



U.S. Public Health Service Nursing
Chief Nurse Officer's Newsletter
RADM Kerry Paige Nessler
June 2012



Dear PHS Civilian, Tribal, and Commissioned Corps Nurses,

I hope you all had a very Happy National Nurses Week – 6-12 May!

This year we celebrated the 21st Annual U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Nursing Recognition Day (NRD) Conference on 4 May 2012. The theme was “*Nursing on the Forefront: United in Health*” and focused on recognizing nurse leaders on the forefront of advancing public health, the implementation plans for the SG National Prevention Strategy and the PHS Nursing Strategic Plan, and developing skill sets for future leaders.

The conference was sponsored by the USPHS, Nursing Professional Advisory Committee (N-PAC), the Commissioned Officers' Foundation and the Carruth-Wagner Foundation. This full-day event (8:00am – 4:00pm) honors the outstanding contributions made by Commissioned Corps, Civil Service and Tribal nurses.

We had the pleasure of an opening session lead by **RADM Boris Lushniak, the Deputy Surgeon General**, and we thank him for his heartfelt, inspiring and warm opening remarks and for celebrating Nursing Recognition Day with us. **RADM Carol Romano (ret) and RADM Ann Knebel** joined us during NRD to recognize PHS Nurses around the country that make a difference everyday in health outcomes by protecting, promoting and advancing the health and safety of the Nation.

Congratulations to the award winners:

RADM Faye G. Abdellah Publication Award for Nursing Research: recognizing publications that stimulate the development of nursing knowledge and practice through scientific investigation and research. The 2012 award was presented to: **Nancy J. Ames, RN, PhD, CCRN** for her publication “Effects of systematic oral care in critically ill patients: a multicenter study”

RADM O. Marie Henry Publication Award for Clinical Nursing Practice: recognizes publications that describe clinical nursing practice such as observations or trends in clinical nursing, clinical nursing research, or current issues in clinical practice. The 2012 award was awarded to: **Tarah S. Somers RN, MSN/MPH, LCDR, USPHS**, authoring a chapter for undergraduate nursing text book.

RADM Julia R. Plotnick Publication Award for Health/Nursing Policy: recognizes publications that inform and educate consumers and/or health care practitioners about significant health related issues. The 2012 award was presented to **Sonia Swayze, RN, MA and Suzanne Rich, RN, MA, CT** for educating nurses on safe medical device use, factors contributing to device events, reporting problems to FDA, and development of position statements to minimize risks.

McLaughlin Award for Clinical Services recognizes a nurse who demonstrates exemplary leadership and skill resulting in noteworthy accomplishments as a clinician over a period of time focusing on the timely and ethical delivery of health care in a direct care setting. The 2012 award was awarded to **LT Thomas Liles**, Nurse Practitioner at the Federal Detention Center (FDC) Honolulu, Hawaii, for performing at a level

of proficiency and dedication distinctly greater than that expected of an officer from February to December of 2011.

Hanzel Award for Administrative Activities recognizes a nurse who demonstrates exemplary leadership as a nurse executive resulting in noteworthy accomplishments. The 2012 award was presented to **Clare Hastings, RN, PhD, FAAN** for her outstanding accomplishments from 2007 through 2010 and significant contributions in defining the roles of clinical nurses within the national clinical research infrastructure and for setting a standard for integrating patient care and management within the clinical research process.

Hasselmeyer Award for Research Initiatives is given to a DHHS nurse who demonstrates exemplary leadership resulting in noteworthy accomplishments in conducting nursing research and clinical investigation which stimulates the development of new knowledge and practice in nursing and/or the health professions. The 2012 Hasselmeyer Award was presented to **Gwenyth R. Wallen, PhD, RN** for her outstanding accomplishments and significant contributions as a nursing leader and independent clinical scientist

Petry Leone Award for Health Promotion and Education is given to a DHHS nurse who demonstrates exemplary leadership resulting in noteworthy accomplishments in patient/client or professional education, which informs and educates consumers and/or health care practitioners about significant health related issues and promotes healthy lifestyles. The 2012 award was presented to **LCDR Heidi Rogers** in recognition for her outstanding performance and leadership in patient care services and promotion of continuing education.

