THE PEOPLE’S CLINIC: A NORTH CAROLINA
MINORITY HEALTH EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE

The People’s Clinic: A North Carolina Minority Health Education Collaborative is a 3-pronged program that began in January 2006 designed to address minority health and healthcare disparities across the state of NC. Funded by the Fannie E. Rippel Foundation from 2006-2009, and now sustained by the Maya Angelou Center for Health Equity (MACHE), the project has produced targeted health education initiatives in the African American, American Indian, and Latino communities.

The specific goals of this project are:

1. To improve understanding and trust between minority communities and the medical community by providing an open forum for discussion of health and healthcare issues

2. To improve health literacy in NC African American, American Indian, and Latino communities by providing a continuous source of scientifically sound, relevant, and understandable health information

3. To disseminate up-to-date information regarding national and local racial and ethnic health disparities to minority communities in NC

4. To provide knowledge of local healthcare resources and health concepts in a practical manner that will facilitate healthy lifestyles, maximize health maintenance, and improve healthcare utilization

5. To develop a community-academic model of health education that is replicable and relevant to minority communities across the country

The MACHE has partnered with a local newspaper, the Winston-Salem Chronicle, to publish a weekly column that addresses major health disparities within the African American community. This partnership has since expanded to several other major African American newspapers in the region.

The American Indian branch of The People’s Clinic is endorsed by the NC Commission of Indian Affairs. Partnerships were forged with the Lumbee, Coharie, Haliwa-Saponi, Occaneechi, Sappony, and Waccamaw-Siouan tribes. Preliminary focus group research has revealed that community churches are an excellent means of disseminating health information, though other arenas are still being explored to ensure that all members of these diverse communities can benefit from any health education materials developed.

The Hispanic Health Media Project, which provides culturally competent health information via weekly radio broadcasts and corresponding newspaper columns, is also considered a part of this initiative.