



EmployeeUPDATE

Our Mission: To serve the people of North Carolina by enabling individuals, families and communities to be healthy and secure, and to achieve social and economic well-being.

A monthly publication for employees of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services

Southern AIDS Living Quilt: North Carolina participates in a new project focusing on HIV and women in the South

The Southern AIDS Coalition and Test for Life have launched a new and unique project. The Web-based Southern AIDS Living Quilt (www.livingquilt.org) is a collection of personal stories from women living with HIV and AIDS. Some of these women are HIV positive, while others work with patients who are HIV positive. By sharing their experiences, these women urge others to get tested and treated.



Evelyn Foust and Dr. Steve Cline

be reduced by 30 percent per year if all HIV infected people knew of their infection and adopted behavioral changes to limit the spread of the disease.

“The status quo must change,” said Foust, who is also co-chair of the Southern AIDS Coalition. “In order to turn the tide on new HIV infections, we must act now.”

A panel discussion and demonstration of the Living Quilt was held in Raleigh on Oct. 28. Deputy State Health Director Steve Cline and Evelyn Foust, director of the Division of Public Health’s Communicable Disease Branch, participated in the event.

“As a nation, I think we are really losing the war against AIDS,” said Dr. Cline.

“We’re losing it not just as a nation, but also losing it as a region. The South is disproportionately hit.”

AIDS is the leading cause of death for African American women ages 25-34 today. In North Carolina, more than 32,000 individuals are living with HIV disease. HIV infections could

The Living Quilt includes audio and video of stories from many women who have tested positive for HIV and how they have learned to live with the disease. The true power of the Living Quilt project is in the stories it shares and the inspiration it brings to others. While some are telling their stories for the first time, others have embraced the importance of communicating the

continued on page 2



DHHS WISHES YOU A HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON!

Southern AIDS Living Quilt, continued from page 1

changing face of HIV/AIDS.

Visitors can also upload stories of their own, becoming part of the Quilt through their own unique narratives. The Living Quilt site also provides valuable information and resources on HIV and AIDS, including where to find testing resources across the United States. ■

Three from DHHS receive 2008 State Employee Award for Excellence

Three outstanding DHHS employees were recognized for their achievements with the State Employee Award for Excellence in a special presentation ceremony in Raleigh on Oct. 20: Tracy Dawson, O’Berry Center; Daniel W. “Danny” Rice, Caswell Developmental Center; and Rebecca Rommen, Governor Morehead School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. The Award for Excellence is the highest honor a state employee may receive for dedicated service to the state and the citizens of North Carolina.

Tracy Dawson received the Human Relations Award for exceptional commitment to the residents of O’Berry Center. Her belief in a rich and diverse quality of life for clients shines through in her work as a health care technician and her drive to do the very best for those whom she serves.

Dawson was cited for her compassion and her creativity in enhancing the lives of clients under her care. Two years ago, Dawson was assigned to one of the center’s most challenging group homes – a home for those who are profoundly developmentally disabled and also exhibit serious psychiatric and medical issues. One of those individuals was both developmentally disabled and bipolar and had manic episodes rendering him

unable to eat or drink, resulting in dehydration and extended hospitalization requiring heavy sedation and intensive care. Dawson realized that his limited verbal skills required special treatment. By staying constantly in tune with the smallest changes in his behavior, she has been able to reduce the severity and length of his manic episodes and reduce his suffering. She also devised and implemented a technique to ensure adequate hydration that the facility now uses with other clients.

Danny Rice received the Public Service Award for serving his community, state and fellow man. Rice began working at Caswell Center in 1982 as a social work supervisor and is currently the director of volunteer services, a position he has held since 1986. He works with people with disabilities not only in his profession, but also in a voluntary capacity.

For nearly 30 years, Rice has participated in volunteer projects to benefit children and families in his community. As a youth, he was named one of Woodmen of the World’s (WOW) Top 10 Outstanding Youth Leaders in America. He is now a member of WOW’s national board of directors as well as chairman its WOW’s North



Tracy Dawson



Danny Rice



Rebecca Rommen

continued on page 3

Employee Award for Excellence, continued from page 2

Carolina Children's Home Program. Rice is a founding member of the Lenoir County Friends for the Homeless, Inc., which provides temporary housing for transient individuals and families. The shelter's accountant says Rice is known as the "go-to guy," adding "When it comes to getting things done at the shelter, you name it and Danny does it."

