

the health advisor

DOH Mission:

To promote & protect the health & safety of all people in Florida.

Sept./Oct. 2003

FOR A PATIENT TO BE ELIGIBLE, THEY MUST:

Have no insurance for the condition for which treatment is sought.

Have a family income at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty income standards.

Have been referred by DOH.

Be a Medicaid recipient where there is no Medicaid provider.

For more information on how to volunteer for this program or to obtain services, contact the Volunteer Health Care Provider Program at (850) 245-4104.

DOH volunteer program receives innovation in american government award

DOH'S VOLUNTEER HEALTH CARE PROVIDER PROGRAM RECENTLY WAS NAMED AMONG THE TOP 100 PROGRAMS in the 16th annual Innovations in American Government Awards competition.

The Volunteer Health Care Provider Program is a program that consists of volunteer physicians, nurses, hospitals, and other health care professionals who donate their services and goods. The program serves eligible people who are uninsured and underinsured and meet a financial requirement.

"Through this program, hundreds of health care providers are volunteering thousands of hours and millions of dollars in services to those who might otherwise have to use an emergency room or go without treatment," said Secretary Agwunobi. "Volunteerism is a key component in the continuum of health care services needed in a state as diverse as Florida."

Representatives from Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, the Ford Foundation, and the Council for Excellence in Government selected the department's Volunteer Health Care Provider Program for its novel and successful approach to addressing timely and crucial public sector problems.

The program began in 1992, and in fiscal year 2001-2002, more than 15,000 individual health care providers donated more than \$89 million of services and goods. Service is available across the state and is provided through local volunteer clinics, community health centers, county health departments and other health care providers.



“Volunteerism is a key component in the continuum of health care services needed in a state as diverse as Florida.”

—Secretary Agwunobi

Miami-Dade CHD honors health care volunteers

GIVING TIME AND SERVICES, FOR THE SAKE OF HELPING OTHERS, is a special quality that the Miami-Dade County Health Department (CHD) celebrated during the 2003 Volunteer Recognition Awards Ceremony in June. The ceremony, held at the South Miami Hospital, was sponsored by Baptist Health South Florida.

The event honored the 1,409 area health professionals who donated \$17 million in health care services to more than 105,800 uninsured and underinsured people in the community during the past year. These health care workers brought their services and a healthy hope to those in Miami-Dade County who do not have medical insurance and are under the 150 percent poverty level.

"Volunteers are our greatest resource. They enable thousands of people in our community to receive health care that would otherwise be unavailable to them," said Nancy Humbert, MSN, ARNP, then-Acting Executive Administrator of Miami-Dade CHD. "We want to let them know how much we value them." **Otto Rodriguez, Miami-Dade County Health Department**

FITE receives national association of state and territorial health officials award

THE FLORIDA INITIATIVE IN TELEHEALTH AND EDUCATION (FITE) WAS SELECTED TO RECEIVE THE 2003 ASSOCIATION OF STATE AND TERRITORIAL HEALTH OFFICIALS (ASTHO) VISION AWARD.

The first-place award will be presented during a national ASTHO conference in Arizona in September.

FITE is a program of the University of Florida, which since November of 2001 has contracted with Children's Medical Services (CMS) to provide health care services to children with diabetes in a cost effective and cost efficient manner. FITE provides:

- telemedicine clinics between Gainesville and the Daytona Beach CMS area office to children enrolled in CMS who have diabetes and other endocrinological diagnoses on a bi-weekly basis and interval phone contact as necessary, staffed by a board-certified pediatric endocrinologist and a diabetes educator;
- tele-psychology program with in-home videophone psychological intervention, staffed by a psychologist Ph.D.; and
- web-based educational modules about diabetes, (<http://fite.peds.ufl.edu>)

FITE accomplishments have been significant for families and health professionals, and include:

- reduction in time and travel for patients and families by sig-

nificantly reducing the need to travel to Gainesville to see the pediatric endocrinologist;

