

Office of Public Health Nursing



2007-2008 Annual Report



Words from the Florida Department of Health



Ana Viamonte Ros, MD, MPH
State Surgeon General

The Florida Department of Health is dedicated to achieving the vision of ensuring all Floridians are healthy, safe, and well. The Office of Public Health Nursing and Florida's public health nurses are vital partners in making this happen.

We are very proud of the professionalism, leadership, and dedication of our nurses and the Office of Public Health nursing. The office fosters nurse leaders through development, resources, training, and establishing protocols that support nurse practice. Among its duties, the office links public health nurses to resources and information related to public health nursing practice, education, and leadership.

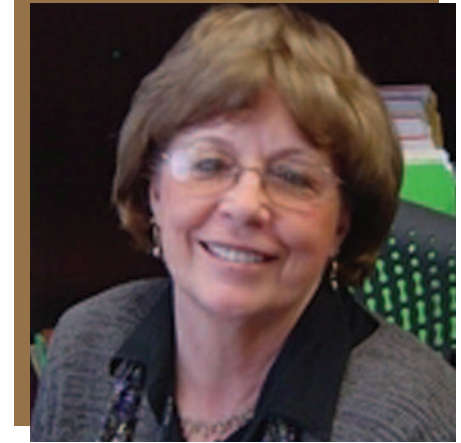
Many initiatives of the Florida Office of Public Health Nursing have been recognized as national models. I am happy to share this annual report which highlights some of these achievements.



Jean Kline, RN, BSN, MPH
*Deputy Secretary for Health and State
Public Health Nursing Director*

I am proud of my connections to public health nurses and nursing. I have worked as a nurse at many levels for the Florida Department of Health—from health department nursing director, to health department administrator to deputy secretary. Public health nurses play a vital role in every aspect of the department and represent the largest employee group.

At the Florida Department of Health, you will find nurses working in clinics, epidemiology, family health, school health, health planning and evaluation, environmental health, and preparedness. Nurses at the department are educated and trained to work and practice holistically, and beyond traditional roles. This is what is so exciting about public health nursing, this is what attracts nurses to public health and where they find their career home. Public health nurses in state and local health departments are an essential component of the solutions for today's health problems.



Sandra A. Schoenfisch, RN, PhD
Director

It is my pleasure to join the State Surgeon General, and Deputy Secretary in presenting the Office of Public Health Nursing Annual Report for state fiscal year 2007-2008. The office continues to achieve success in providing leadership, technical assistance, consultation, education, and support to public health nurses, administrators, educators, and community and agency partners. This report includes a summary of activities during the year and accomplishments to remind us of the importance of the role of the public health nurse.

We look forward to the new year as we strive to meet the challenges of an increasing need for public health services and a diminishing workforce. We look forward to the new year as we continue to **champion Florida's public health nurses as they deliver essential services necessary to promote and protect the health and safety of all Floridians.**

MISSION:
*Promote, protect
and improve the
health of all
people in Florida*

VISION:
*A healthier future
for the people of
Florida*

**Office of Public
Health Nursing**

MISSION:
*Promote and
protect health
while promoting
public health
nursing in Florida
through practice,
education,
research, and
evaluation*

VISION:
*Champions for
Healthy People
in Healthy
Communities -
Public Health
Nursing --
the Ultimate
Nurse Workforce*

OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING

Public health nursing in the United States traces back to a nurse named Lillian Wald who, in 1893, established the Henry Street Settlement House in New York City and coined the phrase, “public health nurse.”

The Florida Office of Public Health Nursing was established in January 2002 to support the mission of the Department of Health by addressing nursing issues and to respond to the threat of an increasing nursing shortage. Following a series of surveys, meetings and conference calls, a taskforce identified the structure needed to provide statewide leadership and to support excellence in public health nursing practice. A unit was also needed to provide standardized training and education, generate networking opportunities, and expand recruitment efforts.

Today, the office continues these responsibilities as well as provides technical assistance and consultation and participates in disaster preparedness activities.

CORE FUNCTIONS

The Office of Public Health Nursing is responsible for **leadership, workforce development, and public health preparedness**. These core functions are designed to facilitate the delivery of essential public health services to meet the needs of the community and missions of the department and office.

Each function is guided by the office’s mission encompassing excellence in public health nursing **practice, education, research, and evaluation** to support and facilitate the delivery of high quality services to citizens and visitors to Florida.

