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**Upcoming Events**

- We are pleased to announce that The Ohio State University will host the Appalachian Health Summit next year! We will provide more information in the future.

Request for collaboration through the [Community Engagement Program](#) may be made through the

## Research Spotlight: Rural Appalachian Elderly

**T**his spring the Ohio State University Center for Clinical and Translational Science (CCTS) and Ohio University Appalachian Rural Health Institute awarded pilot funding to Deborah Meyer, PhD, RN and Albert M. Lai, PhD for their study titled *Chronic Disease Management in Rural Appalachian Elderly*.

This study is designed to improve management of Type II Diabetes in individuals over age 60 living in Appalachian Ohio. Study participants will monitor their disease daily

by utilizing in-home technology. The study aims to improve patient self-management of the condition, decrease health care utilization and increase quality of life. Drs. Meyer and Lai are partnering with the Appalachian Community Visiting Nurses Association to achieve these goals.

This award is designed to stimulate collaboration between universities and increase community based research . We look forward to sharing the results of this project with ATRN community!

## Scioto County’s VOICE An Interview with Pastor Merit

**P**astor Merit Smith is a hometown boy, who followed his heart and calling and became a minister. He has been the leader at various churches around the area, but several years ago was lead to the South Webster Community Church, a non-denominational church.

This church not only opens their door for the church services and programs, but also is a host to various local groups, such as the boy scouts, girl scouts, cup scouts and Webelos. Due to an epidemic of addiction in Scioto County, they have also started hosting *The Loves Ones Group* co-sponsored by the Counseling Center located in Portsmouth, OH. This group focuses on the family and friends of those who have a loved one who is or has been battling addiction. This allows community members in the area to seek the support of this program in their own community.

When we first approached Pastor Merit regarding the ATRN and our desire to build a community partnership with his church, he stated, “We are already involved in the lives

of our local community this just

seems like the next step.” On the topic of health and research, Pastor Merit says, “That health is obviously a personal matter, but if a member is not healthy it is hard for them to be involved in the community and church activities. It is important for a person to attend church and have the interaction with other church members to help them better understand the Bible.”

The South Webster Community Church is very committed to their community and has built partnerships with other area churches for hosting Thanksgiving Meals, tent revivals, hosts fundraisers for the Celebrate Recovery program. These locals churches work together to meet more than just the spiritual needs of the community.

ATRN welcomes Pastor Merit Smith and the South Webster Community Church as a valued community partner.



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*Do you have information for future newsletters, or are you interested in becoming a community partner? Email us at [Beverly.stringer@osumc.edu](mailto:Beverly.stringer@osumc.edu)*

### Join the ATRN Researcher Directory!

The ATRN Researcher Directory links researchers, students, and community partners interested in health-related research in Appalachia. To join the directory, complete our questionnaire at

<http://go.osu.edu/ATRNRResearcherDirectory>

Directory member information will be available on the OSU CCTS website. When researchers, students, or community partners request assistance or collaboration, ATRN staff will contact you.

Please note that your personal information will not be displayed and will not be released until you provide permission to do so.

We hope this initiative will be beneficial to all involved!

## Meet the ATRN Network Coordinator

The ATRN staff is excited to introduce Beverly Stringer as our Network Coordinator! The Network Coordinator works closely with community partners to build relationships, facilitate research projects, and provide feedback about research initiatives to the wider ATRN community. Beverly will travel throughout Southeastern Ohio to meet our community partners and expand our network.

Beverly has worked in Scioto County for 28 years. “I have worked for a local hospital for 28 years and held various positions. This work has allowed me to do one of the things that I love doing—helping people.” Beverly looks forward to working with community partners. “I am so excited to be able to move from working in the healthcare field to the research field. After seeing how diseases progress and what patients go through, I am hoping, even if in a small way, to be a part of research that can help people.”

Contact Beverly at (740) 377-5499 or [Beverly.Stringer@osumc.edu](mailto:Beverly.Stringer@osumc.edu).

## Powerful Partnerships ATRN-Ohio and Dr. Deena Chisolm

The recent debut of the Appalachian Translational Research Network (ATRNL) has researchers at OSU and Nationwide Children’s Hospital eager to begin utilizing these valuable resources to expand and support their research to rural populations of Ohio. Dr. Deena Chisolm of the Research Institute at Nationwide Children’s Hospital (NCHRI) will collaborate with the team at ATRNL to help learn more about how parents’ and teens’ abilities to use and understand health information influences their use of health care services, and supports the teen’s transition to adult health care. This study is one of the first at NCHRI to incorporate ATRNL’s resources into their protocol, and utilize their support with the recruitment of about 50 families residing in Athens, Meigs, Pike, Scioto, and Vinton counties. Dr. Chisolm’s staff is still in the planning stages for how to best execute research participant recruitment and data collection, but anticipate that rural data collection should start in January 2013.

Points of transition in health care present multiple challenges that can be especially challenging for teenagers with special health care needs. Over the next three years, Dr. Chisolm hopes to enhance our knowledge of the relationships between low health literacy and quality of life, health care use, and costs in teens with special health care needs. Findings will also help to identify risk factors that could lead to poor health outcomes in these teens.

Conducting interviews with participants who live in rural counties can be quite complicated and often requires extensive planning. With ATRNL’s support, Dr. Chisolm and her research staff will be able to conduct face-to-face interviews with participants at familiar, safe locations within the participant’s home county. ATRNL’s Director Laureen Smith is excited for the possibilities, and hopes that through community engagement and strong, positive experiences, ATRNL will open the doors to more research projects within the Appalachian region.

