

the health advisor

DOH Mission:

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

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florida's perinatal HIV prevention program delivers; state sees dramatic drop in HIV-infected infants

With proper prenatal care and treatment, the perinatal HIV transmission rate can be reduced from 30 percent to approximately 2 percent.

DOH Bureau of HIV/AIDS

SERVICE PROVIDERS THROUGHOUT FLORIDA ARE SEEING POSITIVE RESULTS FROM THEIR WORK TOWARD REDUCING THE INCIDENCE OF BABIES BEING BORN HIV INFECTED. The number of pediatric HIV cases is greatly reduced and new pediatric AIDS cases are rare.

The number of reported HIV-infected infants in Florida decreased significantly from 33 born in 2001, to 17 born in 2002, 13 born in 2003 and six born in 2004. The declining number is a success influenced by the collaborative efforts of all who work with pregnant women in the state.

The success of Florida's perinatal HIV prevention program can be attributed to multiple sources, including an increase in HIV testing rates for pregnant women, greater awareness among health and social service professionals of the availability of treatment to prevent mother-to-child transmission, assistance for high-risk pregnant women in accessing health services, and a statewide commitment by community members to address a preventable disease.

Without appropriate medical therapy, the risk of an HIV-infected pregnant woman passing the HIV virus to her infant is about 30 percent. Infection can occur at any time during pregnancy, and it can occur through breastfeeding. With proper prenatal care and treatment, however, the perinatal transmission rate can be reduced to approximately 2 percent. Therefore, it is important that all pregnant women access early and ongoing prenatal care and be tested for HIV. Florida law requires all pregnant women to be counseled and offered HIV testing at the initial prenatal visit and again at 28–32 weeks gestation. Law also requires health care professionals to offer HIV testing to women appearing at labor and delivery with no record of an HIV test during pregnancy.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Florida Department of Health recommend that all hospital labor and delivery units implement rapid HIV testing for women of unknown status.

Florida's perinatal HIV prevention program includes a number of initiatives that target health care professionals and pregnant women. The Targeted Outreach for Pregnant Women Act (TOPWA) program, established in 1999, is available in 12 counties. TOPWA providers work with at-risk pregnant women and assist them to access early and ongoing prenatal care, offer free pregnancy and HIV testing, and link clients to needed health and social services. Pregnant women also receive information on HIV/AIDS and perinatal prevention through the state social marketing campaign, which has included radio ads and public service announcements, billboards, newspaper ads, bus shelter ads and photo novellas. The perinatal program also includes a comprehensive provider education component through the Florida/Caribbean AIDS Education and Training Center at the University of South Florida Center for HIV Education and Research in Tampa. Statewide trainers work with prenatal care providers and hospital labor and delivery units to offer staff training and policy development on Florida's HIV testing laws and the latest treatment recommendations for HIV-infected pregnant women.

In Gainesville, the University of Florida Department of Health Policy and Epidemiology has evaluated several of the perinatal program initiatives and conducted studies on HIV testing rates and hospital policies and practices.

Finally, the commitment of community members working in the fields of HIV/AIDS prevention and maternal and child health have contributed greatly to the success of the perinatal program through the dissemination of HIV/AIDS information to pregnant women, raising awareness of HIV/AIDS and perinatal prevention among program staff, and the creation of community and state-level interagency linkages and client referral systems.

The latest data from the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), which interviews women shortly after the birth of their babies, shows Florida's 2002 HIV-testing rate for pregnant women at a high of 90.2 percent, a 4 percent increase over the previous year.

For more information about Florida's perinatal HIV prevention program, including contact information for TOPWA program providers, visit the Bureau of HIV/AIDS website, Women and Children: The Perinatal HIV Program at www.doh.state.fl.us/disease_ctrl/aids/Perinatal/PERINATAL.html.

Frances Walker, Perinatal HIV Prevention Coordinator, Bureau of HIV/AIDS

florida's first-ever public health water summit makes Big Splash in Orlando

BRISK WEATHER WAS NO MATCH FOR THE HOT ISSUES THAT BUBBLED OVER AT THE INAUGURAL PUBLIC WATER CONFERENCE IN ORLANDO SHORTLY AFTER THE NEW YEAR. A wave of issues took center stage, and featured topics ranging from bioterrorism and bacterial tracking to shrinking water resources and the Florida Springs Initiative.