Leadership - Representing, promoting, and supporting public health nursing statewide and nationwide, monitoring public health trends and needs, and implementing new initiatives. The office leads in the development, implementation, and evaluation of public health nursing policy, standards, and professional development.

Workforce Development - Promoting professional development and leadership of nurses, mentoring new nurses, and assisting in finding ways to meet the state’s need for public health nurses.

Public Health Preparedness - Coordinating public health nursing disaster response and developing public health preparedness initiatives.





PRIORITIES

The following issues have been identified as current priorities for the Office of Public Health Nursing:

- Workforce and leadership development
- Nursing practice
- Preparedness
- Recruitment and retention
- Partnerships
- Rewards and recognition
- Resources



KEY INITIATIVES

Following is a summary of some current key initiatives designed to meet office priorities:

Caring Hands Awards - An opportunity for the office to provide special recognition to acknowledge significant accomplishments, achievements, and contributions of public health nurses. Awards recognize nurses and nurse led teams exhibiting a commitment to nursing that inspires peers, clients, and communities. Awards are presented in the areas of leadership, community health and safety, education and professional development, and nursing practice. Twenty nurses attained this honor during the fiscal year.

Continuing Education - An opportunity for nurses to maintain and improve knowledge, skills and professional competencies, and meet professional requirements. The office is a Florida Board of Nursing approved continuing education (CE) provider. The office facilitates use of its provider number, free of charge, to all work units of the Florida Department of Health, including County Health Departments and Children’s Medical Services, and to other state agencies. During the fiscal year, 14,270 Continuing Education contact hours were awarded.

Florida Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Network - A network of medical reserve corps sites with the mission to augment local community and state-level health and medical services with pre-identified, trained, and credentialed volunteers during emergency medical operations and other vital public health activities. The office provides leadership, supports network development, coordinates statewide efforts, and provides resources and technical assistance. The network includes approximately 4,000 volunteers in 29 local sites covering 56 of Florida’s 67 counties.

Florida Emergency Health Volunteer Registry @SERVFL.com - A volunteer management tool and database for MRC and other private health care volunteers who can provide emergency surge manpower and assist with other community public health activities. The Registry allows for local volunteer management while being connected into a single state registry. The goal of the Registry, part of the national Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals, is to fill post-event disaster missions and other public health activities with willing and able health care

Florida’s Office of Public Health Nursing - a national model for Leadership, Practice, Education, and Research



Evelyn Anderson, RN takes blood pressure during a Santa Rosa MRC back to school clinic.



"I received the statement from my lender showing the credit! WOW! What a huge help that is!"
-Casey Meddock, RN

workers. Automated license verification through the Registry eliminated the need for manual verification of over 3,700 health care volunteers.

Nursing Student Loan Forgiveness Program - A program that provides funds to assist in the repayment of nursing education loans. It serves as a recruitment and retention incentive to encourage qualified persons to work in areas of the state where critical nursing shortages exist. The office reviews and processes applications, monitors renewals and disbursements, and provides leadership to increase the number of applicants, enrollees, and base funding. Funds made it possible to assist 263 nurses working in designated priority employment sites and facilities during the fiscal year.

Special Needs Shelter (SpNS) Program - A standardized, comprehensive, county and regional approach to Special Needs Shelter operation that ensures continuity in services and quality care to vulnerable persons, caregivers, and staff. The Florida Department of Health, in coordination with county health departments and other partners is responsible for the operation and staffing of SpNS. The office provides leadership, planning, technical and operational guidance, training, evaluation, and support to the program and Regional Special Needs Shelter Consultants. The office supports a network of 140 shelters assuring statewide coverage.

Special Needs Shelter Interagency Committee - A committee established in accordance with Section 381.0303(5), *Florida Statutes* to address and resolve problems related to special needs shelters not addressed in the state comprehensive emergency medical plan and to consult on shelter planning and operations. The office provides staff and resources to support the committee, and plans and facilitates committee meetings. Partners from 26 groups representing emergency management, health, medical, and social service organizations are brought together to focus on sheltering needs of vulnerable populations.

Refresher Skills Course - A refresher course to provide technical skills needed to care for clients with special needs. The course was developed in response to the increasing demands and challenges facing public health nurses in emergency preparedness environments. The course is designed to maintain and enhance current skills required for sheltering response to better serve Florida's vulnerable population. Over 300 public health nurses were trained during the fiscal year.



This report presents a snapshot of achievements organized around **leadership, workforce development, and public health preparedness**. Effective activities and initiatives may support more than one function but are included in this report with their primary function.

