

Green River Gazette



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR...

Springtime is just around the corner...thank goodness! As I write this message, we have just concluded our response to Ice Storm, 2009. No doubt, this is the largest disaster to hit our area with all seven counties within the Green River District affected at the same time. The most consistent barrier was the lack of accessible communication. The costs were tremendous to all our counties, our citizens, and it was fairly significant for the health department as well. We do hope to recover some of the costs thru FEMA; however, some of the costs simply cannot be recovered. For example, the cost of employees actually working on the recovery effort (working in shelters, manning the phones, etc.) has a good chance of meeting the guidelines for recovery set forth by FEMA. Unfortunately, the loss of revenue (clinic services) is not a cost we can request to be recovered. GRDHD's estimated loss of revenue during this time is approximately \$100,000. As we move forward, we can certainly use this as a learning experience and will build upon these experiences to improve our response during the next event. Thanks to all of you who made the effort in each of your communities! - Debbie

KUDOS TO YOU!

Mark Sears received the 2009 Outstanding Sanitarian award at the annual Kentucky Association of Milk, Food, and Environmental Sanitarians -Clay Horton

A special thanks goes to each of the Green River district **MRC Volunteers!** During the ice storm, 29 volunteers worked over 900 hours assisting in shelters, delivering supplies, preparing foods and many other needed tasks. If you see one of our MRC volunteers, please say thanks! -Angela Woosley

National Public Health Week April 6-12, 2009

Building the Foundation for a Healthy America

The first week of April has been designated National Public Health Week (NPHW). This year, NPHW recognizes the role of Public Health in ensuring a healthy America. So, what is Public Health? Public health is your health. At GRDHD, our mission is to improve the quality of life by promoting, protecting and enhancing the well-being of the public. What does that mean? By educating ourselves and others, developing healthy habits, maintaining positive lifestyle changes, and by ensuring the safety of others, we can improve the foundation for the health and well-being of all people. Public health affects every facet of our lives. The people who help make us healthy are all around us: families, friends, neighbors, co-workers, and leaders. During NPWH, we challenge you to consider how this impacts

- ◆ Your home—Protecting and promoting health in our daily lives
- ◆ Your schools—Nurturing healthy students and educators
- ◆ Your workplace—Supporting healthy employees and healthy businesses
- ◆ Your community—Addressing the impact of where we live on our health
- ◆ Your nation—Building the foundation for a healthy America

For more information, please visit:

National Public Health Week www.nphw.org,

American Public Health Association www.apha.org

Association of Schools of Public Health: www.asph.org and

www.whatispublichealth.org and www.thisispublichealth.org

Diabetes Prevention and Control Program

Did you know that the most recent data from 2007 shows the Kentucky rate for diagnosed diabetes is the 9th highest in the nation at 9.9%, compared to a national rate of 8.1%? Over 445,200 (14.3% or 1 in 7) adult Kentuckians have diabetes, one third of whom are undiagnosed! **Diabetes is now considered an EPIDEMIC!!!**

The Kentucky Diabetes Prevention and Control Program (KDPCP) is a public health initiative consisting of a network of state, regional and local health professionals whose mission is to reduce new cases of diabetes as well as the sickness, disability and death associated with diabetes and its complications. Funding comes from the State as well as a small portion coming from the Centers For Disease Control.

Mary Tim Griffin, RD, LD, and Mary Ann Correll, RN, BSN, CDE are the regional representatives and cover the 7 county area for the Green River District Health Department. We provide education for professionals as well as people with diabetes, strive to improve access to quality care for those with diabetes through our patient assistance programs and advocate for people with diabetes by working with legislators.

We work with diabetes coalitions in our area by providing health screenings, helping with fundraising and presenting community prevention programs just to name a few. An increasingly important part of what we do is provide patient assistance programs through the local coalitions. Grants have been received to provide funding for supplies/medications and personnel. A diabetes case manager operating out of the REACH clinic is the result of the most recent grant received. These programs are managed through the diabetes program. Comprehensive classes are taught in the surrounding counties where there is no access to diabetes education.