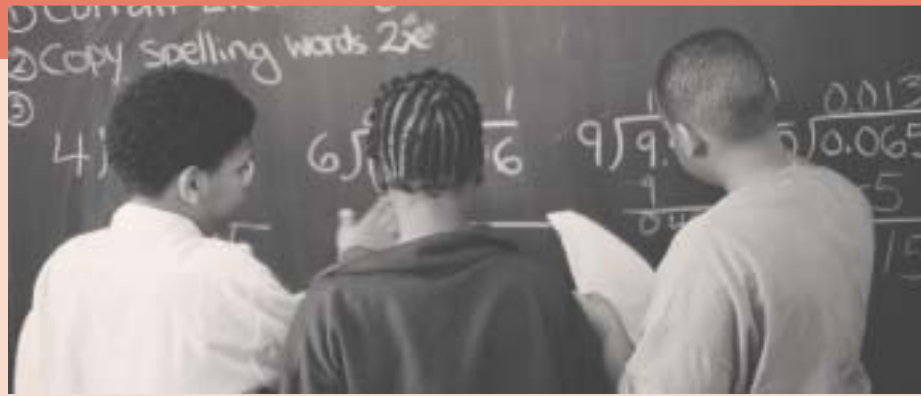
- reduction in time and travel for the pediatric endocrinologist and staff;
- decreased costs for Medicaid transportation;
- improved health status, greater independence in managing health needs, and increased compliance for treatment by the enrolled children and their families;
- decreased emergency room visits and decreased hospitalizations; and
- donated computers have been placed in the homes of children who are enrolled in CMS and participating in the FITE project so they can learn from online diabetes educational modules.

ASTHO presents the annual Vision Award to recognize state health programs and initiatives that use a creative approach to address public health needs or problems; and to increase awareness of successful state health programs and initiatives for other states to replicate. **Susan Redmon, Children's Medical Services**



During the 2003–2004 funding year, Coordinated School Health Programs staff will work to achieve the following:

- 1 Plan and coordinate statewide educational meetings for school district health coordinators and institutes of higher learning.
- 2 Facilitate Pilot School program evaluation, feedback and support.
- 3 Facilitate collaboration between schools, districts, state, and national organizations, associations, and other agencies by participating on, and/or supporting the AIDS Education Advisory Councils, Florida Youth Survey Work Group, Governor's Emergency Medical Services Advisory Committee for Children, and various other boards and consortiums, as appropriate.
- 4 Work to enhance collaboration with the State Obesity, Diabetes and Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Programs by coordinating program objectives and promoting communication within and among the agencies and organizations serving Florida's youth.
- 5 Participate with professional organizations such as the Florida Association of School Nurses; Florida School Health Association; Florida Foundation for School Health; Florida Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance; the Florida Foundation for School Nurses; Excellence in School Nursing Conference, the School Nursing Certification program and other trainings and conference sessions that are attended by similar stakeholders.
- 6 Facilitate and support the 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, training of district survey coordinators and reporting of survey data.



public health joins forces with education to improve the health of florida's school-aged children

IN 1992 THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DOE), IN COLLABORATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH), INSTITUTED THE COORDINATED SCHOOL HEALTH PROGRAMS (CSHP) TO ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCEMENT OF SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS AIMED AT IMPROVING STUDENT HEALTH AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT. The mission of the project is to establish prevention education as an important component in the development of comprehensive health programs intended to prevent major health problems and health risk behaviors among Florida's youth.

This mission is accomplished through efforts to build infrastructure that will strengthen the capacity of state health and education agencies to plan, implement and evaluate a coordinated school health program at the local level. These services incorporate the eight components of the CSHP promoting community involvement, health education, health services, physical education, nutrition services, counseling psychological and social services, health promotion for staff, and a health school environment. CSHP staff at the local and state level work to support school, district and county health department programs including community health, consumer health, disease prevention and control, environmental health, family life, injury prevention and safety, personal health and fitness, mental and emotional health, nutrition education, prevention of tobacco and other drug use. Chronic diseases addressed by this program include obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. In addition, this project also addresses prevention efforts and health risk behaviors that affect Florida's youth, such as tobacco and drug use, sexual behaviors, poor nutrition and lack of adequate physical activity.

Currently, Florida has eight CSHP pilot school programs in six school districts including Broward, Hillsborough, Polk, Duval, Sarasota and Orange counties. These programs emphasize school-based efforts to increase health knowledge, support healthy decision-making and behaviors, improve access to nutritious food, physical activity and mental health services, and assure a healthy school environment that includes positive, healthy role models such as teachers, parents and community members.

March 1, 2003, marked the beginning of a new funding cycle for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Adolescent Health, Priority 2 funding for Improving the Health, Education, and Well-Being of Young People Through Coordinated School Health Programs.