“The Refresher Skills Course is a model for supporting disaster response needs of public health nurses in the field.”
-Sara Wilson,
RN, MSN



***Florida’s Office of Public Health Nursing,
a national model for Leadership, Practice, Education, and Research***

FISCAL YEAR 2007-2008 IN REVIEW

Home Care Training course released

August 2007

Web-based Florida Emergency Health, Volunteer Registry (FEHVR) launched

October 2007

Funding process for awarding funds to Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) sites established

October 2007

Public health nurse recruitment marketing campaign initiated

November 2007

Special Needs Shelter rule became effective (Chapter 64-3, FAC)

November 2007

Nursing Workforce Advisory Committee established

December 2007

Public health training collaboration and partnership with the Florida Public Health Institute developed

January 2008
February 2008

Alaska's Disaster Preparedness Team visited and received preparedness and sheltering consultation

March 2008

Nursing Student Loan Forgiveness Program (NSLFP) team recognized with Davis Productivity Award

April 2008

Nursing Preparedness Milestones courses completed and made available to department staff

May 2008

National Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing Annual Conference hosted

May 2008

Mission tracking feature of FEHVR initiated

May 2008

National model MRC Orientation Guide and on-line resource tool kit unveiled

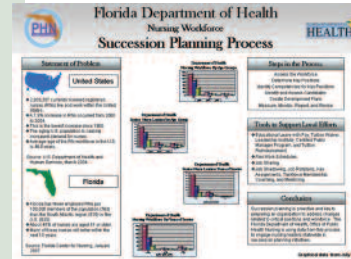
June 2008

Staff deployed to Iowa as part of emergency response public health team

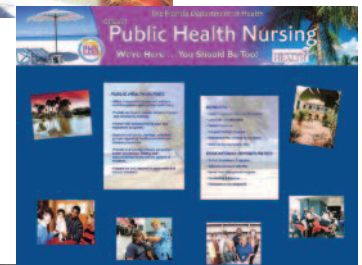
June 2008

NSLFP program achieved maximum participation

June 2008



Miami-Dade County
MRC in Action



Alaska Team
Visits Florida

LEADERSHIP

Leadership Roles and Responsibilities

- Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health.
- Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of public health services.
- Provide consultation and technical assistance to internal and external stakeholders and partners.
- Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.
- Foster partnerships to maintain the integrity of the profession and serve as the voice for all public health nurses.
- Advocate for and empower community public health nurses.

Following are highlights of fiscal year 2007-2008 leadership achievements.

Policy Development, Research, and Evaluation

- Provided support to the **Nursing Workforce Ad Hoc Advisory Committee** established by the department, under the direction of Governor Crist, to facilitate policy discussion and act as an advisory body to address the growing demand for an educated, qualified nurse workforce. The committee is a multidisciplinary group with representatives from state agencies, the legislature, hospitals, educational facilities, and partner associations. The committee is responsible for making recommendations to the Governor regarding strategies to address Florida's growing shortage of nurses.
- Participated in three conference calls with the Ad Hoc Committee to address critical health practitioner workforce issues and create policy recommendations.
- Developed and analyzed a survey for the Ad Hoc Committee to identify critical areas and possible actions to be taken.
- Performed analysis of statewide and county public health nurse workforce data to assess current needs and identify steps for succession planning. Data is collected every six months on overall nurse workforce, vacancy rate and senior nurse leader workforce and provided to state and county nursing leaders.
- Analyzed program need for policy, technical assistance, and guidance. Revised, developed, and issued procedures and guidelines for Special Needs Shelter planning, Medical Reserve Corps, credentialing of nurses to perform health assessments, and Nursing Strike Teams.

Consultation and Technical Assistance

- Established a nurse liaison network to provide a point of contact for technical assistance and consultation for each county health department, Children's Medical Services area office and central office unit. Consultants provided assistance and information on practice issues, standard operating guidelines, training needs, and recruitment.
- Provided consultation to legislative staff and department leaders in reviewing, analyzing, and making recommendations on proposed legislation and policy that could impact public health nursing.



"[OPHN] offers critical resources for county health departments ... This allows for a needed networking opportunity for new nursing leaders....It gave me a foundation to start my public health experience."
- Jody Smith RN, MBA, AASN Administrator, Wakulla CHD

"We look forward to more sharing of best practices...as we move forward to address the many health issues across our communities in Florida."

- Mary Hooshmand, RN, MS Exec Community Health Nursing Director, Children's Medical Services, S.E. Florida Region



"The connection I made with the Directors of Nursing from other states...has been very beneficial. I was able to see...that many of the problems faced in Florida are universal."