We are increasing our efforts to collaborate with community partners. A recent example of this is the "Activating Citizens of Daviess County" (ACDC) program with the YMCA, UK Extension Office and others. A free Kidney Screening (valued at \$1000) is provided annually in 2 of our counties through our efforts with the National Kidney Foundation. We are involved in various professional diabetes organizations on a regional, state, and national level by either serving on committees or as officers.

Organizing professional diabetes education programs is another area where we provide services. In addition to our regional duties, we serve on or chair state KDPCP committees. We are involved in Diabetes Day at the Capitol—the state advocacy day, strategic planning, diabetes training and other committees on the State level.

The work is challenging but never boring because we interact with such a wide variety of people in so many different areas. There is just never enough time in every day!

We are also very glad to be a resource for anyone in the Green River District who may need diabetes materials or need a link to other resources. -Mary Tim Griffin



March 21 is American Diabetes Alert Day

March is National Nutrition Month

National Nutrition Month® is a nutrition education and information campaign created annually in March by the American Dietetic Association. The campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. Registered Dietitian Day, also celebrated in March, increases awareness of registered dietitians as the indispensable providers of food and nutrition services and recognizes RDs for their commitment to helping people enjoy healthy lives.

GRDHD's Nutrition Services staff will be sharing helpful nutrition tips with employees throughout March via email. We are also working with Information Systems to add a new feature to our website that will include nutrition information for the public.

Merritt Bates Thomas, R.D., L.D.



Travel Snack

With spring break approaching and nice weather ahead, more and more families will be hitting the road for weekend trips or family vacations. With a little planning, you don't have to break the bank or your healthy eating plan stopping at every gas station or fast food restaurant for a snack. Bringing along your own healthy snacks (and beverages) can make all the difference in the world. Here are some portable snack ideas to get your vacation off to a healthy start.

- ✓ Bottled water - You can even bring your favorite no-sugar-added powder packets to enhance the flavor (Crystal Light On The Go , Propel, etc.). True Lemon or True Lime are other options to add flavor without adding an artificial sweetener.
- ✓ Fruits - Apples, bananas and grapes are great, and the no sugar added apple sauce cups work well too.
- ✓ Fresh vegetables
- ✓ Whole grain cereal - You can pre-portion it out in to baggies for convenience.
- ✓ Peanut butter - Add it to a slice of whole grain bread (just don't forget to pack a plastic knife for spreading.)
- ✓ Popcorn
- ✓ Granola bar
- ✓ Nuts - Portion out 1-1/2 ounces in a baggie to help with portion control. Nuts are a great protein food, plus they contain fats that are good for your heart. You can also try roasted chickpeas. They are lower in fat and an excellent source of protein. Check out this link for a great recipe. <http://www.weightwatchers.com/food/rcp/index.aspx?recipeId=50326>
- ✓ For a sweet treat for the kids, try fruit snacks or even fun size candy bars. Just remember to pack some sugar-free gum to chew after the snack to help reduce the risk of cavities.



Before your next trip, sit down with your family and see what they would like to snack on. The options are limitless. Vanilla wafers, rice cakes, graham crackers, pudding cups, you name it and it's probably out there. Just beware that the prepackaged items do cost more than portioning it out yourself.

By getting everyone in involved, it opens the door to talking about the importance of healthy eating...something that is important for us all!

-Tricia Foster RD, LD

The Deep Freeze of 2009

The dynamic Environmental team did not miss a beat under the direction of Clay Horton, Environmental Director, during the recent ice storm. The office was without heat and electricity; however, running off the main generator we were able to access the computers and keep communications open with the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) set up in the district building. After de-icing the state vehicles, the team hit the streets visiting the shelters, accessing conditions and needs. As lists of required items were compiled and called into the office, the information was relayed to the EOC for action. Utilizing the extensive network available for resources; the EOC individuals were able to obtain a barrage of supplies for distribution. At one time there were over 500 individuals in shelters across Owensboro alone. With the partnership of the Environmental group and the professional individuals manning the EOC, many needs were addressed and acted upon. The

team was able to have 600 blankets brought in from Louisville to be distributed among the seven plus shelters as well as deliver and distribute a multitude of supplies and support. The grocery stores and restaurants received visits from the Environmental team as power was restored to assess situations at each location and ensure related items were properly destroyed if not kept at optimum temperatures. Their enforcement was necessary to assure the health and safety of the public. Out in the field the Environmental team encountered a mirage of challenges including distressed victims in shelters to individuals removing quarantined food from dumpsters at grocery stores.