In 1999, Rice established the Caswell Center Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit organization serving individuals and families with developmental disabilities in 38 counties in eastern North Carolina. The foundation now has an annual budget of nearly \$300,000 and recently added a scholarship program for students who are learning to serve those with developmental disabilities.

Rice's leadership extends to numerous organizations, including Boy Scouts of America, Lions Club, Big Brothers/Big Sisters and Association for Retarded Citizens.

Rebecca Rommen received the Outstanding State Government Service Award for serving as a role model for her students and for state employees everywhere. As a dedicated teacher at Governor Morehead School, Rommen is a powerful advocate for her students, working tirelessly to provide them with new opportunities and adventures. She teaches theater, dance and choral music, and organizes eight performances each school year. She also prepares scripts and programs in large print and Braille; creates sets, props and costumes; and decorates the auditorium for each event. She is often on campus until late in the evening helping students rehearse and prepare for shows, and returns early the

next morning to prepare for another day of serving GMS students.

Rommen arranged for one of her students to take tap lessons at a local dance school and ensured that the student had transportation to and from the lessons. Thanks to her efforts, the student blossomed into a fearless performer. From this was born the Sightless Rhythm Tap Project, a collaborative effort between Rommen and the local instructor. As part of the project, students received a tap shoes at no cost and performed for families and friends in a large production. She helped another student obtain a scholarship and instruction in modern dance and ballet.

DHHS salutes these three exemplary employees for their dedication, vision and service, and congratulates them on their awards. ■

NCS student receives dance honors

Russell Threatt, a 13-year-old eighth-grader at the North Carolina School for the Deaf, recently brought home honors from an Irish dance competition, the Rince na h'Eireann Charlotte Feis. The Feis was attended by 700 dancers of all ages from across the Southeast. Russell was awarded a trophy for his performance in the Exceptional Dancers competition, but also competed for the first time in regular competition against dancers who could hear. He took the second place medal in the Beginner Under-14 competition. ■



Russell Threatt

N.C. paramedics take first place in international event

A team of North Carolina paramedics won top honors in a competition with five other teams at the 2008 International Trauma Conference held in Guanajuato, Mexico in November.

The team of Billy Eldridge, Shane Lisenby and Austin Nabet, all National Registry Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedics, was the first North Carolina team to make it to the competition finals in the seven years the International Trauma Life Support competition has been held. They are paramedics employed by FirstHealth Regional EMS in Montgomery County.

“To win a competition at this level is a tribute to the knowledge, skills and dedication of these paramedics,” said Drexal Pratt, chief of the N.C. Office

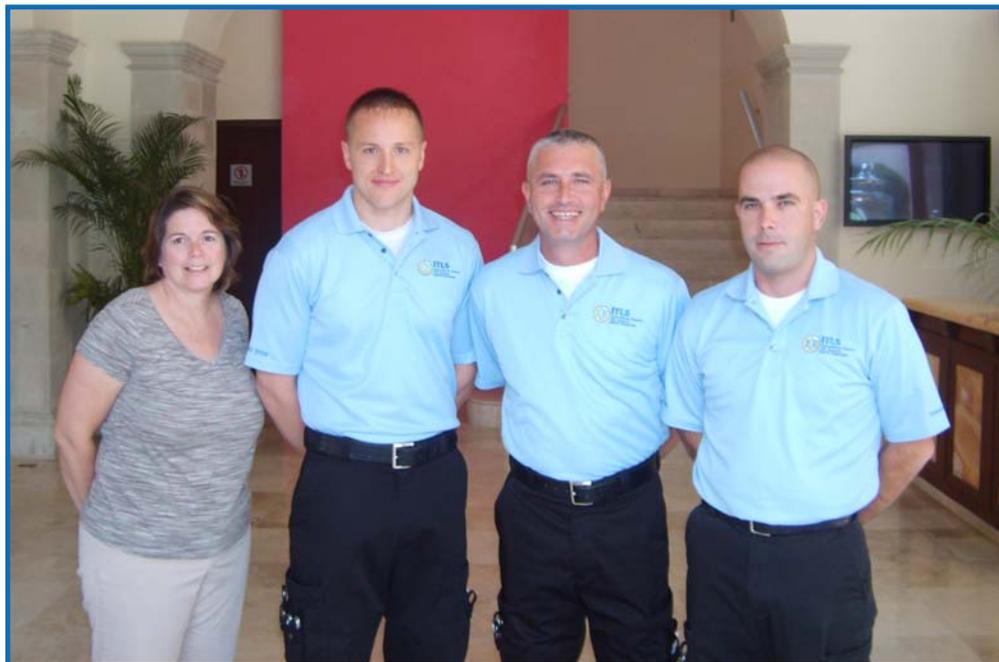
of Emergency Medical Services. “The winning team sets an example for all in their profession to follow. We are very proud of their efforts.”