-Jean Munden, MPA, MPH Administrator, Alachua CHD

- Provided technical assistance and consultation to other states on Florida's approach to preparedness and sheltering. Assistance was provided to Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, New York, Tennessee, and Texas.
- Hosted and facilitated a visit from 12 members of Alaska's disaster preparedness team.
- Initiated a quarterly newsletter to share information, resources, and research on evidence based practice for public health nurses.
- Created the *Public Health Nursing Tips*, a monthly informational flyer to enhance public health nursing practice.

Partnerships

- Maintained an active role with the Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing, Florida Public Health Association, Florida Board of Nursing, Florida Center for Nursing and the Florida Nurses Association.
- Participated in committees and programs sponsored by the Florida Association of Public Health Nurses.
- Expanded and enhanced partnerships through internal and external collaborations. Partnerships include 29 MRC sites throughout Florida and partnering agencies such as the Department of Children and Families, Department of Elder Affairs, Agency for Health Care Administration, and Agency for Persons with Disabilities.
- Participated in U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Region IV credentialing committee for standardizing interstate support during large scale response.
- Collaborated with the Leon County Health Department to launch an Office of Public Health Nursing immunization initiative, "Protecting our Workforce." As a result, 203 employees from 10 state of Florida agencies were immunized.

Advocacy

- Presented at the 2007 **Healthcare Preparedness Meeting** in Washington D.C. on Florida's efforts in developing a Medical Reserve Corps and the Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals.
- Represented the state and presented a poster at the 2008 **National Medical Reserve Corps Conference**.
- Chosen to participate as 1 of 18 state teams in a national **Nursing Education Capacity Summit**. The initial meeting in Virginia provided a forum to address the nursing workforce shortage by focusing on strategic partnerships and resource alignment; the role of policy and regulation; increasing faculty capacity and diversity; and education redesign. The summit was the beginning of a year long technical assistance and mentoring relationship to help states develop and implement effective strategies for expanding nursing education capacity.
- Planned and hosted the annual **National Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing Conference**.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Workforce Development Roles and Responsibilities

- Build leadership and management opportunities to better prepare public health nurses for the future.
- Assure a competent public health and personal health care workforce especially in areas of the state where there are critical nursing shortages.
- Provide opportunities for improving skills and professional development.

Following are highlights of fiscal year 2007-2008 workforce development achievements.

Leadership Development

- Established priorities, revised agenda to meet identified need, and developed an evaluation for orientation sessions for new nursing directors, assistant directors, nursing supervisors, and other nurse leaders.
- Organized quarterly **Leader Orientations** attended by 17 new nursing leaders.
- Conducted monthly web based conference calls to collaborate and share information. An average of 43 public health nursing leaders participated each month.
- Convened an annual **Nursing Leaders Conference** to address policy, practice, and emerging issues. One hundred and twenty persons attended.
- Coordinated five regional **Facilitative Leadership Trainings** for department staff and preparedness partners. Excellent ratings were received from the 101 participants.
- Provided consultation and leadership to support the **Nurse Practice Council**, a body of public health nurses whose mission is to promote the advancement of public health nursing and support public health nursing practice standards.

Mentoring the Next Generation of Public Health Nurses

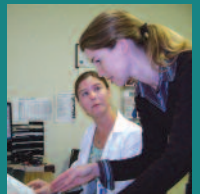
- Collaborated with the University of Florida to support the first of its kind graduate nursing practicum in public health nursing with a strong focus on policy development, program planning, and leadership.
- Facilitated a 244 hour practicum in Public Health Nursing Leadership with the University of Florida, College of Nursing Master of Science Program.
- Updated the affiliation agreement with Florida State University to meet the needs of the department and this academic partner. The agreement can serve as a model for collaboration with other educational institutions.
- Partnered with Florida State University to provide rotations, each semester, for students enrolled in an undergraduate nursing leadership course focused on public health nursing.

Professional Development and Continuing Education

- Streamlined the application process for continuing education and conducted a statewide training to introduce the department to the streamlined/user friendly process. Twenty-two persons attended.