The seven counties which comprise the Green River District were affected by the crippling storm. Communications were extremely handicapped as the EOC desperately attempted to build a command center allowing staff to report their assessments and needs.

With cell phone towers layered in ice, the radios and satellite phones were the only means of reaching isolated and sporadic areas. The determination of the individuals manning the EOC did not falter as hurdles were overcome and reports regarding outside areas were received. Individuals and supplies were transported to shelters across the district not only by the immediate teams but Frankfort as well.

The last several days have been stressful and exhausting; however, due to the level of professionalism within the Green River District Environmental Department and the individuals in the EOC, situations were diffused, emergencies were met, supplies were distributed and rewards were reaped and will continue to flow in throughout the next weeks as the recovery effort continues. KUDOS to the GRDHD and those who assisted in emergency and recovery issues during this historical storm...The Ice Storm of 2009. *-Terri Prewitt*



Americans spent about 9 billion dollars on bottled water last year, and we're adding more than 60 million plastic water bottles to the nation's landfills every day!

The solution? Buy reusable water bottles. For a few bucks you can reuse the water bottles again and again; plus you're helping make our Earth healthier. *-Connie Nalley*

Can you find the KDPCP symbol in this newsletter? If so, send an email indicating the precise location to any member of the newsletter committee. Winners will be chosen by random drawing and announced in the next issue of the Green River Gazette!.

The Heart of Public Health

It should come as no surprise that the vast majority of the GRDHD workforce is women. Specifically, Human Resources note that about 92% of our employees are women.

February was a month where the heart received significant attention. Women especially are targeted by the American Heart Association through its *Go Red for Women* and the national *Wear Red Day* campaigns to examine how lifestyle and attention to their vital numbers can affect their heart health.

As Public Health workers, daily we strive to embrace our mission of improving the public's quality of life and well-being and are often frustrated by the inattention of much of the public. However, public health remains determined to keep promoting healthy behavior and community awareness despite discouraging statistics and lack of resources. Personally, we have a challenge of facing everyday issues and stresses in daily life and finding time to keep our own mental and physical health moving in a positive direction. Whether we like it or not, working at an agency that promotes healthy lifestyles and personal responsibility for health maintenance, we are often viewed as behavioral examples of how to conduct a healthy life. As with all things human, public health

employees are not perfect. The public's reaction when indicators are obvious that lifestyle advice is coming from someone who needs to take their own advice to heart is something that all public health employees should consider. In addition, being Doctor Mom and chief family nutritionist are roles women embrace that have consequences or rewards for the entire family. This type of responsibility can be a daily burden for many. When you think and act in a heart healthy way for yourself, your example and personal benefits overflow throughout the family, your professional life and your community

As parents, we struggle with consistency and cringe when hearing, "do as I say and not as I do" from those who you feel responsible for learning healthy behaviors. Change and consistency are often partners that are difficult to keep on the same page, but consistency is emboldened by effort and supported by evaluation. Having a personal plan to protect and improve your heart is without a doubt a vehicle that will have benefits beyond the personal realm. Making a plan that incorporates small changes over time has been shown to have many benefits. Effective starting points include reducing salt, cholesterol and fat, reading food labels, and making time

for family meals. Change on a personal level will translate into increased family awareness and healthy changes over time. Consider these heart healthy small changes that can benefit you and your family's heart health.

