June was a busy month for about 100 people involved in two important aspects of DHHS Excels – further defining the five departmental goals and implementing the five values, published in the two previous editions of DHHS Employee Update.

**Strategies & Measures**
Five separate teams, one for each goal, have been meeting to define strategies and measures for the department’s five performance goals. There have been hours of meetings, exchanges of information, debates and discussions to determine the best strategies for achieving successful outcomes for each of the goals for DHHS and how to measure for results. These teams were working against a June 30 deadline so that the next biennial budget can reflect alignment with the department’s goals.

**DHHS Values**
Five different teams have been discussing how the five values are reflected in employee work practices. This requires looking at work plans, dimensions and other human resources tools to determine how to incorporate our new values as well as streamline the process to achieve the desired outcome: A prepared and enabled workforce to provide excellent customer service to North Carolinians in need of assistance. The values teams also had a June 30 deadline.

These DHHS teams are not working in isolation. Not only have our goals been aligned with those of Governor Bev Perdue, but also all work has been conducted in collaboration with the Office of State Budget & Management and with the Office of State Personnel.

Allen Feezor, executive sponsor of the Values Subcommittee, told that group about one of his first meetings with Secretary Cansler who explained his vision to unleash DHHS’ inherent energy, creativity and dedication so that DHHS can achieve exemplary status among other North Carolina state government agencies. It is not often, he added, that employees have the opportunity to help shape a “legacy that will impact how the agency will be perceived well into the future.”

— Sandra K. Trivett, Special Projects Office
DHHS Excels Email, Questions and Answers:

Q: This is regarding the use of the concepts of Anticipatory at the national, state and local levels, and the concepts of being proactive and prepared:

The Medical Eye Care Program is total state funding. I would be interested in determining whether the new health care billings will cover these needs. The state would be able to save money from this entire program. The (new) health care regulations are starting to kick in.

Secondly, the Rehabilitation Program has large grants for surgeries. Again with proper implementation this will be covered through Medicare, Medicaid and the Health Care Reform bill.

You need to start tailoring negotiations, and anticipating change.

A: Thank you for your comments to the DHHS Excels Email Box. Thanks also for focusing on the importance of anticipating change in the area of health care reform. We have already started meeting with DHHS divisions impacted by Health Care Reform. Several divisions have completed an initial analysis of potential changes; others will do so soon.

We are in the process of forming a multi-divisional work group that will meet over the next two months to fully analyze the law and develop a DHHS work plan for its implementation. Another part of this endeavor is to anticipate the short- and long-term cost implications for the department as well as the individuals and families we serve. The work group will also allow us to plan across agency lines.

The total impact of health care legislation will take time to fully understand since the federal government is releasing details in phases. For example, most immediate changes are around the private insurance exchanges. We do know that people whose income is at 133 percent of the poverty level would become eligible for Medicaid. We do know that pediatric vision care is at the minimum reimbursement, but we do not yet know about others.

I am sharing your comments with the work group, and as we proceed we will make sure to include the Medical Eye Care Program and the Rehabilitation Program in our planning. Comments such as these are important to our efforts under DHHS Excels. Thanks for contributing to our success!