Susan Cashman, Bureau of Chronic Disease Prevention



take control with MQA's online services

www.doh-mqaservices.com

MEDICAL QUALITY ASSURANCE (MQA) NOW OFFERS ONLINE SERVICES FOR CONSUMERS AND LICENSEES. The online services project has been developed through the Licensure Services Unit in the Bureau of Operations. The online services website address is www.doh-mqaservices.com. The online services website offers consumers and licensees convenience and control. The services give consumers the ability to take control of their health care services and these services give licensees more control over their profile and license information.

The website offers consumers the ability to look up the license of any health care practitioner licensed in the state of Florida, view the profile information for the five profiled professions, request license certification and data, place a public records request, file a complaint, report unlicensed activity, request a licensure application packet and utilize the licensure evaluation tool.

With the license look-up option, consumers can make sure their health care provider has an active, current license. They can also check if the state health care board has disciplined a practitioner. Using the search link for practitioner profiling, consumers can check the specialty certification, place of education and criminal proceedings for licensed allopathic and osteopathic physicians, registered nurses, podiatrists and chiropractors.

The online services website gives consumers the ability to place a request online for several documents including license certification, license data and public records. The system accepts most major credit cards for documents that require fees. The requests are placed online and the documents are sent in the mail.

Consumers also can download a complaint form through the online services website. The form is used to file a complaint against health care practitioners and report unlicensed activity. This option minimizes the need to print complaint forms and speeds up the complaint process.

Prospective practitioners can request a license application packet online. Prospective practitioners can use the self-guided licensure evaluation tool to determine eligibility for licensure in the state of Florida.

The website also offers services for licensees. These services are aimed at giving the licensees more control over their license information. Licensees can make changes as needed. For security purposes an account ID and password are required to enter the licensee services link. The online services website offers licensees the opportunity to renew their license, update their address, view and update their profile information.

Licensees can renew their license online by simply using their account ID, password and credit card. This link is only accessible during the renewal cycle. The system accepts most major credit cards. Renewals are processed immediately and license status is updated online within seven business days.

Online services give licensees more control over their own information. Licensees can update their mailing, practice and e-mail addresses using the update address option. Profile professionals can update their profile information using the update my profile option. All changes will appear online the next business day.

The online services system is safe and secure. MQA uses industry standard practices to safeguard the confidentiality of personal identifiable information, including "firewalls" and Secure Socket Layers. MQA treats data as an asset that must be protected against loss and unauthorized access. MQA employs many different security techniques to protect data from unauthorized access by users inside and outside the division. The website does not retain complete credit card information after the data is processed.

The possibilities for additional MQA online services include online applications for license and public access to documents and images. Currently, the website services are being promoted through a statewide radio campaign. The website address is being promoted through an unlicensed activity billboard campaign for the Dietitian and Nutritionist Council. **MQA Communications**

new state law stipulates legible prescriptions

A new state law designed to improve written prescriptions became effective July 1. The new law, section 456.42 of the Florida Statutes, requires written prescriptions to:

- be legibly printed or typed;
- contain the name of the prescribing practitioner, the name and strength of the drug prescribed, the quantity of the drug prescribed in both textual and numerical formats, and the directions for use of the drug;
- be dated with the month written out in textual letters; and
- be signed by the prescribing practitioner on the day when issued.

The bill, created in the interest of reducing prescription errors and keeping Florida's residents and visitors safe, was sponsored by Florida Representative Shelley Yana and Florida Senator Debbie Wasserman-Schultz and signed into law by Governor Bush.

DOH maternal mortality review team aims to prevent pregnancy-associated deaths

FOR THE PAST SIX YEARS, THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (DOH) has been coordinating the state's team of health experts who review pregnancy-associated deaths in the state in an effort to improve the system of care for pregnant and postpartum women.

Florida's Pregnancy Associated Mortality Review (PAMR) has become a model program for identifying system factors related to deaths associated with pregnancy. The multidisciplinary team that carefully reviews 15 cases each quarter hopes its recommendations can be used to help prevent future pregnancy-associated deaths. (Pregnancy-associated refers to the death of a woman, from any cause, while she is pregnant or within one year of termination of pregnancy, regardless of duration and site of pregnancy. Cases are further identified as Pregnancy-Related, Possibly Pregnancy-Related, and Not Pregnancy-Related.)

