

A Message From the Chief Nurse

Nurses,

This spring has seen a burst of activity in politics and in public health. Here is some information to keep you informed.

Our HHS Secretary Kathleen Sebelius spoke to nurses from the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees on May 6, 2009 and reported that “if the Obama administration is to make health reform a reality, we need nurses at the forefront of the effort.”

The FY 2010 budget includes over \$1 billion to support a wide range of programs to strengthen and support our nation's health care workforce. These investments will expand loan repayment and scholarship programs for physicians, nurses and dentists who are committed to practicing in medically underserved areas. Additionally, this funding will enhance the capacity of nursing schools. Many of these programs are managed by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

The Acting Surgeon General will be releasing a Call to Action To Promote Healthy Homes in early June. Please watch the Surgeon General's website and be prepared to share this information about actions that keep our homes safe and healthy.

Career Development

The 2009 temporary and permanent promotion results for nurse officers have been released and are posted on the CC-MIS web site. Congratulations to those who were successful this cycle. We plan to activate our Senior Nurse Counseling initiative in the next couple of months to help officers with career advice and to prepare for the next promotion cycle. Stay tuned.

We launched a new Nursing web site thanks to the work of many nurses: CDR Gettie Audain, CDR Carrissa Sanchez, CDR Les Cruise, LCDR Bernetta Lane, LCDR Jacquin Jones, LCDR Malini Krishnan, LCDR Jason Humbert, LCDR Sean Creighton, LT Faith Walsh, LT Anitra Custalow, LT Stacey McBryde, and Mr. Rob McBryde, civilian volunteer. Please visit www.phs-nurse.org.

A call for nominations for the C.J. Leadership training will be circulated early summer. Junior officers should stay tuned for announcement of the October training dates.

There is still time to register for the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium June 1-4, 2009 in Atlanta, Georgia. Conference theme is "Leading a Strong Public Health Workforce for a Healthy America." Visit <http://www.phscofevents.org/> for more information and to register. I look forward to seeing you there.

Readiness

Thank you for your efforts to assist and educate others about the novel influenza A (H1N1) virus. Our Acting Surgeon General has provided messages and public service announcements to the public and conducted numerous interviews. According to CDC, "At this point, we're not seeing the seriousness of illness that was initially reported in Mexico in the United States, but this certainly does not mean that the outbreak is over. We know that the outbreak is not localized but is spreading and appears to be expanding throughout the United States. So, this is an ongoing public health threat and continued vigilance and action is needed". Any threat in public health is a call to duty for nurses to serve as investigators, educators and myth-busters, to know the facts, to remain calm and to reinforce basic infection control and prevention strategies. Additional guidance can be found at: <http://www.cdc.gov>

OFRD is embarking on a comprehensive review and renewal of the Commissioned Corps Readiness and Response System.

New team leaders have been selected, the process for recruiting and assigning new team members has begun (including surveying officers on team assignment preferences), and field-based training for all teams as well as select Tier 3 officers in being planned. An online survey form to facilitate response team assignments is available and includes links to fact sheets about each team. Please complete the form located at <http://ccrf.hhs.gov/ccrf/Teams/TeamApplicant.htm> no later than **COB 22 May 2009** to indicate your team preferences if you are in Tier 1 or 2.

Transformation

Our Commissioned Corps technology systems continue to be updated. The first phases of our future information infrastructure, Direct Access, went live this past month without significant problems. Please remember to update your officer profiles on line by accessing the CC-MIS website at <http://dcp.psc.gov> and logging in to the secure website. Update Contact Information, Special Skills and Languages, and the Profile Data Entry as needed.

The size of the Commissioned Corps in April was 6296 and the nurse strength was 1486--We are sooooo close to our goal of 1500 nurses for this year. Continue your recruitment efforts.

Leadership and Outreach

I had the opportunity to return to my alma mater at the University Of Maryland School Of Nursing to give the convocation address to the Class of 2009. It was exciting to see so many federal nurses in the graduating class. Congratulations to all the nurses who graduate this year with baccalaureate, masters and doctoral degrees or advanced education certificates. Continued learning and knowledge are our most powerful weapons in the silent war against disease that we fight each day.

I have been selected to serve as the new Director for the Office of Reserve Affairs in the Office of the Surgeon General. I look forward to this opportunity to promote our mission to protect, promote and advance our nations health and safety through the surge capacity

of the inactive reserve officers. I will continue as Chief Nurse Officer and as Acting Chief of Staff for the Office of the Surgeon General.

We celebrated the 200th year anniversary of the American Red Cross and CAPT Silvia Trent Adams represented PHS Nursing this month at the Washington DC celebration. We honor the important work that is done by the American Red Cross and all of our nurse colleague volunteers who serve this mission.

Recognition

The NPAC Nurse Recognition Day event May 3, 2009 was a huge success thanks to the NPAC leadership and committees. In her keynote address, the former Chief Nurse RADM (ret) Julia Plotnick challenged nurses to reach their potential and “to become the nurse you always hoped you would be”. We celebrated the work of all nurses and specifically acknowledge the following who received awards this year.

PUBLICATION AWARDS

The RADM O. Marie Henry Publication Award for Clinical Practice: **Kathryn Feigenbaum, RN, MSN–NIH**

The RADM Faye G. Abdellah Award for Nursing Research: **Jan M. Fall-Dickson, RN, PhD–NIH**

The RADM Julia R. Plotnick Publication Award for Health/Nursing Policy: **CAPT Amy S. Collins–CDC**

MINNIGERODE NURSING EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Hanzel Award for Administrative Activities: **CAPT Mary Rossi-Coajou–CMS and Ursula Knoki-Wilson, RN–IHS**

McLaughlin Award for Clinical Services: **Barbara Green, RN, ARNP–IHS**

Petry-Leone Award for Health Promotion and Education: **CDR Wayne Keene–IHS**

Gregg Group Award for Teamwork: **CAPT Jacinta Garrido, CDR Frank Molina, LCDR Angel Rivas Rivera, LCDR Jessica Diaz, LCDR Jeff Wiersman, LT Carroll Wyble, LCDR Steve Morin, LCDR Charles Huddleston and LCDR Marc E. Clough–DIHS**

There is still time to nominate nurses for the 2009 AMSUS awards at <http://www.amsus.org/awards/>. The new deadline is July 15, 2009. Please take this opportunity to give visibility to the excellence of nursing.

Comment

We honored nurses during national nurse’s week May 6-11; however we celebrate your work as a nurse every day and every week and thank you for the contributions you make to our nation’s people. During these busy and ever changing times that place increasing demands on you -- the times when we depend on you the most -- remember that your most important patient is YOU. Give yourself the gift of rest, exercise, affirmation and

nourishment of body, mind and spirit. Caring for our nurses is an important part of taking care of our nation's health.

Carol A. Romano PhD, RN, FAAN
Assistant Surgeon General
Chief Nurse Officer, USPHS

To subscribe, unsubscribe or change your options for receiving messages (i.e. on vacation)--:Go to: <http://list.nih.gov/archives/phsnursing-l.html>

If you are subscribed and want to send a message to the list, the message should be sent to phsnursing-l@list.nih.gov