Gregg Group Award for Teamwork is given to exemplary leadership contributions by a team of nurses resulting in noteworthy accomplishments and positive outcomes towards the attainment of PHS goals. The recipients of the 2012 award were **Lea Latham, MS, RN, ANP-C, CDR, USPHS; Brenda Mitchell, BSN, RN, CDR, USPHS; Monica Morris, MS, RN, FNP-C, LCDR, USPHS; Akara Ingram, MPH, RN, LT, USPHS; Terry Smith, MSPS, RN, LT, USPHS; STG Contract Nurses: Ryan Antokal, RN; Richard Bradford, RN; Jennifer Carrera, RN; Maria Cornejo, RN; Michael Durtschi, RN; Racquel Llanas, RN; John Nordstrom, RN; Violet Odhiambo, RN; Arlene Putnam, RN; Michael Reed, RN; Cecilia Riley, RN; and Cindy Villaneuva, RN** in recognition of for their exemplary leadership, teamwork and interdisciplinary efforts in restructuring the mental health program at the ICE Medical Facility Pinal County, Arizona.

Past Conferences & Meetings:

Military Health System's Executive Skills Capstone Course

The Military Health System's (MHS) Executive Skills Capstone Course was hosted by the Joint Medical Executive Skills Institute (JMESI) from 5-9 March 2012. This course was designed to provide senior leaders of the MHS exposure to nationwide healthcare industry trends, leaders in organizational change management, and federal healthcare policy makers who offered participants a global view of how policies are formed that affect the course of the Military Healthcare System (MHS).

The objectives of the course included:

- Enhancing understanding of MHS policymaking including how policies are disseminated and the legal basis for those policies.
- Gaining a deeper sense of TRICARE issues and policies that shape the delivery of Department of Defense (DoD) healthcare.
- Becoming familiar with information systems to support executive decision-making, as well as tools for evaluating quality assurance, customer satisfaction, and metrics.

- Discussing issues of retention and recruitment from the military and national perspectives as well as financial and business matters as they relate to the MHS.
- Sharing networking opportunities to include, but not limited to the Surgeons General, members of other services serving in similar capacities, OSD leaders including Deputy Secretaries, the VA, civilian health program managers, and academia.
- Becoming familiar with unique ways of dealing with human relations and gaining a better appreciation for the way they are perceived by others.
- Exchanging ideas on current issues such as risk management, patient safety, Homeland Security, bioterrorism, war fighters (the line) and Reserve Forces, and
- Gaining an enhanced appreciation for transformation and fiscal issues within the DoD.

Federal Nursing Service Council (FNCS)

The Federal Nursing Service Council met on 15 March 2012 at the Navy Bureau of Medicine (BUMED) in Washington, DC. The Council is composed of the Chief Nurse Officers from the U.S. Public Health Service, the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the American Red Cross and the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS).

We were honored to have in attendance representatives from three vital professional nursing organizations. Ms. Amy Garcia, Chief Programs Office represented the American Nurses Association (ANA), Ms. Myra Broadway, President and Ms. Kathy Apple, CEO represented the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) and G. Rumay Alexander, Executive Committee Member, represented the National League for Nursing (NLN). Chief Nurses or representatives from each service or organization provided a brief overview of their organization's priorities and initiatives to the council. As you know, the ANA is currently involved in numerous activities in support of nursing. Details can be found on the ANA website at <http://www.nursingworld.org/>. The NCSBN has revamped their website to include links to verify nursing licenses for both the public and nurses. Visit <https://www.ncsbn.org> to learn more. The NLN announced an upcoming Education Summit that will be held at the Washington Marriott Wardman Park in Washington, DC from 18-21 September 2013. Their website is <http://www.nln.org/> for details on this and all of the progress the NLN has made when it comes to nursing education.