- ◆ Know your numbers (Blood pressure, Cholesterol and Blood glucose) Keep a blood pressure diary and act on the results
- ◆ Include fruits and vegetables every day. Frozen veggies and fruits are a great way to add affordability to the family health eating budget. Also, try to eat more vegetables and fruits when they are in season and priced right.
- ◆ Have a meatless meal each week.
- ◆ If you smoke, cut back and consider a quit day and a plan to get there.
- ◆ Talk about your stress with your family. Use the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to help work with daily worries and stubborn issues
- ◆ Overall, make "*Moving More and Eating Less*", a conscious effort. **"JUST DO IT!"**

-Don Crask

Salmonella Outbreak-Peanut Butter

Here we go again! Another crazy widespread recall that has caused mass hysteria all over the United States, this time with *Salmonella* Typhimurium and Peanut Butter.

Here is what you need to know about this current outbreak and how you can protect yourself and those that you love.

To date there have been 654 cases in 44 different states with the earliest case being from September 2008 and the latest confirmed case on February 3, 2009. So far, the CDC is investigating 8 deaths that are possibly linked to this outbreak. In Kentucky, there have only been 3 reported cases, one of which was in Western Kentucky, but not in our district. The outbreak is ongoing, although the number of new cases has declined a lot since December 2008.

This is actually the second outbreak caused by contaminated peanut butter in the United States. The first outbreak was in 2006-2007 and was caused by contamination of a commercially distributed brand of peanut butter with *Salmonella* Tennessee. There has only been one other peanut butter associ-

ated *Salmonella* outbreak reported and that was in Australia in 1996.

During the epidemiological investigation, many of the people who have been ill reported that they ate peanut butter in various forms and fashion. The peanut butter seems to be linked to a plant in Georgia called the Peanut Corporation of America (PCA). How the peanut butter was contaminated in this current outbreak has yet to be determined. Proper roasting of the like that of peanut butter, bacteria such as *Salmonella* can persist indefinitely. *Salmonella* has also been shown to withstand temperatures as high as 194°F for a period of 50 minutes, which isn't a problem if the peanuts are roasted correctly (usually at 350 degrees F). The problem is that some of the goods, such as peanut butter paste or peanut butter containing products might not be heated to proper killing temperatures enough to eliminate *Salmonella* that might be introduced after the initial roasting of the peanuts. This is just something that the investigative team from CDC is looking at.

You should consult your doctor if you think that you might have become ill from eating peanut butter or peanut-containing products. Signs and symptoms of *Salmonella* include: nausea, diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps. Sometimes vomiting occurs, but most often diarrhea is the predominant symptom. Symptoms usually occur 12-72 hours after the infection is introduced in the body and usually lasts on average from 4-7 days. *Salmonella* infections are usually diagnosed by collection of a stool specimen. Most healthy individuals can recover from *Salmonella* without treatment. *Salmonella* can be very serious however, and can enter the bloodstream and can cause serious complications, even death if not treated promptly with antibiotics. Those who are considered high risk, such as infants, elderly people, and those with compromised immune systems are more likely to have complications.

The recall list for this outbreak is ridiculously long (more than 400 products long!). I would recommend that you check the FDA website for details on recalled products:



Major national brands of jarred peanut butter found in grocery stores are NOT on the recall list.

<http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/peanutbutterrecall/index.cfm>



Henderson County Health Center

Henderson County Health Department was very very Lucky.
Considering the "Ice Storm" was so Sucky.
The generator kept everything running.
So our losses wouldn't be so stunning.
We had some workers here and there.
Most of them wanted to pull out their hair.
Some workers were trapped and couldn't get in.
It was hard, but it wasn't a sin.

We hope things get better in time, we pray.
Poor Holly, she wrecked her truck today.
The deer came out of nowhere and just in time,
Holly slammed on her brakes and stopped on a dime.
The deer ran away and could not be found.
Holly's out big bucks (no pun intended) to make her vehicle sound.

Poor Brea lost her Grandmother last week.
She passed to join the righteous and meek.
Our sympathy goes to her in this time of need.
We'll give our support with this special deed.

