

Organization: Mountain Area Health Education Center**County:** Buncombe**Address:** 501 Biltmore Ave.
Asheville, N.C. 28801**Phone:** 828-771-4221**Website:** <http://www.mahec.net/>**Project:** Educational Resources on Reproductive Health**Additional counties served:** Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Rutherford, Polk, Swain, Transylvania and Yancey*****Below are excerpts from their final report*****

About the Project: This grant was used to purchase educational materials for the MAHEC Women's Health Center. We purchased 32 packages of brochures on prevention and treatment for common medical conditions, including primary care (i.e. cholesterol, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, exercise and fitness, etc.), gynecological care (i.e. birth control, sexually transmitted diseases, incontinence, pelvic pain, etc.), explanations of office procedures (i.e. colposcopy exam for abnormal pap smears), and surgical procedures (i.e. hysterectomy, sterilization, and D&Cs). We also purchased visual aids including posters of the female reproductive system, the menstrual cycle, breast, and pelvic health among others. The model we purchased, the Breast Self Exam Kit, contains soft models of breasts with various lumps to educate patients about how and what to look for during a self-exam.

We conduct approximately 2,400 annual exams that may utilize the breast model kit and the menstrual cycle posters. We conduct approximately 320 urogynecology exams (approximately 60 new patients) annually that may utilize the illustrated guides. In addition to annual exams that may address birth control, all late trimester obstetric patients (approximately 1,600 patients) and all post partum patients (approximately 1,250) may utilize the menstrual cycle chart and birth control flip charts.

Successes: These brochures and other visual aids help our doctors be better educators for their patients. Patients are able to see a diagram of the body parts being described, and in some cases, touch models (thus they are presented with auditory, visual and kinesthetic information to better process and understand their bodies and their health concerns).

Patients refer to brochures at home and reread explanations at a time that is convenient and perhaps less anxiety provoking. Accurate information is shared with supportive persons who were not at the doctor's office or perhaps unable to attend to all the information that was presented. Patients formulate questions and concerns at home that could be addressed more efficiently at the next office visit or during a phone call.



Our providers said:

“A picture is worth 1,000 words, especially with teen patients. Being able to show them big pictures has helped with compliance because their comprehension has improved.”

“The models help me explain female anatomy to my patients. Some of them are unaware of all of their parts so when you have a model, it’s very helpful.”

“Most women have never seen a cervix; some don’t know where a cervix is. With the pictures, I can show them what I am going to do during a pap smear.”