The Public Health Water Summit marked Florida's effort to build on successes and leverage resources at the local, state, and national levels in the water safety arena. More than 200 people attended, including county government officials, environmental program managers, environmental health advocates, public works engineers, academic researchers and state agency representatives.

Strategic collaboration was the underlying theme as the conference highlighted the partnership between host agencies Department of Health and Department of Environmental Protection. The event was a natural progression for the two state public health powerhouses that regularly link with federal partners to protect health and safety of all those in Florida.

"Our water resources and infrastructure face numerous challenges, ranging from the effects of the built environment to the threat of intentional contamination," said DOH Secretary John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A., M.P.H., a keynote speaker at the event. "This conference was a phenomenal

success as we linked real solutions with our many partners."

While there are annual conferences focused on water, this collaborative event was dedicated to the health aspects of water safety. Strategic plans and policies were the focus for day one, followed by broader environmental health initiatives day two. Featured breakout sessions included drinking water, recreational water, waterborne diseases, wastewater, and contamination sites.

The 38 presentations included speakers and excerpts from "Water's Journey: Hidden Rivers of Florida," a film about the state's groundwater and springs made by renowned cave diver and exploration filmmaker Wes Skiles. Keynote speakers included Ben Grumbles, administrator of the Office of Water of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Dr. Tom Sinks, deputy director of the National Center for Environmental Health/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Conference coordinator Bart Bibler, chief of the Department of Health's Environmental Health Division/Water Programs Bureau, said the event strengthened interagency teamwork for prevention, protection and prompt response efforts.

It also helped build awareness and will help keep water issues at the forefront of the state's list of priorities. Evaluation Surveys after the conference provided positive feedback, including many requests for a similar event next year.

DOH Division of Environmental Health

pasco CHD markets free HIV testing for Valentines because: it's better to know

In 2003, the latest figures available, county public health departments in Florida performed 301,461 HIV tests. Of those tests, 2.2 percent came back positive.

Because Valentine's Day is associated with love and love partners, Pasco's HIV Prevention team says the appropriateness of the HIV outreach on this day is evident and has been successful.

CALL IT PUBLIC HEALTH WITH A TWIST—OR MAYBE WITH CHOCOLATES AND ROSES. Either way, the day when Cupid's arrow comes in for a landing, health workers at Pasco County Health Department know it's an opportunity to connect love with awareness about one's HIV status.

February 14 is a busy one for the Pasco CHD's HIV Prevention Program team, and this past Valentine's Day was no different. They had contacted the media, distributed flyers to government offices and school nurses to announce free HIV screenings available on the day set aside to say, "I Love You." And what a better way to say it, health workers say, than to know.

The program was initiated in 1992 by Health Services representative Patricia Burjony. This year, she tested 24 men and women.

The HIV Prevention Program offers HIV tests throughout the year, using mainly mouth swabs for initial screening, and blood draws for a definitive result. The initial test usually costs about \$20. Results are available about two weeks after a screening.

Health workers see people in a client-centered, confidential and nonjudgmental atmosphere. Pre and post-test counseling are an integral part of the screening.

If a person tests positive for HIV, the CHD offers treatment through its clinic or will refer clients elsewhere. Staff also assesses their clients' risk factors, and refers them as necessary to clinics covering hepatitis, tuberculosis, domestic violence and prenatal and family care.

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Because Valentine's Day is associated with love and love partners, Pasco's HIV Prevention team says the appropriateness of the HIV outreach on this day is evident and has been successful. **Vee Dayton, Pasco County Health Department**

CHD initiative improves wellness at okaloosa county

IN OCTOBER 2003, OKALOOSA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT BEGAN AN INITIATIVE TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR THOSE EMPLOYED IN THE COUNTY THAT HAS SO FAR PROVEN TRUE THAT HEALTHY EMPLOYEES ARE HAPPIER ONES.

It began with reviewing CHARTS data when CHD staff found that among the employed population, 76 percent did not eat five fruits and vegetables a day, 59 percent were overweight or obese, 21 percent had high cholesterol, 15 percent had high blood pressure, and heart disease was the number one killer in the county. It was clear a wellness initiative needed to focus on the county's employed population.