Lisenby and Nabet are no strangers to high-pressured competitions. They won North Carolina scenario-based paramedic competitions held in 2002, 2003 and 2006 at the annual Emergency Medicine Today conference in Greensboro.

The 2008 ITLS competition in Mexico featured six teams competing in the preliminary round. The teams included Illinois, Florida, North Carolina, Japan, Ontario and Mexico. The teams from Florida, Ontario and North Carolina advanced to the final round.

International Trauma Life Support is a global organization dedicated to preventing death and disability from trauma through education and emergency trauma care. ITLS was founded in 1982 as Basic Trauma Life Support, a local and regional trauma education course for EMS professionals. BTLT grew to have over 70 chapters around the world, and in 2005, it was renamed ITLS to better reflect the scope of the organization.

Since its founding, the organization has assisted more than 330,000 EMS professionals in learning proven techniques endorsed by the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) and the National Association of EMS Physicians (NAEMSP). ■



Winning Team:

Donna Strong, left, with FirstHealth Regional EMS in Montgomery County, served as N.C. delegate to the competition, won by the FH Montgomery EMS team of (left to right) Austin Nabet, Billy Eldridge and Shane Lisenby. Strong has attended all seven conferences and competed on the North Carolina team two of those years.

Top Ten Excuses for NOT getting a flu shot:

10) You'd like to catch up on your favorite TV shows.

9) Getting sick is one way to get your spouse to do some chores around the house.

8) You get thrills having the chills.

7) You don't like going to holiday parties.

6) You're desperate for sympathy.

5) You like the taste of cherry Nyquil.

4) You'll try every new plan to lose weight.

3) You can save gas money by staying home a few days.

2) You consider coughing a full-body workout.

1) Your stock portfolio includes Kleenex.

We hope this top ten list will make you smile! But you should know the flu is no joking matter. The flu can make you very sick; it can even be deadly. You can protect yourself and your loved ones from getting the flu this season simply by getting a flu shot or nasal spray vaccine. It's a quick, easy step that will help you stay healthy and smiling all winter long! ■

Save costs through energy efficiency

In the face of serious current state revenue shortfalls, DHHS officials are urging all employees and facilities to save costs in every way possible. Deputy Secretary Dan Stewart has provided the following tips from the State Energy Office (www.energync.net/efficiency/government.html) to help the department in its efforts to save money:

Alter settings of heating and cooling systems seasonally to save 1 to 3 percent of cooling or heating costs for each degree the thermostat is raised or lowered.

During the winter, set the thermostat to 68°F when the work place is occupied, and 65°F after business hours. During the summer, set the thermostat to 76°F when the workplace is occupied, and 80°F after business hours. (However, these guidelines should not be applied to health care facility buildings that house patients. The determination of appropriate temperatures for these buildings is made by the health care professionals in charge.)

Turn off all office equipment and lights every evening and weekend. If you can't turn off the whole computer, turn off the monitor and the printer.

Open blinds and shades. Turn off lights in unoccupied areas or in spaces with sufficient natural lighting.

When purchasing PCs, monitors, printers, fax machines and copiers, consider ENERGY STAR® models that "power down" after a user-specified period of inactivity.

Maintenance and purchasing staff should also review the energy- and cost-saving ideas on the North Carolina State Energy Office's website, www.energync.net/efficiency/government.html.

The Utility Savings Initiative (USI) website (<http://www.energync.net/programs/usi.html>) offers additional information. USI is a comprehensive, multi-programmed approach to reducing utility expenditures and resource use in state buildings. ■

Streets recognized with first Jim Long Outstanding SHIP Service Award

Dennis Streets, director of the Division of Aging and Adult Services, was recently recognized as the first recipient of the Jim Long Outstanding SHIP Service Award.

