injured, we feel it is equally important for our graduates to understand the importance of prevention, wellness, and safety.” said Daryl Boucher, NMCC nursing and allied health instructor and coordinator of the EMS program.

Boucher has been working with the students to select topics and prepare the presentations. A wide range of areas will be covered, including childhood obesity, immunization, trampoline and playground safety, Halloween safety, and ATV and snowmobile safety equipment.

The community presentations follow two other components of the pediatric education grant. NMCC has already used part of the funding to purchase equipment for a local pediatric repository and worked to improve curriculum through public education to help meet a need expressed by area hospitals and emergency medical service organizations.

“Our vision is to become the information, equipment, and education center for pediatric care in this area,” said Daryl Boucher, coordinator of the NMCC emergency medical services (EMS) program and nursing faculty member at the College. “The Rural Pediatric Education Resource Center will provide area hospitals and EMS providers a local resource and expertise in helping develop pediatric programs for their organizations. Since being awarded the grant in January, approximately 170 people from 9 different healthcare organizations in the region have utilized the equipment purchased with grant funds.”

The pediatric training equipment purchased is now available to assist in the education of EMS providers at all levels, as well as hospital emergency department and pediatric personnel. The equipment, which is housed on the Presque Isle campus, will additionally be used by students in the College EMS, nursing, and other allied health programs.

According to Boucher, the material obtained through the grant is the first substantial purchase of pediatric training equipment in Aroostook County in several years. Among the new items received by the College are a cardiac monitor, rhythm generator, laryngoscope blades, and replacement accessories. The equipment purchase accounts for half of the total grant award.

Another component of the funding allowed NMCC to develop and administer 12 educational sessions in pediatric topics currently being held throughout the region. Funding from the grant has supported educational materials, lesson plan development, instructor time, and travel expense.

The courses, held monthly, cover various topics in pediatric emergency care and are provided in a number of different communities throughout Aroostook County. So far, 7 sessions have been held from Patten to Fort Kent, with several more scheduled in the next few weeks. Over 200 EMS, nursing, and other healthcare providers have participated in pediatric education.

NMCC has been a provider of high quality EMS, nursing and healthcare education in northern Maine for over two decades. For the past eight years, through various educational initiatives, the College has focused on improving the care provided to the children of Aroostook County.

This initiative, to develop a Rural Pediatric Education Resource Center, was started in 2005 with the development of the Megan Bradstreet Pediatric Critical Care Transport Fund.

Earlier initiatives included working collaboratively with area hospitals and EMS agencies to bring quality educational programs such as the UMBC (University of Maryland Baltimore County) Critical Care Transport Program and the Pediatric and Neonatal Critical Care Transport program to Aroostook County.

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