

Consumer Health Resource Information Service (CHRIS) Program

The Consumer Health Resource Information Service (CHRIS) Program is a faith-based initiative designed to support the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Healthy People 2010 goals of increasing quality and years of life and eliminating health disparities. Developed by the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, the program addresses these goals primarily by improving health information access to address identified health issues that disproportionately affect minorities, such as HIV/AIDS, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, immunization, cancer, and infant mortality. The program is based on the concept that churches and other faith-based organizations can play an effective role in eliminating or reducing health disparities because of their unique positions in the community.

The program began in 2002 as a 15-month pilot demonstration project in Knoxville, Tennessee, in collaboration with the Knox County Health Department, Tennessee Office of Minority Health/Knoxville Minority Health Coalition, the Baptist Health System of East Tennessee Parish Nursing Program, and Chi Eta Phi Nursing Sorority, Inc., and sponsored by the National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, in Bethesda, Maryland. Six inner-city churches in Knoxville were selected as host sites for the pilot. The tremendous success of this pilot project led to the expansion of the program to include, as of March 2006, 21 churches across the state of Tennessee.

ORISE has developed a manual, *Developing a Consumer Health Resource Information Service Program: A Guide for Faith-based Organizations and Communities*, with an accompanying Tool Kit for those who would like to initiate a CHRIS program in their church or place of worship. The Tool Kit includes resources for seeking funding and writing proposals as well as samples of forms and letters for conducting a CHRIS program as a community effort or within a single entity. Faith-based organizations independently looking to start health and wellness programs will find the CHRIS program to be very cost-effective and easily managed.

For further information, please contact:

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ORISE is a U.S. Department of Energy institute focusing on scientific initiatives to research health risks from occupational hazards, assess environmental cleanup, respond to radiation medical emergencies, support national security and emergency preparedness, and educate the next generation of scientists. ORISE is managed by Oak Ridge Associated Universities (ORAU).