We also decided to seek "Well County" designation through the Wellness Council of America (WELCOA). In order to achieve this designation from the the Florida affiliate, the Wellness Council of Florida, we needed to enlist at least 20 worksites that would become designated as Well Workplaces, and we needed to ensure that 20 percent of the county's employed population worked for a designated Well Workplace.

Okaloosa CHD is working toward a Well Workplace designation, and staff is helping many worksites in Okaloosa achieve this designation. Eleven worksites were among the original Well Workplace venues to sign on to the Well County Project in January 2004. Ten additional worksites joined the venture in February 2005.

The evidence is overwhelming that workplace wellness programs improve employee health and foster healthier lifestyles. Okaloosa County Health Department has seen first hand the benefits of developing an employee wellness program and working toward the Well Workplace designation. Our worksite, with approximately 120 employees, has lost more than 324 pounds, and the number of employees who have high blood pressure and high cholesterol has decreased. Additionally, absenteeism rates have declined.

Other worksites participating in the Well Workplace model have results from their employees ranging from a decrease in the number of employees who smoke to weight loss.

The success of the wellness program is directly related to leadership. Okaloosa County governmental and business leaders have recognized the importance of fostering a healthy workforce, and they continually encourage employees to focus on enhancing their own quality of life. And overall, healthier employees lead to a healthier community.

Gina Holmes, Wellness Coordinator/Senior Health Educator, Okaloosa County Health Department

newborn screening program expands testing to include more than 30 disorders

ON FEBRUARY 1, THE STATE'S NEWBORN SCREENING PROGRAM BEGAN TESTING FOR MORE THAN 30 DISORDERS INSTEAD OF JUST FIVE IN AN EFFORT TO IMPROVE DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF SEVERAL SERIOUS CONDITIONS.

The disorders, while rare, pose the serious risk of a lifetime of health problems if untreated, according to Health Secretary Agwunobi. He says the expansive testing of the state's newest citizens serves as an important foundation for a lifetime of wellness.

The expansion follows the recommendations of the Infant Screening Task Force and requires no new equipment to be placed in hospitals.

Children's Medical Services and the Bureau of Laboratories provide the testing and follow-up care to all newborns in the state free of charge to parents. The test is a simple heel stick at 48 hours of age. The program tests for PKU, Hypothyroidism, Galactosemia, CAH, and Sickle Cell, whose untreated effects range from possible retardation to death of the affected child. The 25 additional tests include fatty acid oxidation disorders such as MCAD, Biotinidase deficiency, amino acid and organic acid disorders.

Newborn Screening seeks to quickly return the results to the newborn's hospital and physician. By treating these diseases early, the department hopes to promote better infant health and to lower costs associated with the long-term care of untreated children.



**resources in public
health—learning
without boundaries**

The Office of Performance Improvement (HPI) is the main venue for department wide resources geared toward and designed for personal and professional development.

The variety of skill building, training and educational opportunities available won't take you away from the office. The Distance Learning Network allows employees to attend satellite broadcasts. Other educational opportunities are available through Intranet or the videotape library. Online health journals provide free and valuable information on current public health research and more.

Tools are available as part of a larger performance management system. Quality Tips, HPI's online resource sheets, create new ideas for performance improvement. Layers of additional resources for each Quality Tip give additional information on a quality topic. ProgrESS creates ideas for taking Employee Satisfaction Survey data results and translating the data into strategies.

Need specific help? Consultation is just a phone call away.

These resources and more can be found on the Office of Performance Improvement page of the DOH Intranet or by calling (850) 245-4007 or SunCom205-4007.

Pasco CHD: achieving excellence in public health nutrition

ONE OF THE CHALLENGES WE FACE IN PUBLIC HEALTH IS ENSURING A WELL-TRAINED WORK FORCE PREPARED TO MEET THE UNIQUE NEEDS OF OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITIES. This is particularly relevant in the area of public health nutrition where it has been difficult to recruit and retain Public Health Nutritionists.

