

CALL FOR POSTER ABSTRACTS

Don't forget that poster abstracts are due to the Research and Evidence-Based Council by June 1, 2011, for the Annual Conference and Assembly to be held September 22-23, 2011, in Grand Rapids at the Airport Hilton Hotel. All the guidelines you may need to develop your abstract, and your presentation—should the Council choose your abstract for presentation—can be found on the [rn-aim.org](http://www.rn-aim.org) website under the “Events and Meetings” tab on the home page. Directions about where to send your completed abstract are found on the same page.

Go to: <http://www.rn-aim.org/conference.php>

Congratulations to Region 2!

Region 2 – Northern Michigan, has just held a very successful spring conference, with 39 participants, including some new memberships for RN-AIM. The two speakers were Jeanette Klemczak, Michigan's Chief Nurse Executive, who provided an update on the work of the Task Force on Nursing, and Wendy Kushion, who spoke about Metabolic Syndrome. Congratulations on a successful conference! Region 2 has a monthly presentation and is one of our most active regions. Great work by the Region Board and Planning Committee.

National Nurses Week begins each year on May 6th and ends on May 12th, Florence Nightingale's birthday.



Should the Public be Involved in Redistricting?

The Michigan League of Women Voters is encouraging all citizens to become involved in the redistricting that has begun following the release of the 2010 census, which affects Michigan because of loss of population with the resulting loss of federal representation in the House of Representatives. Redistricting will affect how Michigan voters are represented for the next ten years. It is important that voters be able to view the maps that are being drawn, and to comment on any concerns or inequities they have regarding the process. The League thanks individuals for being a voice for pen and participatory redistricting process.

EVALUATING HEALTH CARE

Following a poll of 1,034 individuals completed by the Robert Wood Johnson foundation, these findings were noted:

- Sixty-five of the respondents graded the quality of the health they received as an A or a B,
- 13% gave a rating of a D or F for their personal health care

But the survey also found that:

- Only 33% of respondents rated overall health care in the U.S. as an A or B,
- And, 28% graded it with a D or F.

Data also indicated that 45% of individuals who earned less than \$50,000 said their personal care was a C, D or F – compared with 21% of people who earned more. The poll results were reported in the Wall Street Journal/Health Blog, 4/12/2011.

New Initiative Launched

The United States Department of Health and Human Services is allocating as much as \$1 billion in federal funding to support the *Partnership for Patients* Program, which is focused on saving lives by decreasing the rates of adverse incidents experienced by patients. It is estimated that the program may save as many as 60,000 lives over a three-year period by focusing on the reduction of medical errors and adverse events. The HHS Secretary, Kathleen Sibelius, indicated that technology will be key to meeting the goal of the program. The Program has received support from approximately 500 hospitals and health groups.

Dartmouth Atlas Project Reports on End-of-Life Care

The first report from the Dartmouth Atlas Project, titled "Trends and Variations in End-of-Life Care for Medicare Beneficiaries with Severe Chronic Illness" indicates that chronically-ill Medicare patients spent fewer days in the hospital and received more hospice care in 2007 than they did in 2003, but at the same time they noted an increase in the intensity of care for the patients who were hospitalized.

This demonstrates longitudinal change in end-of-life treatment, and includes trends in the use of health care resources in the treatment of patients cross regions, hospitals and academic medical centers. The report found that there is still widespread variation in how patients are treated, and those findings were primarily due to where patients lived.

The existing systems of care in the regions studied explained the variations in the treatment of chronically ill individuals enrolled in Medicare, with the declines in the rate of deaths in hospitals providing evidence that the provision of care more closely aligns with patients preferences. There was a concern expressed by the report however, that the growth in intensive care and medical specialty availability may lead to increased aggressiveness of care that patients receive, with patient preference not always as the determining factor.

Maybe Child's Play Isn't Just That...