FNCS visit to the Hill

Federal Nursing Service Council met with the Senate and House Nursing Caucus leaders on 17 May 2012 on Capitol Hill, Washington, DC. The purpose of the meeting was to educate the Senate/House staffers and members to the FNCS's mission, vision, and focus area which were developed in the FNCS Strategic Plan. The Nursing Caucus provides a forum to address topics affecting the nursing community and advancing the role of nursing in delivery of high quality health care.

Maj Gen Siniscalchi, Air Force Chief Nurse, led the day by providing an overview of the FNCS and then each panel representatives from each of the FNCS addressed the 5 strategic focus areas of Faculty Shortage, Psychological and Mental Health, Culture of Inquiry, Collaboration and Strategic Communication, and Advanced Practice/Scholars. CAPT Susan Orsega, NPAC Chair, presented on my behalf on the nursing area of Advanced Practice/Scholars. Below is the list of nursing related topics that were presented to the Senate/House staffers and members:

Faculty Shortage: RADM Rykowski, Navy

Psych/Mental Health: Dr Hinshaw, USUHS

Advanced Practice/Scholars: CAPT Orsega, USPHS

Culture if Inquiry: COL Connelly, Army

Collaboration and Strategic Communication: Dr Stanley, Red Cross

It was a wonderful opportunity to inform the Senate and House on the FNSC role and strategy to address health care and nursing.

Joining Forces

Support the White House Joining Forces initiative www.whitehouse.gov/joiningforces.

On 11 April 2012, **First Lady Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden** participated in a Joining Forces nurses event in the Irvine Auditorium at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, announcing a commitment from nurses across the country to serve and have a better understanding of health issues impacting our troops, veterans and their families – with a specific focus on Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Led by the American Nurses Association, American Academy of Nurse Practitioners, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, and the National League for Nursing, in coordination with the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Defense, and HHS, more than 150 state and national nursing organizations and over 500 nursing schools have committed to educating current and future nurses on how to recognize and care for veterans, spouses and families impacted by post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, depression, and other combat-related issues, in ways appropriate to each nurse's practice setting. The USPHS Nursing Corps has about 55 nurse officers detailed to DoD to help lead this important effort to better meet the health needs of our returning veterans and their families. I will be calling upon you to assist in the implementation of our PHS Nursing Strategic Goal #3: *Improve the mental health resilience and emotional well being through early detection, prevention and education focused on violence and suicide risk reduction*. Thank you for your service and dedication to healing, comforting, and promoting a healthy lifestyle.



Photo was taken with the First Lady, Michelle Obama and Dr. Jill Biden (center) during the Joining Forces nurses' event on 11 April 2012. USPHS Chief Nurse, RADM Nessler, is 5th, bottom right side.

WHO Global Forum for Government Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers (GCNMO) Meeting

The WHO Global Forum for Government Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers (GCNMO) meeting and the Fourth TRIAD Meeting for Nursing was held in Geneva, Switzerland, 16-19 May 2012. The theme was "Strengthening the role of nursing and midwifery in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) prevention, treatment and care." This topic was in direct alignment with our current efforts with the SG's National Prevention Strategy and the development and implementation of our PHS Nursing Strategic Plan. There were over 100 countries and Chief Nurse Officers in attendance. These two meetings occur every other year just before the WHO World Health Assembly.

Upcoming Conferences and Meetings:

****Please save the date:** the second **Nursing All-Hands Meeting** will be held on **13 June 2012** in San Diego, California. The dial-in information, time and location will be announced soon. Many thanks to CAPT Celissa Stephens and CAPT Regena Dale for assisting in the coordination of this event. This All-Hands Meeting will be held at the same time as the 2012 Nurse Leaders in Native Care Conference (NLiNC), which is scheduled to take place from 12-15 June 2012 in San Diego, California.