It is well established that diet has a significant impact on disease at all stages of the life cycle. Dietary factors are associated with many of the leading causes of death and contribute substantially to the burden of preventable illness. Consequently nutrition related concerns and objectives are always an important component of any efforts at the national or state level to address disease prevention and treatment. To be achieved, these objectives require the coordinated efforts of a public health team, which includes a public health nutritionist (PHN). The PHN is a necessary team member in resolving complex community-based nutrition related problems. This health professional provides services for migrants, the Women, Infants and Children program, the elderly nutrition program, and a variety of community based chronic disease prevention and treatment programs. The PHN

plays an active role in health promotion and prevention but must also be prepared to address prevention at the tertiary level.

Directly responding to the shortage of PHNs, the Pasco County Health Department Nutrition Division created a dietetic internship program and submitted an application to The American Dietetic Association, Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education for the accreditation of this program. The program was approved and accredited until 2007.

In order to become a registered dietitian, an individual needs to obtain a Bachelor's degree in nutrition and then complete an accredited dietetic internship program to become eligible to sit the national exam for registration as a dietitian. Unlike the university and hospital based internship programs with a clinical focus, the Pasco County internship includes clinical practice experiences as well as experiences in a public health setting. The program focuses on the unique skills needed to manage nutrition care for population groups across the lifespan. In addition to the required training to prepare graduates to manage patients with complex medical conditions and provide medical nutrition therapy (MNT), the curriculum includes training in community assessment and evaluation, program development, nutrition surveillance and monitoring, policy development and participation in a variety of intervention programs. Interns are further prepared to create prevention and promotion material that is appropriate for varied educational levels and ethnic groups.

Eighteen interns are accepted each year from universities in Florida and across the nation. The availability of a part-time option allows the participation of non-traditional students for this very intense, 8-month program. Although the main office of the internship is in Pasco County, interns are also placed at regional sites in the Health Departments in Miami/Dade, Jacksonville and Palm Beach.

To date, the internship has produced 150 graduates—many of whom are currently working in Public Health Nutrition Departments around the state. The internship continues to receive the strong support of the State WIC and Nutrition department and local WIC programs in Florida. Many community partnerships, including at hospitals, research centers, diabetes and dialysis centers, pediatric facilities and varied community based programs have provided supervised practice opportunities for interns as well.

In May 2004, the program celebrated 10 years existence. Deputy State Health Officer Dr. Bonita Sorensen was the main speaker and had the opportunity to encourage graduates and promote our mission to pursue excellence in our efforts to train the next generation of public health nutritionists.

Leslene Gordon, Co Director of Dietetic Internship Program, Pasco County Health Department

note your notable colleagues

MANY EMPLOYEES HAVE RECEIVED RECOGNITION BY HAVING THEIR WORK PUBLISHED IN ACADEMIC OR PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS. The Notable Colleagues Intranet site is an opportunity for published work to be shared within the department. Abstracts that were selected for national conferences are needed for the Notable Colleagues web page as well. Abstracts, for posters or oral presentations, along with published journal articles, offer best practice models that can improve the department's overall effectiveness. The Notable Colleagues website was created as a venue to share and access this important information.

Please help the department celebrate and recognize employees' professional contributions by submitting published articles. For more information, call Bonnie Gaughan-Bailey in the Office of Performance Improvement at (850) 245-4007, SunCom 205-4007.

people in public health

project management office receives best IT governance structure award

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S PROJECT MANAGEMENT OFFICE RECEIVED THE BEST IT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AWARD IN MARCH 2005 by the International Quality and Productivity Center's IT Financial Management Institute. The award recognizes that IT Governance directly contributes to the overall success of the organization and the strategic plan for future development.

regional CMS medical director appointed deputy secretary and deputy state health officer for CMS

PROVEN LEADER IN CHILDREN'S HEALTH CARE IN FLORIDA JOSEPH J. CHIARO, M.D., WAS APPOINTED DEPUTY SECRETARY AND DEPUTY STATE HEALTH OFFICER FOR CHILDREN'S MEDICAL SERVICES (CMS) EFFECTIVE JAN. 28, 2005.

In his new position, Chiaro directs the nation's most comprehensive service network for children with special health needs. Prior to this appointment, Chiaro served as regional CMS medical director for Brevard, Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties.