*"Thank you for the wonderful PHN Leadership Orientation. I gained lots of new information."
-Gabriele Bloodworth,
Nursing Director,
Orange
CHD*



*"Orientation at the state level played a key part in my development as a leader."
-Jennifer Opalek,
Assistant Nursing
Director, Pinellas
CHD*





"Being a member of the Nurse Practice Council has given me the opportunity to participate in leadership activities and provide a voice for small county health departments."
- Jill Braxton, LPN
Holmes County Team Leader,
Nurse Practice Council

"Furthering my education...has been a lifelong desire...without the grant I would not have been able to pursue it."
-Denise Rosenberg,
BSN, RN

- Increased the number of county health departments using the office continuing education provider number by approximately 50%.
- Expanded use of the continuing education provider number to the Division of Disease Control and Office of Public Health Preparedness.
- Awarded more than 14,000 **Continuing Education** contact hours to 2,589 attendees through 66 approved nursing courses.
- Supported department policies and initiatives that encourage staff professional development. Initiatives relate to tuition waivers, educational leave with pay, and flexible work-schedules.
- Created a three-part **Public Health Nursing Competencies** professional development program that will be finalized, pilot tested, and released in fiscal year 2008-2009.
- Updated the department's **Orientation Modules** for public health nurses to include current information supporting public health practice. Revised modules were made available on the office web site. The following topics are covered:
 - Florida's History of Public Health
 - Florida Department of Health Overview
 - A day in the Life of Public Health
 - Philosophies of Public Health
 - Public Health Nursing

Recruitment and Retention

- Initiated a marketing campaign to highlight the advantages of being a public health nurse in Florida.
- Produced a marketing resource kit including a brochure, display, and sample print advertisements. Materials were distributed to assist counties recruit licensed professional nurses from Florida and other states to the field of public health nursing. Materials were designed to allow for customization to meet local needs.
- Provided contract management and administration for nine sub contracts through the **Florida Center for Nursing** to promote retention, improve work environment, and encourage targeted recruitment of men and minorities. Evaluation results and recommendations will be available after December 2008.
- Continued a partnership with NOVA Southeastern University College of Nursing to provide tuition assistance to nursing students. Funds were awarded to assist 97 students.



Nursing Student Loan Forgiveness Program

- Distributed over \$1 million to assist 263 nurses working in priority health care settings repay nursing education student loans.
- Received a Davis Productivity award for an improved customer service process which provides a more diverse pool of nurses from critical designated sites.
- Increased completed loan applications eligible for consideration by 250% over the previous year. The increase was a result of improvements made to the application process.
- Funded 100% of qualified applicants from the first four priority employer categories - State of Florida operated medical and healthcare facilities, public schools, Department of Health County Health Departments (including Children's Medial Services Area Offices), and federally sponsored community (migrant) health centers.

Recognition and Awards

- Streamlined, improved, and marketed the **Caring Hands Award** process for nominating nurses and members of nurse led teams who exemplify a significant commitment to public health.
- Presented Caring Hands Awards to 20 nurses recognized for their accomplishments, achievements, and contributions to the public or public health practices.
- Celebrated **Nurse Practitioner Week 2007** with a certificate of appreciation for nurse practitioners in public health settings.
- Celebrated **National Nurses Week 2008** with a Governor's proclamation and press release. Certificates of Appreciation were presented to all public health nurses.



"I am forever grateful for the financial assistance and support the Department of Health has provided us."
-Bruce Gamble, BSN, RN

"To have the state recognize the efforts of those in my field, and to assist in paying accumulated loans back is a marvelous thing."
-Michael Altman, BSN, RN

PUBLIC HEALTH PREPAREDNESS

Public Health Preparedness Roles and Responsibilities

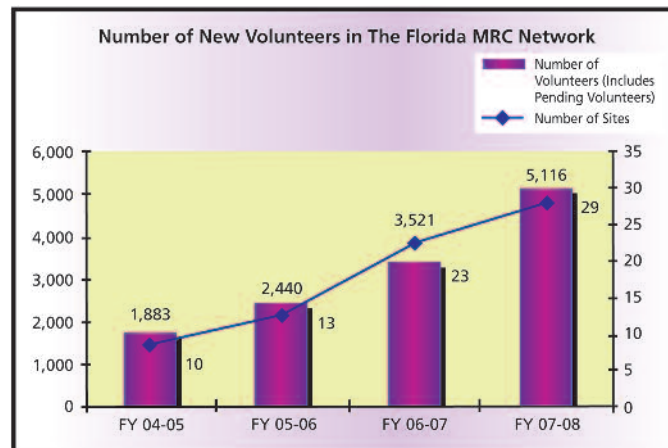
- Coordinate public health preparedness initiatives for effective disaster response.
- Support development of a fully prepared nurse workforce for all hazard response.
- Inform, educate, and empower people about health services before, during, and following emergencies.
- Assure adequate community care for vulnerable populations during and following emergencies.
- Support the state's Emergency Response Team, Emergency Support Function (ESF 8) - Health and Medical efforts.
- Provide leadership and management of the ESF 8 Logistics Staffing Unit.