The **2012 USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium** will be held **19-21 June 2012**, at the University of Maryland, College Park, in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area. The theme for the conference is "**Prevention Strategies for a Healthy Nation: Building on the Basics of Public Health.**" Nurse Category Day will be 21 June.

PHS Music Ensemble will perform a concert at the National WWII Memorial in Washington, DC, **23 June, 2012 from 6:30 – 7:30 PM** to honor the memories of the Greatest Generation in song as they present music of the era, a tribute to Veterans, and a patriotic celebration in honor of the Uniformed Services.

The **118th Association of Military Surgeons of the United States (AMSUS) Meeting** is scheduled for **11-16 November 2012**, in Phoenix, AZ.

Spotlight on PHS Nurses and others:

Please join me in congratulating these nurses for their exceptional leadership and accomplishments!

ANA Hall of Fame Induction

I'm sharing the fabulous news that the ANA Board of Directors will induct two PHS nurses this year into its Hall of Fame! This award was created to recognize the lifelong commitment of individual nurses to the field of nursing and their impact on the health and/or social history of the United States. We are very proud of **Rear Admiral (RADM) Faye Abdellah** (Ret.), PHS Chief Nurse Officer and Deputy Surgeon General, and her lifetime commitment to the nursing and the Public Health Service. RADM Romano (Ret.) will be accepting her award at the upcoming ANA House of Delegates in June of this year.



Photo: RADM Faye Abdellah (Ret.)

In addition, **Captain (CAPT) Mary Lee Mills**, 1912-2010, “trail blazer extraordinaire” will be inducted into the ANA Hall of Fame. According to Dr. Phoebe Politte, “One of the most inspiring yet little known life stories of a minority nursing pioneer is that of USPHS nurse Mary Lee Mills, MSN, RN, MPH, CNM”. And, ‘Johnetta’ blogs, “CAPT Mills was an advanced practice nurse midwife who stood the test of time. She was born in 1912 and raised in a rural area outside Watha, in North Carolina. She started from poor beginnings and went on to achieve international acclaim as an African American nurse while providing health care, education, and inspiration to the people she met. In 1946 she became a commissioned officer in the USPHS. In addition to her determination, CAPT Mills was adamant about her own health and the health of people on a global basis-transcultural nursing at it best. Her language fluency included Arabic, French, Cambodian, and African dialects. As an officer she served in Liberia, West Africa and Beirut, Lebanon, in January 1952. In addition she provided health education, nursing care and midwifery services to South Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Chad families and individuals.



Photo: CAPT Mary Lee Mills (1912-2010)

Deputy Director of National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR)

Rear Admiral (RADM) Ann R. Knebel, RN, DNSc, FAAN, has joined NINR as Deputy Director on 20 May 2012. RADM Knebel earned her Doctor of Nursing Science degree at the University of California, San Francisco. She brings a wealth of experience to NINR, including her most recent work as the Deputy Director for the Office of Preparedness Planning, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), HHS; her earlier work as a NINR Program Director in OEP and a Program Analyst in OSPPL; and her extensive work in research, administration, and as a Pulmonary Clinical Nurse Specialist at the NIH Clinical Center (CC). RADM Knebel’s special blend of research and administrative expertise, clinical experience, and community and population-based public health efforts will be vital for guiding NINR in our public service mission in the years ahead; and will serve to strengthen and enhance our partnerships and collaborations with colleagues across the Nation and around the globe. Congratulations to RADM Knebel on her new position!

FAAN selection

Rear Admiral (RADM) Clara H. Cobb, Regional Health Administrator (RHA) for Region IV, will be inducted as a Fellow in the American Academy of Nursing at its Annual Meeting and Conference in Washington, D.C., on 13 October 2012. Selection for membership in the Academy is one of the most prestigious honors in the field of nursing. RADM Cobb was selected for her consistent and outstanding contributions to the improvement of nursing and health care at the regional and national levels. RADM Cobb's broad public health perspective is the result of more than 32 years of experience working with private and public partners, within the federal government, as well as in the states and local communities. She has served as the RHA since 2006 and is currently also serving as Acting Regional Director of Region IV.