SHIP is the Seniors Health Insurance Information Program, which was created shortly after Long's tenure at the Department of Insurance began in 1984. This new award recognizes those who advocate on behalf of SHIP.

Streets was recognized as being supportive of SHIP since arriving at the state aging office in 1996, and continuing his support as he transitioned into his current position as director of the Division of Aging and Adult Services.

"A leading advocate for SHIP, his support extends beyond Raleigh's city limits into every aging office, senior center and area agency on aging in the state," said Carla Obiol, SHIP director. "The aging network is encouraged to partner with SHIP in various capacities including serving as coordinating agencies on a county level. Of the 110 SHIP sites, there are 78 sites representing the aging network.



Dennis Streets

"Dennis supports the overall objectives and goals of SHIP at all levels for the purpose of expanding the services and reaching Medicare beneficiaries around the state," Obiol said. "SHIP is fortunate to have him as a partner, especially in our continued efforts to provide critical services to our senior and disabled populations." ■

Taming Holiday Tension

Rushing around from place to place, shorter days and increased work demands as you try to get everything wrapped up at the office can lead to headaches. Just as soon as you've crossed an item off the to-do list, you find yourself adding three more in its place. There's no question that the holiday season brings stress and tension.

By finding ways to tame your tension, you can make it through the holidays without reaching for that extra ginger cookie for comfort. In fact, setting down the cookie and going for a walk works wonders for stress. Physical

activity gives you a break from the hustle and bustle of the holiday season and gives you a burst of energy while relieving muscle tension.

Getting plenty of rest rejuvenates your body to begin another new day. Keep your regular sleep schedule and you won't start the day behind in energy. You'll be more alert and in a better mood to get through the day with a smile.

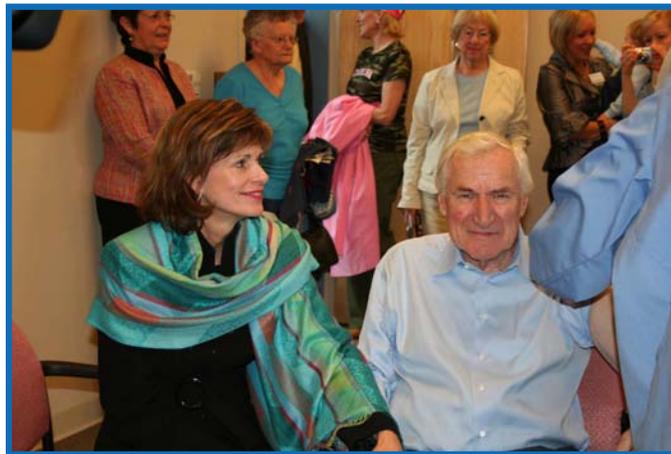
Schedule time to relax and beat stress. Taking short breaks throughout the day to let go of tension helps you keep

up with holiday demands. If you start to feel tense, anxious or stressed, stop what you are doing. Take a few deep breaths and make an effort to relax your muscles as you exhale.

Be flexible. You don't have to do it all, and prioritizing your holiday demands will help you discover what is truly important to you during the holidays and what traditions or expectations you can let go. Keeping perspective and taming your stress will lead to a happier and healthier holiday season. ■

Dr. Devlin and Coach Smith roll up their sleeves for a good cause

State Health Director Dr. Leah Devlin and former UNC Basketball Coach Dean Smith offer each other moral support as each receives their annual flu shot at the Robert and Pearl Seymour Center on Thursday, Nov. 13. ■



Leah Devlin and Dean Smith



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THE Cultural Competency CORNER

By Gloria Sánchez, Latino Public Information Officer



Media Matters: Using ethnic media

North Carolina is becoming the home of diverse broadcast and print media serving various ethnic groups in culturally appropriate ways and in different languages. Proof of this is easily found by walking into a Latino *tienda*, an African American barber shop, a Chinese restaurant, an Indian market, or a Middle East deli. Racks of newspapers written in Spanish, Chinese, Indian and Arabic – the most common languages – are found across the state.