The New York Times *Fixes* Columnist, David Bornstein, reports that recess provides a unique opportunity for healthy play and represents an integral roll in healthy development of children. He reports that most American children get a mere 26 minutes of play each day if any at all. Recess shouldn't be seen as something that can be excluded or seen as a liability, but rather as a unique opportunity for boosting academic performance, the cultivation of needed social skills and producing opportunities for physical activity for kids who are often too sedentary.

Not all academic leaders agree however, since studies indicate that nearly 90% of school-based discipline problems occur around recess time. One principal noted that "recess is even meaner than it used to be".

But Bornstein asserts that the *Playworks* program includes dedicated coaches who help kids engage in healthy, safe and fun play throughout the school day. This innovative national model transforms schools on and off the playground with principals and teachers reporting increased physical activity among students, increased student cooperation and focus in the classroom and reduced conflicts.

Mayo Clinic Health Letter – May 2011

Available at www.healthletter.mayoclinic.com this month's issue contains articles on LDL Cholesterol – New Measurement of Risk; health tips for grilling food safely; Ten Tips for Improving Your Health; Social Anxiety and Learning to Enjoy Others; and, the Wonders of Chocolate – Healthy Perks in Small Amounts. Read more at the website.

New “Survival Toolkit” from the Michigan League

The Michigan League for Human Services has developed a guide for families seeking a range of programs for low-income individuals and families, including information about:

- Public Health Insurance Programs
- Poverty Guidelines for 2011
- Food Assistance Program (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program – SNAP)
- Family Independence Program
- Child Care Assistance
- State Emergency Relief
- Housing Choice Voucher Program
- Weatherization Assistance Program
- Home Heating Tax Credit
- Hotlines and Contact Information for 211 and contact numbers for number of other services

More detailed information on these programs and others is available at www.michigan.gov/helpinghand and Money Back in Michigan at www.mlhs.org. Copies of the brochure are available at www.mlhs.org.

Interruptions and Errors

NurseZone.com reports that the Virginia Mason Medical Center in Seattle uses a variety of visual clues to reduce the number of nurse interruptions, particularly during medication administration and increase the time that nurses are able to spend at the bedside. Signs, red tape and other cues indicate that a particular nurse is busy and that an interruption might result in an error. Hospitals that participate in the *Transforming Care at the Bedside* project are also encouraging patients to take a quiet time to allow nurses to chart without interruption and also encouraging patients' family members to call at prescribed times to reduce the number of pages from families throughout the day.

Here Comes the Sun: Now that Summer's Almost Here A Few Facts About Vitamin D and Sunshine

Question: How much sun exposure do I need for vitamin D?

Answer: You probably need from 5 to 30 minutes of exposure to the skin on your face, arms, back or legs twice every week. The amount of exposure also depends on the time of the year. In the northern hemisphere, the UVB is more intense during the summer months and less intense during the winter months. In fact, if you live north of the 42-degree latitude, you will have a difficult time getting enough vitamin D from the sun from November through February. Since exposure to sunlight is a risk for skin cancer, you should use sunscreen after a few minutes in the sun and even in the winter and on hazy, cloudy days.



Vitamin D is necessary for absorption and utilization of calcium, so you need adequate amounts of vitamin D for healthy bones. Research studies also suggest that getting enough vitamin D may help to prevent high blood pressure, multiple sclerosis and some forms of cancer.

And the musing . . .

. . . a recent article in www.medscape.com provides a literature review on what motivates the second degree/career student to select nursing, and cites the knowledge of why individuals select nursing careers is important in the recruitment of students, providing them with learning experiences that meet their needs, motivating them to complete nursing education and encouraging them to remain in the nursing workforce.

Understandably, individuals seek a nursing degree after an experience of their own ill-health or that of a family member, and the individual nurses they encounter in those experiences have a strong, positive effect on a choice to change careers and become a nurse. The influence of family members who are nurses is also a positive one, and the recognition of nurses as caring, compassionate professionals is another motivating factor. Always strive to be the nurse that motivates another to follow you in the profession.

Mary Scoblic, Editor