Chiaro also is medical director for Camp Boggy Creek and Shepherd's Hope, Inc. He holds a courtesy appointment as clinical associate professor for the Department of Pediatrics at the University of Florida. He's a graduate of the University of Florida medical school and pursued a pediatrics internship with Charlotte Memorial Hospital in Charlotte, NC, and a pediatrics residency at the University of Florida.

Prior to joining the Department of Health in 1996, Chiaro worked in the Orlando Regional Healthcare System and served for four years as Chairman of the Department of Pediatrics at the Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children and Women. He is a past chairman of the Central Florida Chapter of the March of Dimes and also worked with Hospice of Central Florida for five years.

wells to lead biomedical research program and cancer council

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH'S OFFICE OF STATEWIDE RESEARCH IN JANUARY ANNOUNCED THE SELECTION OF CHUCK WELLS, M.S., C.H.E.S., AS PROGRAM COORDINATOR FOR THE JAMES AND ESTHER KING BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH PROGRAM, THE CENTER FOR UNIVERSAL RESEARCH TO ERADICATE DISEASE (CURED), AND THE FLORIDA CANCER COUNCIL.

The Biomedical Research Program is a multi-million dollar program that awards research grants to Florida scientists studying the prevention and cure of tobacco-related illnesses. Since 2001, the program has sponsored 64 projects.

In addition to managing and improving the Biomedical Research Program, Wells will take the lead in establishing CURED and the Florida Cancer Council, which the Legislature established in 2004.

Prior to this new position, Wells was a program administrator with the department's Medical Quality Assurance in Testing Services. Wells has a Masters degree in health education and is a Certified Health Education Specialist (C.H.E.S.). He has extensive experience in program start-up, project management, and working with volunteer boards as a result of stints with the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, USA Cycling, and the Florida Chamber of Commerce Foundation.

pharmacy bureau chief appointed to national drug advisory coalition

THE DEPARTMENT'S STATEWIDE PHARMACEUTICAL SERVICES BUREAU CHIEF JERRY HILL, R.PH., RECENTLY WAS APPOINTED TO THE NATIONAL DRUG ADVISORY COALITION, A COMMITTEE OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BOARDS OF PHARMACY (NABP). In this position, Hill will lend his knowledge in helping set national pharmacy standards to help ensure patient safety as the coalition's primary responsibility is to revise and update the National Specified List of Susceptible Products.

The National Drug Advisory Coalition also is charged with drafting criteria that detail standards and guidance for the revision process. The NABP is the only professional association that represents the state boards of pharmacy in all 50 United States. It assists its member boards and jurisdictions in developing, implementing, and enforcing uniform standards for the purpose of protecting the public health.

Hill, who earned his Bachelor Degree in Pharmacy from Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama, has worked as a Community Pharmacist for 12 years and served in the Army Reserves as Chief Medic for the 400th M.P. Army Reserve Unit. He has served as bureau chief of Statewide Pharmaceutical Services for the department since 1991. The Bureau is responsible for enforcing Florida's Drug and Cosmetic Act, supplying pharmaceuticals to all 67 county health departments and administering pharmaceutical contracts.

see **PEOPLE IN PUBLIC HEALTH** back cover

deputy secretary humbert receives 2004 distinguished alumni torch award

DOH DEPUTY SECRETARY AND PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING DIRECTOR NANCY HUMBERT, A.R.N.P., M.S.N., was honored recently as the recipient of Florida International University's 2004 Distinguished Alumni Torch Award for the College of Health and Urban Affairs. The annual award recognizes FIU alumni who have excelled in leadership roles both in their personal and professional life after graduation.

Humbert received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Florida State University in 1976 and a Master of Science in Nursing from Florida International University in 1993. She has more than 20 years of experience in the field of nursing, including 25 years of experience in the field of public health, most recently coming from the Miami-Dade Health Department where she served as deputy administrator, managing 14 public health programs. She was appointed Deputy Secretary for Health and State Public Health Nurse in May 2004. In July 2004, Humbert added Women's Health Officer to her role with the department.

"Nancy's education and professional background make her a tremendous asset to the leadership of the department," said DOH Secretary John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A., M.P.H. "I am humbled by her charisma, leadership and passion for helping others. She truly embodies the spirit of the nursing profession."

state EMS medical director receives national recognition

STATE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES (EMS) DIRECTOR RICK SLEVINSKI, M.D., FACEP, RECEIVED THE 2004 RICHARD FERNEAU EMS MEDICAL DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR AWARD FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS (NAEMT)—a national association of EMTs and paramedics that represents paid and volunteer EMS workers worldwide.