The clinic is slow. Where is everyone?
Not being busy isn't much fun.
Some employees have been sick and some in pain.
But, thanks to Mary and Holly, our weight we still gain.
We are ready for Spring and some healthy Sunshine.
But, at Henderson Co. Health Dept., It's always a good time.

P.S. A special prayer for my buddy Alice, my partner in crime.
Hurry up and get well woman, I'm running out of rhyme.

-Jeanie Hardy

GreenWorks Recycling of Owensboro has a trailer parked at 101 E. Ninth Street. They accept electronic equipment such as computers, TVs, and telephones as well as batteries, florescent ballasts and all plastics. For a complete list of accepted items and more information, visit www.greenworksrecycling.com

Human Resources

Welcome to the GRDHD Team:

- * **Sandra Adkins**—Local Health Nurse II, Hancock County High School (12/29)
- * **Kathy Cockrum**—Licensed Practical Nurse II, Daviess County Health Center (12/29)
- * **Tammy Lewis**—Account Clerk I, Daviess County Home Health (12/29)
- * **Tonya Beck**—Senior Support Services Associate I, Clinic, Daviess County Health Center (1/12)
- * **Catherine Kellen**—Local Health Nurse I, REACH Clinic (1/12)
- * **Sarah Hatcher**—Clinical Assistant, Foust Elementary (1/26)
- * **Donna Mason**—Clinical Nutritionist, Union County Health Center (1/26)
- * **Rebecca Weaver**—Local Health Nurse II, Webster County Health Center (2/9)

Saying Goodbye . . .

- * **Judith Decker**, Ohio County Health Center
- * **Susan Fulkerson**, Ohio County Health Center
- * **Donna Kaelin**, Daviess County Home Health
- * **Tina McCormick**, District Office
- * **Loretta Oliver**, Daviess County Home Health
- * **Sharleen Schwartz**, District Office
- * **Mark Sears**, District Office
- * **Sheila Sims**, Ohio County Health Center



A group of six GRDHD employees was chosen this year to represent the district in the KPHLI program. KPHLI, which stands for Kentucky Public Health Leadership Institute, is a year-long development program striving to improve skills and enhance leadership capabilities of its members. The participants in this year's program are Shelly Austin, H.A.N.D.S.; Brenda Edge, Home Health; Laura Lindsey, District Administration; Anita Owens, School Health; Connie Nalley, District Nursing; and Becca White, Environmental. Obviously we come from a diverse professional background and this has helped to give us a greater knowledge and understanding of the district as a whole.

As you may know, Gang Green is the name of our KPHLI team this year. This name was chosen because our project is focused on "going green" or helping to reduce the carbon footprint within GRDHD. The first thing we learned about "going green" is what an enormous undertaking it is. If you stop to think of the thousands of things you do everyday or use everyday and how changing those things could enhance the environment, you can be overwhelmed very quickly, not only by the enormity of the process, but also by the cost. The second thing we learned about promoting "going green" is education is the key to beginning the process. People

have to be made aware of the benefits of creating an environment that is helping to stabilize our planet and the dangers in not changing attitudes or habits. The third thing we learned is, even though you cannot bring about this type of change all at once, every little step made toward improving the environment is beneficial. If everyone would make one small effort a day to reduce waste or energy consumption, the results would have a tremendous impact.

Throughout this year, our team has researched several projects with the prospect of reducing our energy consumption in the district – motion detector lighting systems, hand blow dryers in the bathrooms, to name a few. And while these ideas were well received by senior management, budget constraints have definitely put them on the back burner. Not to be daunted by a budget with zero dollars, our team has put together several projects to aid in understanding the benefits of a green environment and/or to reduce waste and our carbon footprint.

Gang Green was responsible for arranging with Habitat for Humanity to pick up cans for recycling at each clinic location and we are working with our maintenance department on recycling our used cardboard. We are promoting the "going paperless" movement within GRDHD. Several departments are having

great success with this and anyone on our team is available to work with you on learning the paperless process. We have provided a booklet, Living a Greener Life, to all employees and we are appearing on FOX-7 AM Evansville giving useful tips for enhancing our environment. We are working with our IT department to provide power strips to all employees because they provide a simple way to turn off equipment at night and on weekends. Also, we provide tips in the Gazette and on our homepage to encourage the "going green" process. And two fun projects are on the way.