Generally, ethnic media keep very close ties with their communities and fill an important information gap that is often overlooked by the mainstream media. These community and ethnic media are valuable guides for recent immigrants, introducing them to a new culture and way of life. And in many instances, they are the only source of local news and information for non-English-speaking populations.

Most ethnic media are locally own and very strongly community-oriented. Often, they work with non-profit organizations and government programs to publish and air educational information for free. However, it is important to keep in mind that ethnic media are in the business of making money to stay

in existence. Conversely, media placement prices in ethnic media are very affordable and much less costly than English mainstream media. Below are few tips for working with and effectively using ethnic media:

- Become familiar with the populations your program serves and the preferred ethnic media in your targeted area.
- Get a media kit.
- Establish and maintain a relationship with the right contact person.
- Include ethnic media in all your community communications – add them to your media list and listserv. Most media staff members speak English and won't have trouble communicating with you.
- Don't forget to update your media or community list at least once a year. Subscribe to or pick up a copy of the publication.
- Know what type of information each media outlet prefers – topics of interest include family well-being; government programs, parenting,

health, nutrition; youth and children services, community events, directories, how-to-do articles and practical advice.

- Become familiar with media formats, topics, sections, segments, programs, community calendars, on-air interviews, frequency and deadlines. Most ethnic newspapers publish weekly or biweekly, and many radio stations conduct community interviews in the mornings and weekends.
- Be responsive when a reporter contacts you and provide the reporter with resources that might be useful to that media's consumers.

Knowing how to work with and use ethnic media will make your job of disseminating information more complete and inclusive. Ethnic media add to the growing cultural richness that North Carolina is experiencing, and without doubt play an important and increasing social role in keeping all North Carolina residents informed. ■

2008 Aging Awards presented

The Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) presented its 2008 Aging Awards at the N.C. Conference on Aging in Greenville in October. These awards are presented annually to recognize individuals, organizations, programs and communities that have made significant contributions in support of the division's efforts to enhance resources, services and opportunities for our state's older citizens.

The Ewald W. Busse Award recognizes an individual or organization that has had a significant impact on enhancing the health status of older North Carolinians through efforts to direct health-related policies and/or providing leadership in developing innovative solutions to health care problems. The 2008 Busse Award went to Pam Silberman, JD, DrPH, one of the leading health care advocates in North Carolina. Silberman is the president and CEO of the North Carolina Institute of Medicine and associate director

for policy analysis at the Cecil Sheps Center for Health Services Research at the University of North Carolina. Under her leadership, the Center has addressed key issues of importance to older adults, including enhancing access to primary care services, care for the underinsured and uninsured, and to high quality nursing, community-based and institutional long-term care.

The George L. Maddox Award recognizes an individual or organization in the state that has excelled in creative programming for older adults. Edna Ballard, MSW, was named the 2008 Maddox Award recipient. Ballard is a social worker with the Duke Aging Center Family Support Program and is well known for her uniquely tailored creative programs for people with Alzheimer's disease, their families, care professionals and direct care workers. Her facilitation and leadership of a monthly Durham family caregiver support group since 1984 has been recog-

nized by the Eastern N.C. Alzheimer's Association. Ms. Ballard is a field work supervisor sought-after by students from four North Carolina schools of social work.

The Ernest B. Messer Award recognizes a community that has excelled in addressing the needs of its older citizens. This year's Messer Award went to Buncombe County and the county's Aging Coordinating Consortium, which consists of community members and representatives of community organizations. The county and consortium have led the way in planning for the needs of the county's older citizens and have produced The Buncombe County Aging Plan (2008 - 2012). The plan's vision for a livable and aging-friendly Buncombe County addresses safety and security, financial well-being, health and wellness, social engagement, living environments, and service and support coordination. ■

Joy Reed named Fellow of American Academy of Nursing

Joy F. Reed, EdD, RN, head of Public Health Nursing for the Division of Public Health, has become a new Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing. Dr. Reed was formally inducted as a Fellow during the Academy's Annual Awards Ceremony in Scottsdale, Arizona in November.

Nominated for this honor by two current Fellows, Dr. Julia Cowell from Rush University in Chicago and Dr. Kaye Bender from the University of Mississippi, Reed was selected by the Academy's 15-member Selection Committee for her outstanding achievements in the nursing profession. Induction into the Fellowship affords her the opportunity to work with other leaders to address the health care issues facing our country as well as our state.