The NAEMT award recognizes a medical director for leadership skills, dedication to improving the quality of emergency medical care, and innovation in system development and clinical care. Slevinski has been active in all aspects of the state's EMS development, including the long-term EMS planning. He co-authored the 2010 EMS Plan, which helps identify the issues related to the development of a statewide EMS system. He is also credited with writing the first law and training course on the use of automated external defibrillators in Florida.

Slevinski, a graduate from the University of Florida medical school in 1975, has served as the state's EMS medical director for 18 years, is an emergency physician at Sacred Heart Hospital in Pensacola, and is medical director for Florida Disaster Medical Assistance Team 1 (DMAT 1). He serves as president of the Florida Emergency Medicine Foundation and is a member of the board of directors of the Florida chapter of the American Heart Association, where he serves as chairman of the cardiac/stroke committee. Slevinski is a resident of Pace, Florida.

sumter's penny furphy selected FASN school nurse of the year

SUMTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT'S PENNY FURPHY, R.N., N.C.S.N., HAS BEEN CHOSEN SCHOOL NURSE OF THE YEAR BY THE FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL NURSES. The honor was bestowed in January at the association's annual conference in Orlando.

Furphy has worked as a school nurse in all the county's 13 schools at one time or another, mostly for health screenings and checking immunization records. She is primarily stationed at the Wildwood Middle School and the Wildwood High Schools in Wildwood.

Furphy also is Sumter CHD's first Nationally Certified School Nurse. She received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Gwynedd-Mercy College, Gwynedd, Pennsylvania in May 1972.

Penny has served as a volunteer as a Red Cross Water Safety Instructor for 20 years in New York and Pennsylvania and had Red Cross Disaster Training while in Indiana. She has been active with Hospice and was a volunteer grief counselor for about four years. Her future goals are to continue working in school health for at least three more years then retire—again—and stay involved in FNA. **Sumter County Health Department**

manley honored as FAPHN public health nurse of the year

LONGTIME POLK COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT NURSE ALICE MANLEY, A.R.N.P., RECEIVED THE FLORIDA ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES 2004 PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE OF THE YEAR AWARD. Manley has worked as a nurse with Polk CHD since September of 1956.

In 1973, Manley achieved the level of Pediatric Nurse Practitioner and became the first African American nurse at Polk CHD to hold the position of both nurse practitioner and school nurse. In 1974-75, she developed and initiated the first County Health Department Pediatric Assessment Course for nurses, which included coaching and mentoring. Manley is recognized for influencing many young women in their career choices and many have become nurses.

Manley's love of children and her community has helped fuel her efforts to address health disparities among the African American population. She currently serves as second vice president of the Lakeland Alumnae chapter of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and has spearheaded several community activities including health fairs, HIV/AIDS counseling and education opportunities, and voter registration drives. She is an active volunteer with the American Red Cross and the Care Center. She also co-founded a Nursing Guild at her church and is the chairman of its education committee. **June E. Mott, Polk County Health Department**

kokol takes lead in DOH communications

IRV B. "DOC" KOKOL WAS APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 17. Kokol assumed the role following Rob Hayes, who became public information administrator for the Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA) in September.

As communications director, Kokol will oversee the office that provides public information services including the coordination of media relations, health communication projects and public information campaigns.

Kokol has worked in the field of communications for over 30 years. Most recently, he has served as the Chief Operating Officer of White Hawk Pictures. His tenure with White Hawk Pictures included the management and strategic planning for the full service communications and production business, a nationally ranked top 100 company. He has held a range of positions, including Senior Vice President of Associated Industries of Florida Service Corporation.

He received his Bachelor of Science in Education from Florida State University in 1978 and is currently a Master of Science in Journalism candidate at Florida A & M University.

information technology director serves as NAPHIT president-elect

DOH CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER/DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DAVID TAYLOR WAS APPOINTED RECENTLY TO A TWO-YEAR TERM AS PRESIDENT-ELECT of the Executive Committee of The National Association for Public Health Information Technology (NAPHIT).