In March, we will have a drawing for all employees to give away 20 reusable shopping bags. Plastic and paper bags are taking their toll on our planet and we encourage everyone to carry a reusable cloth bag for groceries. We will provide interesting facts about the benefits of using cloth bags closer to the drawing.

UK
UNIVERSITY OF
KENTUCKY
College of Public Health

KPHLI scholars are awarded a Certificate in Public Health Leadership from the Kentucky College of Public Health. For more information visit the website:
www.mc.uky.edu/kphli

Policies & Procedures

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Finance: The mileage rate for January 1, 2009 through March 31, 2009 has been set at \$.37 per mile.

IS: New videoconferences (some with CEU's) are constantly being added to the Videoconferencing Calendar on the GRDHD Website. Remember, registration on TRAIN is required three days in advance for most video conferences.

Epidemiology: Salmonella Outbreak-

Peanut Butter - *continued from page 7*

<http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/peanutbutterrecall/index.cfm>

If you don't have access to the internet you can always call the CDC hotline (1-800-CDC-INFO). It is up and running 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you should find any products in your home on the list, they should be thrown away immediately. The CDC recommends that this product should be disposed of in a closed plastic bag and placed in a sealed trash can to prevent people or animals from eating it. You should avoid eating products made with peanut butter, peanut paste, or other peanut-containing products if you are unsure whether these products have been recalled. If you are unsure and the product is not on the recall list, simply call the manufacturer to be on the safe side. You can never be too cautious. This recall includes some pet products as well. Many pet foods and treats contain peanut butter, so it important to discard these products immediately as well if they are included in the recall list. Bird food also sometimes contains peanut butter. **PLEASE NOTE: Major national brands of jarred peanut butter found in grocery stores are NOT on the recall list.**

I will be on maternity leave soon, so I wish you all the best in the next few months and look forward to seeing you in the summer!

-Janie Cambron

KPHLI - *continued from page 9*

In April, we will again have a drawing for all employees to give away 60 tree saplings. No one was spared from the devastation caused by the ice and wind storms of this year and we would like to help with the replacement of some of those trees. We will send out more information on this project closer to the time of the drawing. Unfortunately, the Natural Resources Conservation Service may not be receiving any trees to give away this year. Their source was hit by the storms, as well. We will let you know if this situation changes.

In addition, we are working on the design for a t-shirt to be available for employees. When we have a fix on the design and price, we'll let you know.

In the meantime, think green and live green. Remember that every little effort you make can help save our planet. *-Gang Green*

In the News

Check out these recent newspaper articles and Fox 7 broadcasts on the web at www.healthdepartment.org. Click on Media Archives

Newspaper Articles

- ◆ National Children's Dental Health Month by Amy Brown.
- ◆ Diabetes related eye diseases and a second article entitled "*Diabetes and Your Heart-Make the Link*" by Mary Ann Correll
- ◆ "*The True Cost of Smoking*" by Becky Horn

Fox 7 Broadcasts

- ◆ Heart Health with Don Crask
- ◆ Valentine's Day crafts, tips to remember when buying used toys, what to do when recycling toys, National Children's Dental Health Month and sharing proper tooth care tips for infants and toddlers with Shelly Austin.
- ◆ Diabetes related eye diseases and the connection between diabetes and your heart with Mary Ann Correll
- ◆ The environmental benefits associated with recycling with Becca White.

FOCUS On Employees

Congratulations to **Emily Durbin** of Daviess County Health Center, recipient of a \$5.00 gift certificate from Subway. **Emily** was chosen by a random drawing of correct responses to the last Green River Gazette picture find contest.

SUBWAY

Alice Coakley had heart surgery on Jan 29 and is now at home resting and doing well. Thank you for your thoughts and prayers.