Reed joined the N.C. Division of Public Health in 1995 as head of Public Health



Joy F. Reed

Nursing. Since that time, in addition to her outstanding work for public health in North Carolina, she has twice been president of the Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing

and chair of the Quad Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations. During her first term as chair of the Quad Council, she led the development of a public health nursing specific set of competencies based on the core competencies for all public health professionals. In 2006 she co-edited a special issue of the journal *Public Health Nursing* devoted to the use of those competencies in education and practice.

Reed chaired the American Nurses Association's committee to revise *Public Health Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* and is currently chairing the committee to revise the *Scope and Standards of Nursing Administration*. In June of this year, she received the American Nurses Association's Pearl McIver Award. ■

IT security:

Is your laptop secure?

The rising number of laptop and mobile users poses security challenges for DHHS. Laptops face several security threats and present particular risks to data security. For instance, they can be easily stolen and misused, owing to their mobility; they are more accessible to unauthorized users; and they have higher disk capacities, which encourage users to store more data locally. A recent survey by The Ponemon Institute indicates that more than 10,000 laptops are lost or stolen each week at U.S. airports. Other statistics indicate that a laptop is stolen every 53 seconds, and 97 percent of stolen laptops are not recovered. Every departmental employee who stores departmental data on his or her state laptop and/or portable device should make security a priority.

DHHS Deputy Secretary Dan Stewart announced on Nov. 10 that DHHS Information Technology staff across the department have been working to encrypt laptops and other storage devices such as USB flash (thumb) drives, CDs and DVDs. DHHS policy now states that no employee may remove a laptop or other storage device from his or her office building or other secure site unless it has been encrypted to protect confidential data. Even information that has been “erased” on a hard drive or storage device is often recoverable with appropriate software; therefore, no one should assume that their laptop contains no confidential information. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved personally by both the appropriate division director and the Office of the Secretary.

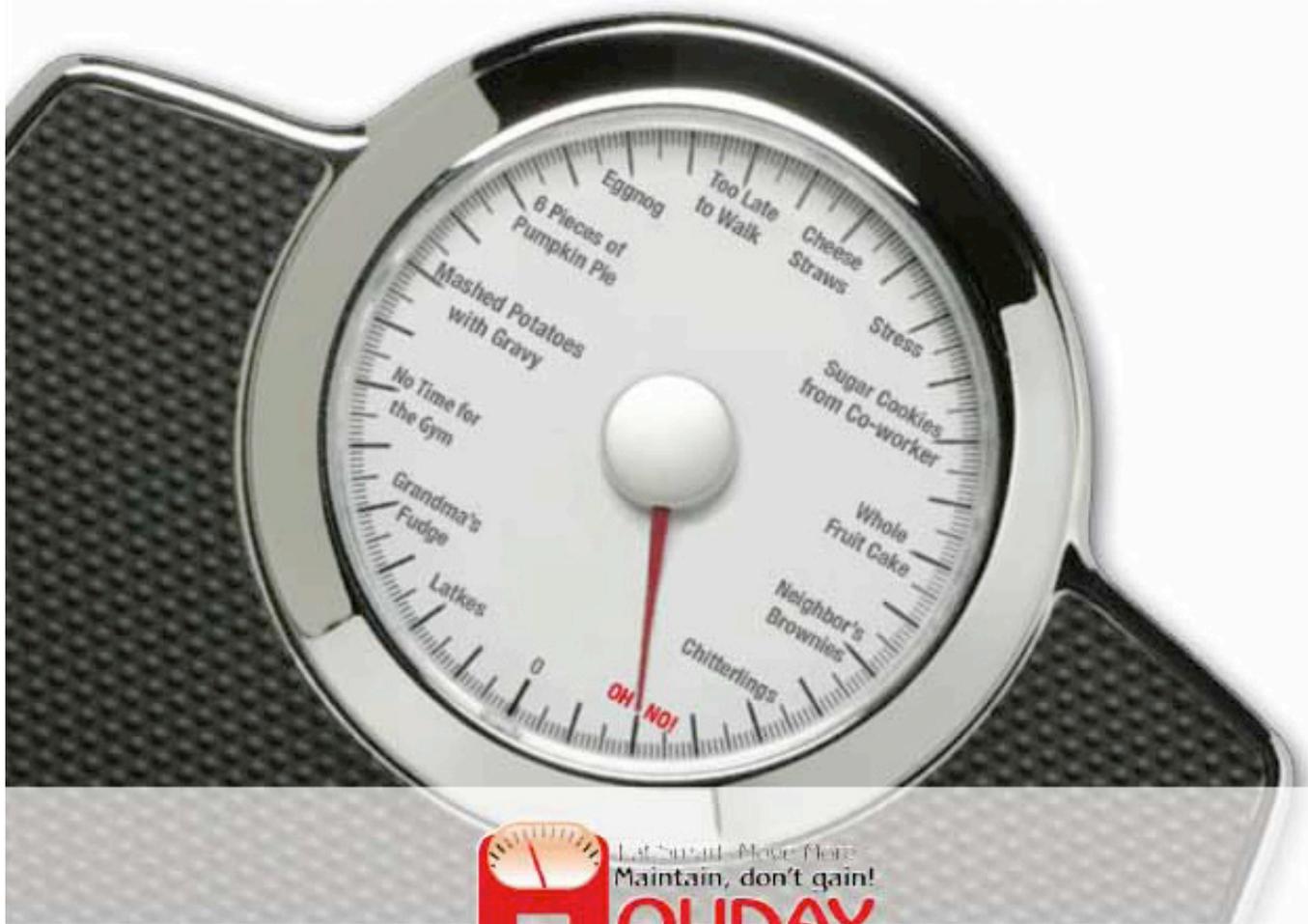
Although laptop computers and portable storage devices have fast become essential tools with which to conduct business, they have also created privacy and security issues. To avoid losing or having your laptop stolen, here are some suggestions for how to secure your laptop:

- **Do not leave your laptop inside a car. Ensure that it is not visible.**
- **Do not leave the laptop in the car overnight. Take it inside with you.**
- **Use a docking station if you have a lot of visitors coming through your office.**
- **Lock the laptop in a filing cabinet or other secure, out-of-sight location when you leave your office, or lock your office door.**
- **Be especially cautious in airports. Don't put your laptop down or let it out of your sight, even through security checkpoints.**
- **Do not set your laptop to automatically log into websites, and do not save passwords on your laptop to make login easier. Otherwise, a thief who has stolen your laptop can easily log into your accounts.**
- **Use a strong password to lessen the risk that a local account is compromised. Passwords remain the most common way to secure resources, including laptop computers.**
- **Make sure your laptop is encrypted.**

Encryption software on your state laptop or portable storage device does not make a bad password any more secure. If you choose an obvious password or pass phrase, a “dictionary attack” can certainly be mounted that could unlock your encrypted volume. Data encryption is an important part of an overall security strategy. Keeping your sensitive data secure requires a little forethought and planning. With viruses and spyware running amok, not to mention the possibility of theft, it is imperative that we take precautions to secure the department's property and data. Notification to affected parties after a security breach can have serious financial implications on business operations.

Let's all do our part to keep the department's data and equipment secure. If you have any questions or concerns, please email the DHHS Privacy and Security Office at DHHS.Security@ncmail.net. You can find the N.C. DHHS Privacy and Security policies at <http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/dhs/pol-80/man/>. ■

Worried the Holidays will weigh you down?



**Avoid Holiday Weight Gain! Register for free at
www.MyEatSmartMoveMore.com.**

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- ▼ Log on to read experts' advice
- ▼ Download a food diary, activity log and weight log to track your progress

November 24 through December 31

DHHS Worksite Wellness

Staying Well in the Cold and Flu Season

It's that time of year when we spend more time indoors and our chances of catching the flu or a cold increase. If you did not get your annual flu shot at one of the DHHS worksite flu clinics, be sure to take advantage of a community site offering the shots or contact your health care provider about getting immunized. The flu shot is free for State Health Plan members.

Unfortunately, there is still no vaccine that protects us from the dreaded common cold. Eating more fruits and vegetables, exercising, avoiding stress and tobacco, and getting enough sleep can all enhance our bodies' ability to fight off the cold virus. Avoiding exposure to the virus is another way we can lower our risk of infection from both colds and the flu.