NAPHIT is a national non-profit organization that provides leaders in public health information technology console and recommendations at the federal, state and local levels of government. It was established to provide assistance to public health leaders in meeting challenges created by the events of September 11, 2001.

Taylor has been with DOH since March 2003 and has led the development of the department's strategic information technology picture. Under his leadership the department has developed an information technology governance process, standard project management practices, IT standards, the foundation for enterprise architecture and led the refocus of IT on business objectives.

His vision to make DOH IT stronger using best practices, quality objectives, and project management principles was easily identified as a great fit for NAPHIT. Taylor welcomes this new position as he joins the prestigious ranks shared by Mike Hill, Okeechobee County Health Department Administrator. **Susan Dilmore, Division of Information Technology**

MQA's recognition program continues to flourish

THE DIVISION OF MEDICAL QUALITY ASSURANCE'S (MQA) EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAM HAS CONTINUED TO GROW SINCE ITS INCEPTION IN THE SUMMER OF 2003. The program recently was highlighted at DOH's Quality Showcase and at the Region I Sterling Team Showcase competition.

The program recognizes meritorious achievement in semi-annual formal ceremonies, with awards going to deserving, dedicated, and progressive



The MQA COMPAS Team accepts achievement award

the advisor

Florida Department of Health
4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin #C-24
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1711

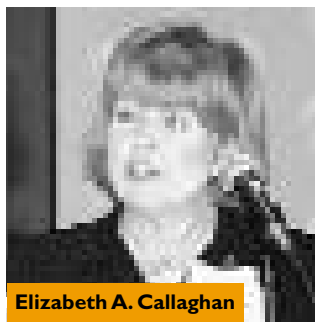
Please send stories & information for the May/June issue by e-mail to Juli Bergstrom-Wasson in the Office of Performance Improvement. The Health Advisor is available on the DOH Intranet & Internet websites.
Phone: (850) 245-4444, ext. 4013 Fax: (850) 922-0462 e-mail: Juli_Bergstrom-Wasson@doh.state.fl.us
Suncom: 205-4007 Suncom Fax: 292-0462

hernando CHD administrator receives national health officer award

HERNANDO COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATOR ELIZABETH A. CALLAGHAN, M.S., L.D., received the National Association of Local Boards of Health 2004 Health Officer of the Year Award.

DOH Deputy State Health Officer Bonnie Sorensen, M.D., M.B.A., nominated Callaghan for the award, which recognizes the outstanding contributions of time and energy in supporting state and local public health issues. The award was presented in July during the group's conference in Denver.

Callaghan joined the ranks of Florida public health professionals in 1978 where she served as a consultant and program director. She became Hernando CHD administrator in 1993. She received her Bachelor of Science from the University of Tennessee in 1973 and later earned her Masters of Science degree in 1975 at the same institution. She worked in public health in Indiana where she was a nutritionist and participant in the first national WIC medical study. **Kathleen Sauskojus, Hernando County Health Department**



Elizabeth A. Callaghan

MQA employees who have demonstrated MQA values and shown exceptional performance.

At the February ceremony, a standing-room only crowd recognized 54 nominated individuals and 17 teams. The 11 individuals and 2 teams winning awards were greeted by raucous cheers from coworkers and friends.

The recognition categories—leadership, quality improvement, customer focus, and teams—are aligned with the Sterling Criteria of management. Employee levels are aligned to the 2002 Broad Banding Levels, to ensure that employees with similar job responsibility are evaluated on an equal level (e.g. a manager is compared to other managers and not to a staff support or a professional employee). The five levels are manager, supervisor, professional, para-professional and staff support.

The nomination submission is web-based. The evaluation process, by which nomination data is compiled, is conducted through a series of data base functions. These processes are completely electronic, in keeping with the division's goal of a paperless operation. The electronic components were developed with existing personnel, equipment and software, meaning development required no additional costs.

For additional information about MQA's Employee Recognition Program, please contact Leo Paulson at Leo_Paulson@doh.state.fl.us or (850) 245-4444, ext. 3550 /SunCom: 205-4444, ext. 3550.

Bill Parizek, Division of Medical Quality Assurance