



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**MESSAGE FROM MARY CLEARY,
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

After much discussion and planning, Interfaith Health & Wellness Association has become an Association of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Palm Beach, effective September 1, 2006.

Catholic Charities Programs serve people of all religious affiliations and ethnic origins.

Human resource operations and accounting are being handled by the respective departments at Catholic Charities in conjunction with Interfaith Health & Wellness. Benefits include expanding outreach, streamlining office procedures, utilizing bulk mailing rates, and increasing Faith Community Nurse training .

I would like to encourage everyone involved in health care advocacy to read the following article on the training that was held at Florida Atlantic University. The Medicaider database program is a great resource that quickly provides a list of health-care and financial support to help those in need. Another training session will be held in February.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish to thank Susan Dyess for her faithful commitment to the specialty practice of Faith Community Nursing and for taking the time to arrange these classes. Susan Dyess and Dr. Susan Chase will again be leading the Annual Faith Community Nursing Retreat in June. Mark your calendars now for that event. We plan to have an evening during the week where alumni of previous retreats will come and share their experiences.

As we look forward to a new year, may our Faith continue to strengthen us to bring wellness and wholeness to everyone we encounter.

Mary Cleary



Medicaider™ Training

Vital Training Session Held

Susan Dyess, RN, MSN, Teaching Associate & Project Director, at Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, Florida Atlantic University (FAU) lead a training session, in December, on the new web-based health insurance eligibility tool - the Medicaider™ at the FAU Jupiter Campus in the Life-long Learning Center.

Medicaider™ is a program accessible through the Internet that provides a method of screening for individual eligibility for healthcare services and resources. This screening process can be done in 3 minutes and the results enable identification of appropriate resources to provide assistance. If necessary, referrals can be made to a healthcare navigator. Susan Dyess said, "For Faith Community Nurses this will assist greatly in identifying appropriate resources for those in need." She affirmed the role of Faith Community Nurses as "advocates for those who need help."

The Medicaider™ online database allows parish nurses and health care advocates to immediately and accurately determine a client's eligibility for health care and financial assistance programs by asking a series of questions. There are about 45 programs that it screens for including a Financial Support Program For Cancer Patients; Health Insurance Application For Pregnant Women; Emergency Medicaid for aliens less than 1 year old; KidCare Application; numerous Patient Assistance Program Applications from Pharmaceutical Companies; free primary care at CareLink in Palm Beach County and Caridad Clinic; and County Health Care District forms including help paying the monthly premium for commercial health insurance.

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Upcoming Workshops & Events

Community Health Planning & Partnerships Workshops: Heath and Home-Community; Family and Transportation; Environment and Physical Activity; Technology and Education; Employment-Money and Food. If you would like to participate in any of the five workshops, contact Rhonda Feldman at 561-681-2524, x 127.

Everglades Area Health Education Center, Inc. will host "The Sixth Annual Glades REACH Fair" on Saturday, March 3, 2007 to educate residents about the various health programs at their disposal. For more info, call 561-640-3620.

SAVE THE DATE—Thursday, April 19, 2007
Annual Faith-Based Nurse Recognition Luncheon
More info forthcoming!

Parish Nurse Networking

A breakfast meeting of about 20 parish nurses from the Palm Beach County area was held in October in Boynton Beach. The dialogue was lively and vital information was exchanged. Mary Rodriguez, Director of LifeLine, talked about her experiences:

I attended the Basic Preparation Retreat at Duncan Center earlier this year and I just loved every minute of it. I have described my experience as a "life changing event." That sounds a little extravagant, however, I was so renewed and charged with enthusiasm for my nursing profession upon completion of the Basic Faith Community Nursing course that I wanted to share what I had learned with others right away.

In spite of my age, 61, I felt a new calling to function as a nurse and I was affirmed in my profession for the first time in a long time. Almost immediately I called my pastor, Fr. Richard, at St. Marks in Boynton and asked for a meeting which he willingly agreed to. I think that my enthusiasm was contagious for him as he suggested that we schedule a meeting for any other nurses in the parish who might be interested in parish nursing which we are in the process of scheduling. From my own parish I went with Debbie Fulton, a fellow Interfaith Health & Wellness "retreatant" to meet with the Parish Administrator at her church. We left the Basic Retreat Course manual with him for review. At the pastor's suggestion we were then asked to meet with the head of the Family Life Ministry. She too was very excited about having parish nurses join the team of "parish council/ministries" and they will consider parish nursing at their next planning meeting!

It's a start and it will take time to fully implement. I am thankful for the preparation and encouragement. I would greatly encourage nurses who are interested in this specialty practice of nursing to attend the Basic Preparation Retreat in June.



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Vital Training

Application forms can be printed and a list of County Health Care Advocates is available.

You may start an interview (by typing in your username and password) without having to identify the person being interviewed. There is a "suggested introduction" on the interview page to help you introduce the client to what will be asked:

This interview may find a program that may find places where you can get regular care and other services or can assist in paying part or all of your bills, if you need them. I will need to ask you questions about your current citizenship, age, household composition, income, bank accounts, and assets...

There is also help in filling out the questions by clicking on the underlined keyword or link on the page.

After answering the questions, within a few minutes a list of resources will come up. You then have the option of continuing with the interview and submitting the data.

The benefits of utilizing this web-based system include:

- Quickly determining a client's eligibility for health care and financial assistance programs.
- You don't have to install software or configure your computer; Medicaider™ is available over the Internet.
- If the applicant is eligible, you can print the application forms right then.

Palm Beach County Community Health Alliance (PBCCHA), an alliance of over 30 public and private safety net health and mental health providers and supporters who are collaborating for healthcare access, provides access to Medicaider™ free of charge.



Susan Dyess and Sr. Anne Meehan access the online database to reveal sources of help for those in need.

This web-based application is accessible through the Internet by health professionals with the required hardware, software, security, and training. Any computer capable of running Windows 95 or later that has a high-speed Internet access such as DSL, cable, ISDN, or wireless can run it.

If you are interested in obtaining access to this resource or to sign up for the next training, please contact Bernadette Macy at Interfaith Health & Wellness Association, 561-379-1972 or e-mail ihwa@ihwassoc.org.

Annual Retreat Experience

Basic Preparation Curriculum For Faith Community Nursing June 4th-8th, 2007

All nurses considering a faith community nursing practice are welcome and encouraged to attend the parish nurse basic preparation curriculum. Recognized by the International Parish Nurse Resource Center, the training is being offered at Duncan Conference Center in south Florida through a partnership between Interfaith Health & Wellness Association and the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing at Florida Atlantic University.

For more info, call 561-379-1972 or visit our website www.IHWAssoc.org.



Visit us on the web

www.IHWAssoc.org



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*Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Palm Beach
Supporting Faith Based Nursing in South Florida*

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