Following are highlights of fiscal year 2007-2008 public health preparedness achievements.

Florida Medical Reserve Corps Network (MRC)

- Established a budget tracking system and initiated a Request for Financial Assistance process for awarding funds to non county health department MRC sites. Developed the funding process, forms, and evaluation criteria.
- Developed standard guidance and a memorandum of understanding for achieving clarity of state priorities.
- Created a web based resource **Toolkit** for developing capability, material sharing, and technical assistance for MRC volunteers and coordinators. The toolkit assembles an assortment of resources ranging from training resources to sample position descriptions.
- Developed and disseminated an orientation guide for new coordinators. The guide, along with the online toolkit, standardized and supplemented one-on-one orientation, and provided valuable resources for all coordinators.
- Increased the number of sites from 21 in 2004 to 29 in 2008. Sites now cover 56 of Florida's 67 counties.
- Increased the number of pre-identified, trained, credentialed volunteers.



- Provided technical assistance and leadership development for coordinators through monthly conference calls and free training opportunities on leadership skills. Fourteen coordinators attended Facilitative Leadership training with others scheduled to attend in the new fiscal year.
- Completed 14 individual MRC site technical assessments with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Region IV MRC Coordinator.
- Established subcommittees of coordinators to develop state action plans for credentialing, recruiting, training, and retaining volunteers.
- Fostered partnerships by promoting and discussing MRC during U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Region IV conference calls, Florida Department of Health conference calls, and the department's annual Nursing Leaders Conference.



Duval MRC recognizes volunteers. "The Florida Medical Reserve Corps is made up of volunteers committed to the causes of our communities."
-Juan Rodriguez, Coordinator

- Established partnerships with the department's Bureau of Radiation Control and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to recruit and refer professionals to MRC sites through the Florida Emergency Health Volunteer Registry.

Florida Emergency Health Volunteer Registry (FEHVR)

- Tested and launched the Registry as a volunteer management tool for the **Florida Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Network** and other preparedness volunteers. The Registry ties Florida to the national Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals.
- Conducted regional trainings on using the Registry for volunteer management. All local site administrators completed training.
- Linked the **Registry** with the state licensing board system resulting in automatic license verification. The process eliminated the need for manual verifications by site administrators saving approximately 6,550 hours. The annual savings in time was at least \$163,750.
- Created a link for recruiting MRC volunteers from the state licensing boards' application and renewal process. This link was the source of 652 new MRC volunteers.
- Imported all prior MRC volunteer data to the Registry making it the single statewide vehicle for volunteer recruitment, management, and license verification.
- Initiated a mission tracking feature of the Registry for tracking MRC volunteers during missions. Provided regional mission tracking training.
- Conducted two mission tracking exercises. All local site administrators participated in an exercise.
- Established a partnership with the Florida Medical Association to link the Registry to its web site.



Visiting public health nurses provide a vital service to the community, reaching those patients whose illnesses confine them to their homes.

Preparedness Coordination

- Led logistic staffing for Florida's Emergency Support Function 8 (ESF 8) following Iowa floods. Logistics staffing responsibilities included recruitment, mobilization, deployment, and demobilization of 25 personnel to impacted areas. One community assessment team, staffed with Florida Public Health Nurses, performed rapid household surveys, and provided referral information and educational materials.
- Established a **Nursing Strike Team** Pilot Project to focus on community health assessment and response. The project will fill an identified gap by adding nursing knowledge and skills to existing disaster response strike force teams. Identified three pilot test sites for creating specialized assessment response teams that can be deployed following a disaster
- Developed standard operating guidelines for Nursing Strike Teams including roles and responsibilities, asset typing, training requirements, forms, and tools.
- Coordinated with the department's Division of Emergency Medical Operations (DEMO) by participating on cross agency strategic planning teams. Assumed leadership roles on the Community Preparedness/Mass Care Capability, Mass Prophylaxis, and Responder Safety and Health Capability Teams.

"The [Refresher Skills] course... gave our nurses a strong base to build confidence and credibility in this important responsibility we own."

