

Holiday Greetings

The Board of RN-AIM offers their wishes for the holidays and the hope that you will be with family and friends and find fulfillment in whichever holidays you celebrate...be it Kwanzaa, Chanukah or Christmas. And we look forward to a New Year that is both exciting and challenging. Year 2012 will certainly bring some changes our way as we move forward as the Constituent Membership Association (CMA) for Michigan.

Welcome to Our New ANA/RN-AIM Colleagues

During November, several ANA members who had not previously been members of RN-AIM members, joined us and we anticipate that many more will be joining as their membership renewal comes due. The RN-AIM Board welcomes each nurse who joins the newly established Constituent Membership Association for Michigan. We are so pleased to once again have a connection to the national organization and feel that it is crucial to assuring professionalism among Michigan nurses. **Welcome! Welcome!**

We Would Also Like to Acknowledge those RN-AIM members who were already members of ANA and who were instrumental in helping RN-AIM to achieve Constituent status. Three people in particular deserve mention: Julia Stocker-Schneider, Linda Mondoux and Margaret Flatt, who had early discussions with ANA and encouraged the RN-AIM Board to move forward in their efforts to become the CMA for Michigan. Linda and Julia have been Delegates-at-Large to the ANA Conventions, and Margaret and several others served as the Steering Committee for this endeavor.

Gallup Identifies Nurses as First in Ethics

Since 1999, nurses have earned the top spot in Gallup polls to determine the group that the public sees as most ethical. The only year that nurses placed second was 2001, after the September 11 terrorist attacks. That year, firefighters ranked first. Nurses received ratings of "high" or "very high" for honesty and ethics from 84% of adult US respondents to the Gallup poll. Karen Daley, the ANA President was quoted as saying that "the public's continued trust in nurses is well-placed, and reflects an appreciation for the many ways nurses provide expert care and advocacy."

And Speaking of Advocacy...

The title for the 2012, 7th Annual RN-AIM Conference and Assembly has been chosen by the Planning Committee – Nurse as Advocate – and topics and potential speakers have already been identified. The Conference is scheduled for September 20-21, 2012 at the Bay Valley Resort in Bay City. Karen Brown-Fackler is the Committee Chair, and is assisted by individuals representing the regions of RN-AIM. Look for more information regarding the conference in the near future.

Governor Signs Anti-Bullying Bill

Governor Snyder recently signed the amended anti-bullying bill which was the source of nationwide scorn in its original form. The controversial language originally passed by the Senate, which exempted statements based on religious or moral grounds and described by some legislators as a license to bully, was stricken in the House and the Senate then passed the House version, with dissent from two members who felt it was not strong enough because it does not require reporting on instances of bullying or outlaw cyber-bullying. Every school in Michigan will be required to have an anti-bullying policy before the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year.

One in 20 Kindergartners Unvaccinated

The Associated Press recently published a report that 1 in 20 kindergartners in eight states are unvaccinated at school entry and ten states reported that the rate of exemptions increased by 1.5% or more for five years. Exemption rates typically are found for children with special needs or decreased immune response, but in Michigan, exemptions are also given for “Strongly held religious or ethical beliefs,” but no evidence is required for exemption, so many parents request exemptions without supporting cause. Exemption rates that exceed 5% place unvaccinated children at-risk for disease and exclusion from school in the event of disease. High exemption rates also place the whole child population at-risk for increased incidence of disease. For example, an immunization rate of 95% is necessary to prevent outbreaks of measles.



Funding for Tobacco Use Prevention Dwindling

Over the past four years, funding for smoking prevention has decreased by 36%, severely threatening the ability of the nation to move forward in the efforts to eliminate smoking and subsequent deaths. While the state will collect \$25.6 billion this year from the Tobacco Settlement, only a fraction – 1.8% or \$456.7 million – will be spent on tobacco prevention programs to help adults quit and prevent children from smoking. In Michigan, the vast majority of Tobacco Settlement money has always been spent on other activities instead of smoking cessation and prevention; plugging holes in Medicaid and used for a variety of purposes other than for what it was intended. With 20% of Americans still smoking, a report titled “A Broken Promise to Our Children” warns that progress toward reducing smoking, the number cause of preventable death, is at-risk unless states reverse the current use of settlement dollars and focus on smoking prevention.

More Websites to Visit

The Michigan Department of Community Health publishes “FluBytes” weekly during flu season, containing information on flu statistics throughout the state and in several other countries. To receive FluBytes, visit: [http://www.michigan.gov/mdch/O.1607.7-132-2940_2955_22779\)_40563-125027--.00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdch/O.1607.7-132-2940_2955_22779)_40563-125027--.00.html).

The Michigan League for Human Services has recently published “Real People, Real Facts, Real Fallout” to describe how families and individuals are impacted by the loss of \$550 million dollars to the Michigan economy. Visit their website at www.hmls.org to view this and other reports from the League.

The Michigan Public Health Association has published the fall issue of “Impact” that includes information on coming events an extensive article on public health accreditation and a report from our national representative. Visit the website at www.mipha.org.

And the Musing...

This is the time of year when we need to think particularly about the homeless and those without the means to share the joy of the season with their families. As helping professionals, nurses often have daily interactions with individuals less fortunate than themselves, but at this season it is even more imperative to do so. We all deserve to have a joyous holiday season.