



U.S. Public Health Service Nursing
Chief Nurse Officer's Newsletter
RADM Kerry Paige Nessler
September 2010



Dear PHS Civilian, Tribal, and Commissioned Corps Nurses,

Happy Labor Day!

Labor Day, celebrated on the first Monday in September was created as a result of the labor movement. 5 September 1882 marked the first Labor Day holiday celebrated in New York City in accordance with the plans of the Central Labor Union. This holiday is a tribute to workers who contributed to the well-being, wealth and strength of our country. That surely sounds like us and all we do! A special thanks to all PHS nurses for your continual "labor of love" for the people of this great Nation and beyond.

July and August were busy months for Commissioned Corps Officers as Public Health Service agencies around the country conducted their promotion ceremonies for the officers. Once again, congratulations to those nurses who have been selected for Year 2010 Temporary Grade Promotions!

Past conferences:

The Federal Service Nursing Council (FSNC) met on 5 August, 2010. This Council is composed of the Chief Nurse Officers from the US Public Health Service, the US Air Force, US Army, US Navy, US Department of Veterans Affairs, and the American Red Cross. The mission is to "bring together its collective leadership and experience to advance and strengthen professional nursing practice among federal agencies and the American Red Cross". The vision statement is "United to Address Tomorrow's Health Care Challenges Today".

MG Patricia Horoho, Chief Army Nurse Corps, Deputy Surgeon General of the Army is the current Chair of the Council. She'll be in this position for the next 18 months.

2010 Nurse Leaders in Native Care Conference was jointly sponsored by the Indian Health Service (IHS) Division of Nursing, the IHS National Nurse Leadership Council (NNLC), and the Arizona Nurses Association. The Conference was held in Washington, DC from 19-23 July 2010. The theme of this year's conference was "*Transforming Indian Health Care through Nursing Leadership*". This year's conference included plenary and concurrent workshop sessions and poster presentations on a variety of clinical and public health nursing topics focused on leadership innovation, education, evidence-based practice and best practices. Conference participants had the opportunity to participate in one of three (3) 4-hour pre-conferences focusing on the Improving Primary Care, Transforming Inpatient Care, and an overview of Community Health Accreditation Program. Thanks to all IHS nurse colleagues for a fantastic learning and sharing meeting.

2010 Public Health Service Nursing All-hands meeting was conducted on 22 July 2010, 1400 EDT, in Atlanta, GA. The topics discussed during the meeting include the Surgeon General's Health Initiatives, Affordable Care Act, past and upcoming nursing events and activities, Global Health Initiative (GHI) and WHO

Global Code of Practice. While in Atlanta, I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the Atlanta Area Promotion ceremony on 23 July 2010. A special thanks to CAPT Amy Collins and all the nurses at CDC/ATSDR and in the Atlanta Regional Area for assisting in this meeting.

DB Cares Fourth Annual Health and Wellness Fair welcomed hundreds of community residents to take advantage of free health screenings, medical testing, and health information resources. This year the Fair took place in Downtown Silver Spring, Maryland on 30 July 2010. This annual event helps to increase the community's awareness on health issues such as HIV, diabetes, high blood pressure, cholesterol and oral cancer. Representatives from more than 60 health and wellness organizations provided free health screening, testing and health and wellness information. I was honored to be invited as the guest speaker. I applaud Ms. Barbara Parker-Triplett, organizer of the DB Cares Program who has been committed to helping improve the lives of area residents.

FDA/CDER Academic Collaboration Program (CACP) is an educational program sponsored by the FDA/CDER in collaboration with the United States Public Health Service (USPHS) Commissioned Corps, the University of Florida (UF) and Arizona State University (ASU) which aims to attract scientists and health professionals to the FDA/CDER. Participants enrolled in these programs will receive two years of advanced graduate education at the masters or doctorate (PhD) level which will help them to advance scientific training and analysis involved in the safety and regulatory decisions unique to FDA/CDER's mission. The welcoming ceremony was held in the White Oak Campus at the FDA on 2 August 2010. RADM David Rutstein administered the Oath of Office to the incoming 18 officers, three of whom are registered nurses. Congratulations to all the FDA staff, officers, and nurses who lead this effort.

White Oak Commissioned Corps Officers Advisory Group (WOCCOAG) Lunch and Learn series took place on the FDA White Oak Campus on 9 August 2010. RADM Scott Giberson, Chief Professional Officer of Pharmacy and I provided remarks on topics such as the Surgeon General's Health Initiatives, Let's Move Campaign, Affordable Care Act, Commissioned Corps Billet Transformation and the strength in numbers of officers in the nursing and pharmacy category. Thanks to LCDR Kendra Worthy and CDR Jeffrey Tworzyanski for coordinating this meeting.