*- Patrick Johnson
RN-C, MPA,
Administrator,
Flagler CHD*



Preparedness Education and Training - Professional

- Developed and deployed web based emergency response **Public Health Nursing Preparedness Milestones** training courses for Awareness, Operations, and Leadership on core competencies for public health workers.
- Provided leadership and supported the development of a disaster **Refresher Skills Course** for the department's public health nurses and community partners. The course was designed to ensure the level of skills and services provided in a disaster.
- Deployed the disaster Refresher Skills Course statewide. Three hundred health professionals attended 19 training sessions.
- Provided contract management, oversight, and marketing for the University of Miami's Center for Disaster and Extreme Event Preparedness Center (DEEP) training in Psychological First Aid. Facilitated the participation of 974 department employees and partners.
- Assisted and supported Regional Special Needs Shelter Consultants in their delivery of continuing education credit, technical level training sessions in **Special Needs Shelter Management**. The course is for any public health worker involved in the management of a shelter. Fifty-eight persons participated during the fiscal year.
- Assisted and supported Regional Special Needs Shelter Consultants in the delivery of continuing education credit, **Special Needs Operations Training** sessions. The course is for any public health worker with a role in the activation, operation, and deactivation of Special Needs Shelters. Three hundred and sixty-four persons participated during the fiscal year.

Preparedness Education and Training – Community

- Developed a **Home Care Course** in English and Spanish to assist communities in preparing persons to provide basic care for themselves and their families at home.
- Distributed the Home Care Course to all county health departments and community partners and made it available on the office web site. The course generated considerable interest. The web site received almost 1,000 visitors. Regional Special Needs Shelter Consultants distributed 125 English and 187 Spanish manuals and compact discs. The course was adopted by Nova Southeastern University for use in its Nursing School Curriculum.

Special Needs Shelter Program

- Planned and conducted two meetings of the **SpNS Interagency Committee** and sub-committees bringing together partners from 26 agencies and interested groups. The committee addressed problems and consulted on planning and operations for sheltering vulnerable populations.
- Updated the 2007 **Alternate Site Discharge Planning Resource Guide** to assist state and local officials with the placement of special needs shelter clients displaced due to a disaster. The guide has been made available to all partners.
- Provided oversight for 140 Special Needs Shelters in 58 of Florida's 67 counties.
- Provided leadership, training, and support to Regional Special Needs Shelter Consultants through conference calls and face-to-face meetings.
- Completed rule promulgation for a Special Needs Shelter Rule (64-3, *Florida Administrative Code*). The rule provides definitions and eligibility criteria for access to SpNS and identifies standards for environment and services.
- Developed and issued technical assistance guidelines on Special Needs Shelter Planning.



"I think it's an excellent tool, all wrapped up and ready to go! Having the PowerPoint and everything else to go along was great."

Preparing persons to care for themselves can lessen the strain on medical facilities and practitioners during a disaster.



Public Health Nurses provide vital services to the community.

LOOKING AHEAD CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

*F*lorida faces a growing shortage of licensed nurses that impacts all aspects of health care. The Florida Center for Nursing projects the current state shortage of 11,000 registered nurses could increase to 52,000 by 2020. The present rate of new graduates will not meet this need. The field of Public Health Nursing faces additional barriers. Public health nursing faces competing demands from other practice settings with more favorable salaries in the private sector. Many public health nurses and nursing leaders are retiring. Currently 21% of Florida's public health nurses and 26% of senior nurse leaders are aged 60 or older. At the same time the workforce is aging, Florida's population is aging thereby increasing the need for health care and health care providers.

During Fiscal Year 2008-2009, the office will continue to promote and advocate for public health nursing excellence in practice and will continue focusing on leadership, workforce development, and preparedness initiatives.

Specific goals for the year include:

*A*dvocating for policies, strategies and support for nurses and nurse educators based on current data to assure a competent nursing workforce. It is essential to assess the current workforce and identify next steps for the implementation of succession planning strategies. Strategies are needed to find ways to capture organizational knowledge and expertise that could be lost as experienced public health nursing leaders retire.

*P*romoting national and statewide venues for recruitment marketing and finding new initiatives to meet the workforce shortage.

*M*eeting the challenge of supporting the education of new nurses to work in priority health care settings in the face of a reduction in available funding for the Nursing Student Loan Forgiveness Program. The number of eligible nurses that require program funds far exceeds the annual Trust Fund deposits that fund the program.