We can try to avoid being around individuals sick with a cold or the flu, but avoidance is not always possible when a family member or co-worker is sick. In any case, others can be contagious even before they show any cold symptoms. So, are there some additional ways that we can reduce our exposure to colds and flu this winter?

Surfaces harbor the cold virus

Current research highlights the significant role that touching surfaces plays in exposing us to the cold virus. An Oct. 29 Associated Press article entitled, *Don't want a cold? Avoid the fridge*, reported recent research showing that commonly touched areas like door handles (including the fridge door), light switches, remote controls, faucets, salt and pepper shakers, and phones were positive for the cold virus about 40 percent of the time if there was someone in the home with a cold. Even more alarming was the fact that more than half of study participants who touched surfaces 48 hours (two full days!) after a cold virus was applied tested positive for the live virus on their fingers.

Reducing surface cold viruses

At home or in our office, wiping down or spraying surfaces we touch with a disinfectant may be practical, but cleaning is not an option for most of the objects we touch when away from home. We routinely come in contact with surfaces that hundreds of other people – some sick – may have touched within the last 48 hours. These surfaces include doors, stair railings, faucets, grocery carts, store or bank pens, and mail just to name just a few. Is there a practical way we can avoid catching any lingering virus left on those surfaces?

Hand washing is most important

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) tells us that *"keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. It is best to wash your hands with soap and clean running water for 20 seconds. However, if soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based product to clean your hands.* Alcohol-

continued on page 16

Worksite Wellness, continued from page 15

based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of germs on skin and are fast acting” (www.cdc.gov/cleanhands).

The widely available alcohol-based hand cleaners make it convenient to clean our hands during the day when it is not possible to wash with soap and water. If we wait until we get home from the grocery store to wash our hands, it is likely we have touched our face and transmitted any virus that was lingering on our hands from the grocery cart or check-out process.

A few years ago, I began using an alcohol-based cleaner regularly in addition to frequent hand washing. My yearly number of colds then dropped from an average of two to three each year to only one in the past three years. One of the small-sized hand sanitizer bottles fits easily in a pocket or purse and can be used soon after leaving a store, shaking hands, or touching a hand railing. Keeping a large hand cleaner pump on your desk makes it convenient to clean hands after handling the mail. The larger sized pumps are also economical for refilling the small bottles. If the frequent use of alcohol cleaners is drying to your skin, carry a hand cream as well.

The idea of using a hand cleaner multiple times a day may sound to some like a lot of trouble. Being more careful about hand cleaning really only takes a few minutes each day and can significantly reduce the risk of infection. If more frequent hand cleaning helps avoid the misery of catching even one cold, it will be well worth the effort. Hand cleaning also helps us lower the risk of passing on to others any infection we ourselves may have.



NEXT ISSUE

In January, approximately 250 DHHS employees will be completing the 15-week Weigh Less Program offered at their worksites. I will be sharing an update on how effective the program has been in helping these employees move toward a healthier weight. ■

- Suzanna Young, DHHS Wellness Coordinator

Adoption Profile

Introducing Allen

Allen is a handsome and charming young man who carries himself in a polite, respectful manner. He is a giving and thoughtful person who likes to be helpful. When Allen is in a good mood, the entire house feels his presence and revels in the positive atmosphere he creates. He likes to take time to read the Bible and believes he gains strength from doing so. Allen enjoys playing paintball, sports, water skiing, fishing, and drawing. He is competitive and likes to win.

Allen attends regular classes at school, where a personal mentor helps him stay on task and in compliance with his behaviors. Being easily distracted makes it difficult for Allen to be academically successful, so some modifications have been made to help, especially with tests. Math is also a challenge for him, so tutoring is expected to help bring him to grade level. Allen is working hard to learn appropriate methods of displaying his frustrations and feelings.



Allen, b. Sept. 17, 1993

A Family for Allen

Allen needs a two-parent family that is willing to keep him active in sports and other activities. He needs a lot of positive individual attention. An adoptive family for Allen must be strong and understand that it will take time for him to build a trusting relationship and develop respect for them. They must take small steps, seeing progress as well as the downsides.

For more information on this child or adoption and foster care in general, call NC Kids Adoption and Foster Care Network toll-free at 1-877-NCKIDS-1 (1-877-625-4371). ■