Officer Basic Course, Class 36 Graduation was held on Gaithersburg Holiday Inn on 20 August 2010. I had the honor of representing VADM Benjamin as the guest speaker. In addition, I presented the graduates with the Commissioned Corps Training Ribbon. Congratulations to the 14 nurses who graduated from the Class of 36 and welcome to the Corps!

Commissioned Corps Nurse Officers:

Basic Readiness: OFRD's official Basis Readiness Status was conducted on 30 June 2010 and the next review will be on 30 September 2010.

Clinical Nursing Billets Revision:

The Office of Public Health and Science (OPHS) will begin the roll-out of standardized, category-specific billets for our category very soon. Unfortunately, the 25 August date was pushed back for about 2 weeks due to some unforeseen issues. We are committed to designing a system that honors the valuable contributions that nurses bring to public health. Once released, we will have **90 days** to complete the process of developing standard billets for each the 1100+ nurses who are currently in category-specific billets. Nurses will be the 2nd category to field the system.

Billet transformation is being undertaken to better reflect the position responsibilities for each billet rather than officer capabilities. By identifying a billet for each unique position, the Corps will be able to more effectively monitor vacancies by position, monitor skill shortages as well as recruit to meet our ever changing mission

requirements. As an officer, you will directly benefit from billets transformation. Standardized billets are more objective and clarify and specify the responsibilities for each unique position. In the near future, Agencies will be able to identify who the best officers are for the best positions as qualified candidates will be directly referred.

*Upon receipt of an invitation email and follow-up email, Nurse Officers in category-specific billets will:

- Select the billet that fits the criteria that best describes the billet that you currently occupy (Note: the billet describes the **position**—not you).
- Tailor a standardized billet by adding **position**-specific components through the use of drop-down menus
- Identify your supervisor (supervisors will identify reviewing officials). NOTE: The Bureau of Prisons has opted to make this element standardized by pre-identifying the reviewing officials.

*To assist in a smooth transition:

- A committee has developed and tested 29 category-specific Nurse Billets.
- “Nurse Rapid Responders” have been identified and will be available to answer your questions and assist you through the process.

Indian Health Service

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All Other Agencies

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I want to reassure you that a team has worked hard to make sure that this system is equitable and honors the unique expertise that nurses contribute to our mission. In all of the testing and fielding to date, there have been very few difficulties. The process is pretty simple and the majority of officers who have utilized the new billet system and created a new billet have remained in the same billet grade—a few even increased. You should be able to accomplish your section in a very limited amount of time—less than an hour. We will be holding a series of lunch and learns where experts from our category and OPHS will be available to answer your questions and provide any assistance needed. Frequently asked questions (FAQs) will be posted to the N-PAC website. Finally, we’ve built in a system of checks and balances along the way to monitor the process and track our success.

*An on-line tutorial is available at http://dcp.psc.gov/Billets_Tutorial.aspx

*FAQs are available at <http://usphs.gov/transformation/billet.aspx>

Lunch and Learns are still scheduled on:

- September 9, 2010 at 1300 EST
- September 16, 2010 at 1100 EST
- September 23, 2010 at 1500 EST
- September 30, 2010 at 1300 EST

The call in number is 866-804-8137 and the participant passcode is 8783258.

Nurses who are NOT in a category-specific billet will participate in the multidisciplinary group. You will receive a separate email when that effort begins.

Chief Nurse Officer Upcoming Visits/Meetings:

I'll be speaking at the Texas Woman's University College of Nursing Good Samaritan Fall Forum, Houston, TX on 22 October 2010 on "Making Global Local: The Impact of Global Issues on Local Healthcare"

Nurses Literary Corner:

Foundation Launches National Initiative Addressing Mental Health Stigma

The National Black Nurses Foundation (NBNF) announces the launch of the community-based initiative, "Minding the Gap: Improving Mental Health - Eliminating Stigma." This Initiative examines the Clinical, Faith-Based, and Policy implications associated with mental illness, such as major depressive disorder, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia, while connecting communities with leaders in each field, to address the issues. This launch will take place in Philadelphia, in collaboration with the Temple University School of Medicine Center for Minority Health and Health Disparities, the Temple University Health System, and the Pennsylvania Department of Health Office of Health Equity. This collaborative endeavor takes place on September 23, 2010 at 5:30 pm, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania at the Temple University School of Medicine - Wendy and Solomon Luo, MD Auditorium (Medical Education Building, 2500 N Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19410).