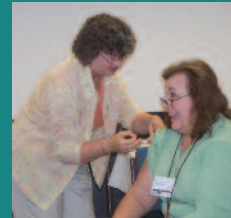
*E*nhancing the SpNS program by improving partnerships, identifying gaps, and improving the sheltering process and care capabilities for vulnerable populations. Areas targeted for process improvement include access to shelters, staffing, training, communication, diverse language needs, and meeting needs of persons with disabilities.

*I*ncreasing the number of qualified and prepared SpNS volunteers by identifying and incorporating volunteers such as the Medical Reserve Corps, student volunteers, and retired community members.

*E*xpanding capabilities of the Florida Emergency Health Volunteer Registry by updating credentialing, integrating with the Florida Department of Health Emergency Notification System (FDENS), and importing other volunteer groups.

*I*dentifying, assembling, and training Nurse Strike Teams in the three pilot sites and improving the value and efficiency of Nurse Strike Team data collection.

*E*xpanding the Home Care Course to produce training materials targeted for children and mature adults.



Providing valuable services that extend and enrich lives.



FLORIDA'S CHAMPIONS FOR HEALTHY PEOPLE IN HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

The Florida Department of Health, Office of Public Health Nursing could not achieve any of its goals without the dedicated and professional nurses and health care volunteers who are the heart of the Public Health system.



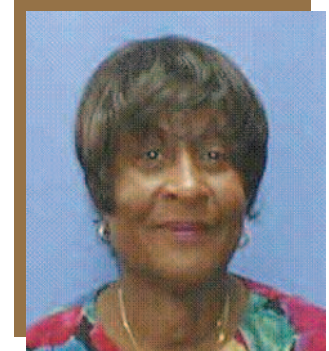
Marjorie Kendall, RN
*Regional SpNS Consultant,
Miami-Dade County*

"I have been privileged to experience the collaborative efforts at the local, regional, and state level. I have expanded my working relationship with community partners, which in turn, has enabled me to contribute in the improvement of the Special Needs Shelter Program in my region."



Juanita Garcia Barnhart, RN
*Hendry County Health
Department*

"As a public health nurse I focus on methods that prevent health issues in our community. In the schools, I understand that I am nurturing and caring for the most vulnerable population. Our sweet children, our future leaders...I am hopeful that my actions as a Public Health Nurse will in some way have a positive impact on a young life."



Alice Manley, ARNP, BSN
*Polk County Health
Department*

"Public health nursing has been an important part of my professional life for over 50 years. It has enabled me to serve three generations of families in my Polk County community and to inspire many young women in their career choices, with over 10 becoming nurses. Public health nursing defines who I am and what I do."

VOLUNTEERS SUPPORT THE PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM

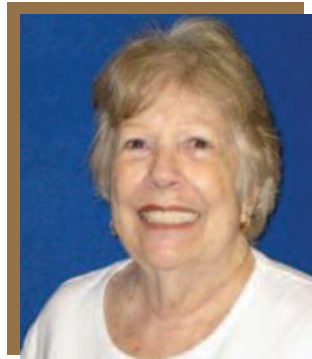
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lorida is fortunate to have incredibly dedicated individuals who perform selflessly.



Maralee Sartain
Escambia County

"As an MRC Volunteer, my actions can help provide an increased readiness for our community to respond to a disaster or other emergency."



Jean Pet, RN
Martin County MRC

Jean joined the Martin County MRC because she wanted to "rejoin the world."



Janet Kratzer, ARNP
Martin County MRC

"It is a great way to serve the community. It gets me out of the house and I love the people I work with."

For more information on the Office of Public Health Nursing or any of its initiatives visit,
www.doh.state.fl.us/PHNursing/index.html

Resources

Florida Department of Health
<http://www.doh.state.fl.us>

MQA Board of Nursing
<http://www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa/nursing>

Florida Association of Public Health Nursing
<http://www.faphn.org>

Florida Public Health Association
<http://www.fpha.org>

State of Florida's official website
<http://myflorida.com>

Florida Emergency Health Volunteer Registry
www.servfl.com

Florida Department of Health
Office of Public Health Nursing, HDSHPHN
4052 Bald Cypress Way, C27
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1711
Phone: (850) 245-4746
Fax: (850) 245-4747
Email: PublicHealthNursing@doh.state.fl.us

Public Health Nursing

Public health nurses fulfill a unique role in promoting healthier communities. For more than 100 years, public health nursing has been a vital force in protecting and promoting health and preventing disease and injury among America's citizens and visitors. Today, in Florida, there are more than 2,800 public nursing staff in 67 county health departments, 21 area Children's Medical Services offices, and one state hospital.





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