The team of volunteers includes medical practitioners, social workers, educators, epidemiologists and public health advocates. A DOH registered nursing consultant serves as statewide PAMR coordinator.

PAMR goals include:

- Improving the identification of pregnancy-related deaths
- Identifying gaps in care
- Identifying systemic service delivery problems
- Recommending linkages between community resources
- Facilitating improvements in the system of care

The PAMR team makes recommendations for strategies and interventions in the area of community-based education for:

- Improvements in Interagency Linkages/Services/Networks
- Improvements in Internal Organizational Practices
- Professional Training and Education
- Strengthening Patient Knowledge and Skills

Recommendations are disseminated through health-related newsletters, such as the Florida Obstetric and Gynecologic Society (FOGS) newsletter, through presentations to professional groups by PAMR team members, and through policy and practice advocacy within organizations and institutions with which team members are affiliated.

Recommendations from the June review include the following

BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT Staff working with the maternal population should have access to regular training on the importance of providing and documenting bereavement support to families of the deceased.

POSTPARTUM HEADACHE Postpartum discharge teaching should include the education for women on the importance of alerting a health care provider if they experience a severe or prolonged headache during the postpartum period.

HEALTHY START Education needs to be provided to health care providers, such as nurses, social workers, child welfare workers and physicians, on the availability of Healthy Start services for surviving children ages birth through three. And, Healthy Start care coordinators should always check with the referring provider if patient is "unable to locate;" the patient is often being seen by the referring provider and perhaps

Healthy Start services could be provided at the referring provider's office, prior to or after visits.

AUTOPSIES Autopsies need to be performed on women who have pregnancy-associated deaths.

DIABETES Endocrinologists should routinely discuss the risks of pregnancy with diabetic women who are of childbearing age.

AGAINST MEDICAL ADVICE (AMA). It is important to carefully document patient's stated reasons for leaving AMA and to provide education on possible consequences of leaving AMA. Additionally, it is important for health care provider(s) to make a referral to Healthy Start or the local county health department when a mother and infant leave the hospital AMA.

DEPRESSION SCREENING Patients should have routine screening for depression and if depressed, they should be referred for more in-depth assessment and services.

MENTAL HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE Efforts should be continued at the legislative and policy level to improve the mental health infrastructure in Florida, including increasing priority access to mental health services for pregnant women.

CHRONIC MEDICAL CONDITIONS Women with chronic illnesses continue to become pregnant against medical advice. Effort should be made at the community level to reach out to these women and educate them on the risks of pregnancy, and ensure their access to family planning services.

DEATH CERTIFICATE It is important to continue to promote the use of the pregnancy checkbox on the death certificate.

Questions about Florida's PAMR process may be directed to PAMR coordinator, Jody Bryan, at Jody_Bryan@doh.state.fl.us or by phone at 850-245-4465.

Bureau of Family and Community Health

public health preparedness

seminole CHD chosen one of 12 in the nation for readiness project

COMPETENCY-BASED TRAINING IS A PHRASE THAT IS PROBABLY FAMILIAR TO MOST FOLKS AT THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH. Ensuring that we are all effectively preparing to meet future human-made and natural disasters is a major objective of the department's Public Health Preparedness grant. Although there are defined general public health competencies and specific competencies for preparedness and response, actually integrating these competencies into the busy everyday activities of a county health department is a real challenge.

With that end in mind, the Seminole County Health Department has been designated to implement "Bioterrorism & Emergency Readiness Competencies for All Public Health Workers." As one of 12 counties in the nation selected by the National Association of County and City Health Officials nationwide, Seminole CHD is in the process of integrating county-level preparedness and response planning with competency-based training to support the County Emergency Management Plan. The project will finish with an exercise designed to test the plan and validate the training process. Seminole CHD will evaluate this exercise and use the lessons learned to modify its emergency plan and training curriculum.

Outgoing Seminole CHD Administrator and Orlando Regional Domestic Security Task Force (RDSTF) Health Co-Chair, Jennifer Bencie Fairburn, M.D., has been among the many Florida DOH public health professionals who have participated in the development of these competencies and she is a strong advocate for implementation in Florida. Anne-Carol Castello, MA, a Public Health Preparedness Planner who is responsible for supporting Seminole, Brevard and Volusia CHDs, is the project lead and is already off to a strong start.