Dr. Robin L. Smith, licensed psychologist, ordained minister, bestselling author, and national television personality featured frequently on the Oprah Winfrey Show and Larry King Live, will serve as the Keynote Speaker for this event. Along with her appearance, Philadelphia health leaders, Calvin B. Johnson, MD, MPH (Vice President and Chief Medical Officer - Temple University Health System; Former Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Health) and Donald B. Parks, MD (Associate Professor of Medicine, Assistant Dean, Minority Affairs & Director, Center for Minority Health Studies - Temple University School of Medicine) will serve as the local hosts.

The Minding the Gap initiative is timely, and builds upon a model designed to bring together policy makers, academic experts, faith- and community-based leaders, and clinical professionals to discuss the improvement of mental health outcomes. NBNF launched this colloquium series concept in 2009 surrounding mental health, and

is confident in the development of the Initiative to further the cause of eliminating the stigma related to mental health. Cities targeted in the 2009 pilot colloquium series included Atlanta, Georgia; Houston, Texas; New Orleans, Louisiana; and New York, New York. As stated by Dr. David Satcher, 16th Surgeon General of the United States, keynote speaker in the pilot series, "mental health is all of our problem." It is significant to bring the communities together to enhance mental health related services, i.e. counseling and treatment. This mental health program was developed to:

- define mental illness and distinguish it from ordinary worry and unhappiness;
- describe the partnership between the faith-based community, academia, clinical communities, and policy makers in providing an improved safety net to enhance mental health and its related services;
- discuss the role of health policy in improving equality for mental health services; and
- provide resource information about mental health services.

The purpose of this program is not to provide a cure for this issue, but to aid in changing the mindset of needing, seeking, encouraging, and providing help. To this regard, the NBNF looks to expand this Initiative to include cities such as Baltimore, Chicago, Dallas, Los Angeles, Miami, Oakland, St. Louis, and Washington, DC. The Philadelphia program is supported by AstraZeneca. For more information, please visit <http://nbnfoundation.us/>.

Should you have questions, please call the Joshua Group at 404.559.6191.

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It is with great sadness that I share the news of the death of one of our nurse colleagues. The article can be found below:

### **Hopkins Nursing Alum among Afghan Ambush Casualties**

Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing (JHUSON) alumnus **Glen D. Lapp '95**, was one of ten medical aid workers who was ambushed and killed in Afghanistan last week, according to the [\*Philadelphia Inquirer\*](#).



"The Hopkins community shares in the grief over Glen's death," said JHUSON Dean Martha N. Hill, PhD, RN. "He was a dedicated nurse -- both here and abroad. The loss of Glen and his colleagues is not only a loss for the people of Afghanistan, but for all of us in the global health community."

Clinical instructor Krysia Hudson, MS, RN, BC, remembers Lapp as "one of the kindest students I've had the pleasure to know...this world was a richer place thanks to him."

Lapp, 40, of Lancaster, PA, had been in Afghanistan since 2008 as part of the International Assistance Mission (IAM), one of the longest serving non-governmental organizations serving in that region.

### **Spotlight on PHS Nurses – Please join me in congratulating our nurses for their Exceptional Leadership and Accomplishments!**

The following nurses were awarded the Chief Nurse Officer Award in recognition of their work and tireless efforts in creating the first officially sanctioned CDC Nursing Work Group, which advocates for all nurses at CDC. In addition to laying the groundwork for the group's organizational structure and goals, the work group provides nursing expertise and leadership, by promoting scientific research, programs and projects in CDC's public health planning and healthcare reform activities.

*Ms. Patricia Drehobl, Dr. Lorine Spencer, CAPT Yvonne Green, Beth Stover, Mr., Joseph Bertulfo,*

*Ms. Kay Lawton, Ms. Susan Laird, Dr. John Moore, Dr. Nancy Cheal, Mrs. Judith Kane.*

A Chief Nurse Officer Award was also presented to *CAPT Amy Collins* for her outstanding nursing leadership and contributions to the advancement of nursing careers in USPHS.

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Enjoy the upcoming Fall season with some cooler weather ahead. And, please know that you are valued and respected for your caring and important work – a true “labor of love”. Mother Teresa once stated, “It is not how much you do, but how much love you put into the doing that matters”.

Truly,

Kerry

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