News pertaining to Commissioned Corps Nurse Officers:

March 2012 Basic Readiness Report

31 March 2012 Basic Readiness Report: The Basic Readiness Run was conducted on 31 March and the top 3 categories were: Dietitian (93%), Dental (92.7%) and HSO (92.5%). Unfortunately, only 89% of the Nurse Category was Basic Ready. The next quarterly assessment of Readiness status is **30 June 2012**. Please complete all the requirements as listed in the Basic Readiness checklist and move our category back to the Top Three!

Personnel Orders

For Commissioned Corps Nurse Officers: You may be noticing Personnel Orders appearing in your electronic Official Personnel Files (eOPFs) as a step in the implementation of the new billet transformation process. OCCO has provided a Billet/Position Message on the CCMIS that is intended to clarify the current process, timelines, and intent.

I hope this information is helpful to you during the final phases of billet transformation. Please note that full implementation is expected to be completed by OCCO in September 2012

Operational Dress Uniform (ODU)

On 12 December 2011, the Assistant Secretary for Health (ASH) signed the Decision Memorandum and a Memorandum of Agreement with the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) that the Corps will begin wearing the untucked NOAA version of the Operational Dress Uniform (ODU). The NOAA/PHS ODU is different from the standard USCG untucked ODU in that it does not have the embroidered USCG logo on the front of the ODU shirt or on the side pockets of the ODU trousers. The current black PHS t-shirt and command ball cap are not authorized to be worn with the ODU. Planned phase-in period for ODU was tentatively set for 1 May 2012 with a 12 month phase until 1 May 2013. ODU name tapes will be gold in color, they are the same tapes utilized on the Navy Coveralls. Please do not purchase uniforms yet and stay tuned for updates for the planned transition.

Recent Reports and Programs:

On 8 March 2012, **VADM Regina Benjamin, U.S. Surgeon General**, released *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General*, which is the 31st Surgeon General's Report. This latest report details important new facts about the epidemic of tobacco use among youth ages 12 through 17 and young adults ages 18 through 25, including the epidemiology, causes, and health effects of tobacco use and interventions proven to prevent it. The full report can be found by clicking on the following link <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/preventing-youth-tobacco-use/index.html>

Retirements

Congratulations to **RADM Christopher Halliday, the Chief of Staff**, on his retirement after a stellar career of 24 years with the USPHS. RADM Halliday has been selected to serve as Dean of the A.T. Still University, Missouri School of Dentistry and Oral Health, in Kirksville, Missouri, where he will be taking on new challenges in the development of the school and education of dental professionals. He will have an opportunity to share with his students a passion of service to the underserved and vulnerable populations, ensuring a new generation of Commissioned Corps recruits. RADM Halliday's retirement celebration took place on Friday, 1 June at 1:30 pm, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Sugarloaf Conference Room, 1 Choke Cherry Road, Rockville, MD. Dr. Koh, VADM Benjamin, RADM Lushniak and Garcia provided keynote addresses honoring his lifetime contributions to dentistry, public health, and the Corps.

Congratulations to **RADM Ann Knebel** on her retirement after twenty years of exemplary career with the USPHS. Join me in saluting her leadership and wishing her all the best with her new position as the Deputy Director of National Institute of Nursing Research, on her future endeavors and fair winds and following seas! RADM Knebel's retirement ceremony will take place on Friday, 29 June at 10 am, Cohen Auditorium – 1st Floor, 300 Independence Ave SW, Washington, DC. The auditorium is located across from the Hubert H. Humphrey Building.

I hope you took some time on Memorial Day to thank those who have given us, and future generations of Americans, the blessings of freedom. I thank all of you for your service and appreciate all that you give everyday.

Sincerely,

RADM Kerry Paige Nessler
Assistant Surgeon General
Chief Nurse Officer, USPHS