Other counties are not waiting for the "Ready Project" to be completed to begin integrating the "Bioterrorism & Emergency Preparedness Competencies" into their Preparedness Education & Training activities. Tallahassee RDSTF Health Co-Chair Art Cooper and Leon County Preparedness Director Jack Pittman are shaping the awareness-level preparedness curriculum for the Region's 14 counties around the core competencies. Jack, Anne-Carol and a strong cadre of preparedness planners, trainers and coordinators throughout the state are working to "... assure a competent public and personal health care workforce!"

Mark A. O'Neill, Preparedness Education & Training Coordinator
Office of Performance Improvement

DOH receives EPA grant for continued beach monitoring

THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA) recently awarded DOH a nearly \$545,000 grant for the state's beach monitoring program. The Florida



Healthy Beaches program was established in August 2000 to frequently monitor Florida's waters for bacterial indicators to maintain the public's

trust in the safety of these natural resources.

Results are posted on the DOH website and provided to the public for use when choosing a beach area. Through the Florida Healthy Beaches program, 305 sites in 34 counties are monitored on a weekly basis to ensure the sites are safe and sanitary.

The initial authorization and funding from the Florida Legislature created the program to monitor the quality of water at frequently used beaches and notify the public of beach warnings and advisories. The EPA's BEACH Act grants have allowed DOH to increase to weekly monitoring to provide the public with prompt notification of poor water quality conditions in an attempt to reduce the risk of exposure to disease-causing microorganisms in the water.

people in public health



agwunobi appointed to national quality forum

Secretary Agwunobi was appointed in August to serve on the board of directors for the National Quality Forum. The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) nominated him.

The National Quality Forum (NQF), established in 1999 following a recommendation of the President's Advisory Commission on Consumer Protection and Quality in the Health Care Industry, is a nonprofit, open-membership organization with a mission to improve American health care through endorsement of consensus-based national standards for measurement and public reporting of health care performance data that provide meaningful information about whether care is safe, timely, beneficial, patient-centered, equitable and efficient.

rivera named miami-dade CHD administrator

Lillian Rivera, MSN, RN, was named Administrator of the Miami-Dade County Health Department (CHD) in July. Rivera's tenure in public and private health care spans more than 27 years, including the last 13 years at Miami-Dade CHD as Executive Community Health Nursing Director and Acting Executive Administrator.

Rivera earned her BSN and MSN degrees from the University of Puerto Rico. She is certified as a Health Care Risk Manager and is a graduate of the Executive Institute for Community Health Nurses (UNC-Chapel Hill) and a fellow of the Nurse Executive Program/Robert Wood Foundation. Presently, she is a doctoral candidate in the area of health care administration. In her most recent role as Executive Community Health Nursing Director of the Miami-Dade County Health Department Rivera was responsible for more than 150 nursing positions and co-administration of daily operations of the health department. Previously she held various nursing positions, at the Public Health Trust of Jackson Memorial Center in Miami. She also held the position of Nursing Director in Puerto Rico with the San Juan Department of Health.

As Administrator of the Miami-Dade County Health Department, Rivera will be responsible for the oversight and supervision of public health programs throughout the county. She will be charged with the management of a \$61 million budget and more than 1,000 employees.

scheuermann appointed child protection and special technology bureau chief

Peggy Scheuermann was appointed Bureau Chief of Children's Medical Services' Child Protection and Special Technology. She brings to the position more than 20 years experience in the areas of juvenile delinquency, domestic violence and child abuse and neglect, specializing in child abuse prevention and intervention for over a decade.

Prior to her July appointment, Scheuermann served as the Unit Director for the CMS Child Protection Unit since 1998. She has participated on the Governor's Task Force Against Domestic Violence, the Governor's Office of Drug Control Drug Free Communities Initiative, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) Child Safety Strike Force, as a designee to the Children's Justice Task Force, and oversees the provision of staff support to the Statewide Child Abuse Death Review Team.

Scheuermann has a BA degree in psychology from Christopher Newport University, and MEd in Mental Health from the University of North Florida. She is currently working on her PhD in Clinical Psychology.

