

Nurses,

The American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) of 2009 allocated approximately \$1B for a Prevention and Wellness Fund. Specific funds were targeted toward the prevention of healthcare associated infections (\$50M) and increasing the number of children receiving recommended vaccinations through the 317 Program (\$300M). With the remaining Prevention and Wellness funds (\$650M), the current Acting ASH/Surgeon General is leading a department-wide effort to develop a proposed prevention strategy that focuses on evidence-based clinical and community-based prevention strategies as stated in the ARRA legislation.

Admiral Galson has pulled together a Committee of some the Department's best clinicians, scientists, and other public health professionals to serve as the internal "think tank" on how best to utilize these funds to achieve important short-term measurable impacts as well as foster long term prevention within and among communities nationwide- with added attention on populations and communities disproportionately impacted by chronic disease.

Remember, April 6-12<sup>th</sup> is American Public Health Association's National Public Health week. The theme for this year is "*Building the Foundation for a Healthy America.*" Please visit the website for more information: [www.nphw.org](http://www.nphw.org) and continue your own work of building our Nation's health.

Here are more updates to keep you informed.

### **Transformation**

Transformation initiatives are moving forward. A new database for collecting Officer Profile information is now available. Officers are invited to enter their education and training experiences so that we can better access your information to match with job vacancies. This system will eventually be integrated with OFRD Basic Readiness and other systems. Please note that it is your responsibility to now send in official transcripts of college degrees or certifications that you received before or after your qualifying degree (BSN or Master's in nursing). We are asking for only your nursing credentials. You will not be able to enter non-nursing credentials at this time.

Log-in to the secure website of the CCMIS website: <http://dcp.psc.gov> and select the left column hyperlink for "Profile Data Entry". Schools can directly mail official transcripts to:

Officer Profiles System  
1101 Wootton Parkway  
Tower Building, Suite 100  
Rockville, MD 20852

As of April 6, 2009, there are 6,229 officers in the Commissioned Corps and 1,461 are nurses. We are getting closer to our goal of 1500 nurse officers so please continue to recruit nurses to active duty. Also, civilian or tribal nurses who want to serve in the U.S. Public Health Service may be eligible to convert!

### **Policy**

At this time, the Woodland Green BDU remains one of the PHS required deployment uniforms. Although other options are being explored, we currently anticipate using the Woodland Green BDU for about two years. Please note, however, that supplies are expected to diminish during this period. Officers are required by policy to own the Woodland Green BDU.

Statutory authorization for the size of the Regular Corps has increased from 2800 to 4000. Officers who applied for assimilation do not need to reapply. OCCO is working on this backlog. We expect that there will be a 2009 assimilation board and a call for applications. Stay tuned.

Recommendations have been sent forward to the Deputy Surgeon General for improvement to the Commissioned Corps policy review process. The intent is to increase transparency and increase the input and communications with stakeholders.

The Assignment Incentive Pay (AIP) Pilot Program is underway and is expected to continue until December 2010. The program has 220 applicants and 212 assignments have been approved. Ninety-seven of the 220 applicants are in the Nurse category. Agencies make decisions related to who receives this pay. Review CC 631.02 Assignment Incentive Pay and contact your agency liaison if you believe you might qualify for the AIP.

### **Career Development**

The 2010 Benchmarks have been posted to the CCMIS website at:  
<http://dcp.psc.gov/PY2010.aspx>

Nurse appointment standards are being reviewed. We are proposing revisions to clarify training and experience credit for nurses who receive a master's degree as their qualifying degree for commissioning.

Join us June 1-4, 2009 in Atlanta, Georgia for the USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium. The 44th edition of this annual meeting will feature 3 1/2 days of general and tracked sessions. The theme for the 2009 Symposium is "*Leading a Strong Public Health Workforce for a Healthy America.*" Visit <http://www.phscofevents.org/> for more information and to register.

### **Leadership and Outreach**

I had the opportunity to speak with a delegation of 20 health officials from China's Anhui Province and the Anhui Provincial Health Department about community health centers and training of care providers in the US.

[http://www.asph.org/fridayletter/article\\_view.cfm?FLE\\_Index=9330&FL\\_Index=1562](http://www.asph.org/fridayletter/article_view.cfm?FLE_Index=9330&FL_Index=1562)

I look forward to giving the keynote address at the National Student Nurses Association conference April 15, 2009 in Nashville. Please consider opportunities you may have to reach out to our future generation of nurses as a recruiter, a mentor or teacher.

Nurse candidates for Chief Professional Officer have been interviewed and a short list was sent forth to the Surgeon General for consideration. Following the Surgeon General's decision, the candidate will need to be approved by the Secretary of HHS, as the Secretary approves all flag officers.

I am meeting with the Chief Nurses and/or senior nurse in each of the agencies that employ a large number of nurses. Our goal is to assess recruitment and retention needs and the implications for a new nurse special pay policy. All categories in the Corps are reviewing their special pay policies. There will be more to follow.

The Institutes Of Medicine is releasing “Health Literacy, eHealth, and Communication: Putting the Consumer First. Workshop Summary”, a report that explores the current state of communication technology, the challenges for its use in populations with low health literacy, and the strategies for increasing the benefit of these technologies for these populations. To read online or get a free PDF visit [http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record\\_id=12474](http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12474)

### **Readiness**

The Nurse category had a basic readiness percentage of 90.47 as of March 27, 2009. We are still pushing for 100%.

It has been nearly 3 years since the inception of the tiered Commissioned Corps Readiness and Response System. OFRD is conducting a comprehensive review and renewal. New patient Advocacy teams to assist with case management will be implemented. New Team leaders for all 36-deployment teams have been confirmed and the team leaders will be selecting new team members to serve for three-year terms. Current members may be renewed.

The USNS *Comfort* set sail on 01 April 2009 for Continuing Promise 2009 humanitarian mission to Latin America and the Caribbean. Nurses will be needed for one month tours through July. More information can be found on the OFRD web site at <http://oep.osophs.dhhs.gov/ccrf>

### **Recognition**

There is a call for nominations for the 2009 Carruth Wagner nursing awards. These include five new monetary awards of \$1000 each, plus some funding to attend the USPHS (COA) Scientific & Training Symposium June 2, 2009 where the awards will be presented. Officers, civilians and tribal nurses can be nominated. One award is also available to nursing assistant support personnel. Please submit nominations to CDR Anita Pollard [apollard@bop.gov](mailto:apollard@bop.gov) or CDR Susan Orsega [susan.orsega@nih.gov](mailto:susan.orsega@nih.gov) by April 17, 2009. More information can be found on the list serve archives at <https://list.nih.gov/cgi-bin/wa?A1=ind0903&L=phsnursing-l> .

### **Comment**

Springtime has arrived, a time when we witness the blossoming of new life. Take this opportunity to revisit your own person growth and renew your commitment to blossom in your personal and professional life. Remember that new growth requires feeding, caring and rest so reach out for nourishment for your mind and spirit and give it to others if you can. When you are enriched and renewed, you can better reach out to care for our Nation. Thank you for all you do each day to make the world safer and healthier.

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