Condolences to **Kelly Donahoo** who lost her mother, Beverly Conrad, on Dec. 9 and to **Joanie Patterson** who lost her father, Wayne Eichelberger, on Dec. 16.



Congratulations to **Kelly Hodges** on the birth of her baby boy, Weston Thomas, born on Dec. 10, weighed 8lbs 10 oz.

Congratulations to new parents **Jon** and **Janie Cambron** on the birth of their daughter, Savannah Reigh, who arrived at 7:16 pm on Saturday, February 28. Savannah was 19.5" long and weighed 7 pounds 3 ounces.



Alisha Powers Takes the Polar Bear Plunge

On Saturday, February 7, 120 braaaavveeee "Polar Bears" took the Plunge in to the icy lake at the Hines Center in Philpot, KY in support of the 5th Annual Owensboro Polar Bear Plunge.

The 2009 Plunge was a great success and raised \$27,000. Special Olympics KY is well on its way to meeting their 2009 goal of raising \$500,000 in an effort to help the Athletes make their dreams a reality by supporting year-round training and competitions. Be watching the Green River Gazette for information regarding the 2010, 6th Annual Owensboro Polar Bear Plunge. In the meantime I will leave you with the Special Olympics motto, "Let Me Win, But If I Cannot Win, Let Me Be Brave In The Attempt."



March

National Nutrition Month

- 6 Supervisor Meeting 9:00-12:00
Henderson County
- 11 Managers Meeting 8:30 -11:30
District Offices
- 24 World Tuberculosis Day
- 24 American Diabetes Alert Day
- 26 Senior Management 8:30-12:00
District Offices

April

STD Awareness Month

- 3 Supervisors Meeting 9:00-12:00
District Offices
- 6-12 National Public Health Awareness Week
- 7 World Health Day
- 8 Managers Meeting 8:30-12:00
District Offices
- 15 ARNP Meeting 9:00-11:00 District Offices
- 23 Senior Management 8:30-12:00
District Offices
- 25-2 National Infant Immunization Week

TECH TIPS

For any staff members utilizing a drive share (Personal Drive, Common Drive, etc.): To help create additional space, please go through and delete any files that are outdated or you do not need.

Have you ever Wondered?



By Wondering Wilma

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED... Kentucky Medicaid Commissioner Elizabeth Johnson has said that Kentucky is facing a projected Medicaid deficit of \$183 million for the budget year that began 7/1/08. The recent down turn in the economy has seen a record number of people signing up for the Medicaid program leaving the State in a “dire” financial situation.

All we ever hear at the health department is how we need to increase productivity. How can we justify seeing patients with Medicaid that have an assigned provider? Why do we continue to see Medicare patients that have just been to their physician and bring in a sack of medications that someone else has prescribed? When we do a well-child exam on a patient that has just seen a pediatrician, are we not “double-dipping” and adding to the projected \$456 million revenue shortfall that our State is experiencing?

Public health departments will always be needed, however, if a patient has a third party payer, whether it be private insurance, Medicaid, or Medicare, why are we not encouraging patients to see their providers? With the economy the way it is, it is time for us to get off the gravy train and concentrate our efforts on clients that don't have a medical home.

Great questions, but complicated!! Patients should be encouraged to see their primary care provider. It is not the Health Department's intent to duplicate services. Well-child assessments are the ones that Medicaid has indicated (by a monthly list sent to the Health Department) need an exam according to the periodicity schedule. Unfortunately many of these children only see their primary care MDs for acute conditions and do not receive their preventive exams by those same MDs.

If the Health Department was ever on the “gravy train,” the gravy has dried up and the train is moving rapidly into the Department's reserve.

The purpose of this column is to provide you with answers, therefore, please submit your “wondering” questions to Wondering Wilma at wondering.wilma@ky.gov,

The Green River Gazette is published bimonthly. For questions, comments, suggestions or submissions, please contact a member of the committee.

• Denise Brinkley • Don Crask • Terri Prewitt • Carrie Reese •
• Angel Thompson • Linda Wahl • Lisetta Whitworth • Angela Woosley •