As bureau chief, Scheuermann will direct the day-to-day activities involving administration and coordination of all activities related to Child Protection Teams; Sexual Abuse Treatment Programs; and special technology programs, including Telemedicine. She will also oversee staff involved with the State Child Abuse Death Review Team.

CMS Nursing Director Sharyn R. Bennett, R.N., retires after 35 years

The Tallahassee Office of Children's Medical Services (CMS) paid tribute to Sharyn R. Bennett, RN, Nursing Director, during a July reception at the local CMS office. Bennett, a well-known children's advocate, retired after 35 years of service in public health.

Bennett was recognized for her outstanding service and extraordinary tenure. Several distinguished children advocates paid tribute, and the celebration concluded with a dedication of the CMS children's playground in her honor.

The Tallahassee CMS office covers Leon, Franklin, Taylor, Jefferson, Gadsden, Madison, Wakulla, and Liberty counties, and serves over 1,700 children. CMS is a program of the Department of Health and is the State of Florida's program for children with special health care needs from birth to 21 years of age. The CMS Network is the insurer under Florida KidCare (Title XXI). Statewide, the network serves more than 40,000 children.

Cynthia Schwartz, Children's Medical Services

orange CHD's environmental health supervisor wins FEHA scholarship

Joreen Washington, environmental health supervisor for Orange County Health Department, recently received a full scholarship to attend the June National Environmental Health Association Conference in Nevada from the Florida Environmental Health Association (FEHA). Environmental Health Administrator Kathy Fuchs nominated Washington for her work and commitment to environmental health.

Washington is vice-chairman for the FEHA Central District and is very active in FEHA. She also serves as a judge for the Orange County Science Fair; spearheaded the health department's participation in local Earth Day activities, and volunteers for many other community activities.

Cathy Ma, Orange County Health Department

awards recognize HIV/AIDS prevention, care

The Department of Health, in conjunction with Florida AIDS Action, presented the second annual Florida HIV/AIDS Red Ribbon Excellence Awards to two doctors, an administrator, an outreach worker, an advocate and an AIDS service organization for efforts in preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS and caring for those with the disease.

The awards were presented during the May 28 All Titles meeting in Orlando. The All Titles meeting brings together providers funded through the Ryan White CARE Act.

Two physicians who have worked tirelessly to ensure that high quality medical care is provided to patients with HIV/AIDS shared the Guiding Light award. They were Dr. Asim Jani, HIV Medical Director from the Orange County Health Department (CHD), and Dr. John Sinnott of the University of South Florida College of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases and Tropical Medicine, and Director of Tampa General Hospital Healthcare.

Tim Johnson, a health educator in the Bay CHD, was honored with the Highest Achievement award for his consistent outreach and education efforts in Florida's panhandle.

Sarasota CHD Administrator Bill Little received the Unsung Hero award for his outstanding work in advocating for equitable HIV/AIDS policies within the community.

Doug Randolph received the Make the Change award, which is given in recognition of an individual or organization for extraordinary efforts in prevention and education services. Mr. Randolph has worked to prevent the spread of HIV in Palm Beach County for nearly a decade.

AIDS Services Association of Pinellas, Inc. (ASAP) received the Healing Hearts/Helping Hands award for providing exceptional care and treatment for persons living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. ASAP was started by HIV-infected persons and their families, and serves more than 1,000 infected and affected people each year.

the advisor

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Please send stories & information for the Nov/Dec. issue by e-mail to Juli Bergstrom-Wasson in the Office of Performance Improvement by Oct. 1, 2003. The Health Advisor is available on the DOH Intranet & Internet websites.
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think davis awards

It's time to begin preparation for the 2004 Davis Productivity Awards by highlighting the past year's achievements (October 1, 2002–September 30, 2003) within department programs. Take special note that deadlines will be earlier this year. Look for specific dates in future announcements via the DOH Intranet.

For more information, please contact Mary Brewington, DOH Davis Awards Coordinator, in the Office of Performance Improvement by e-mail or at (850) 245-4444, ext. 2167 or SC 205-4444 ext. 2167.

the health advisor updates outside of florida mailing list

The Health Advisor newsletter is currently updating the outside of Florida mailing list. If you reside outside of the State of Florida and wish to continue to receive your subscription, please send your request to the editor by Oct. 24, 2003. For your convenience, The Health Advisor is available on the Internet at <http://www.doh.state.fl.us/communications/office/advisor/advisor.htm>.

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