

Lots of News this issue...

Nurses are so incredibly awesome, and there are over 3 million of us nationwide.

**Please visit the website and read the document on:
“MAINTAINING THE ROLE OF THE CHIEF NURSE EXECUTIVE”**

The unique-to-Michigan Role of Chief Nurse Executive is a crucial component in the response to the nursing shortage we are experiencing. Familiarize yourself with the accomplishments of the Chief Nurse, Jeanette Klemczak, and the individuals who have served on Task Forces to assist her in this endeavor, then speak with your State Representatives and Senators who have tried several times in the past to eliminate this position. As you are aware, the position is funded through our license fees, and as such should not be subject to cuts by the legislature.

**Stabenow Introduces Legislation Focused
On the
Improvement In Nursing Education**

Senator Debbie Stabenow (d-Mich) has introduced a bill aimed at enhancing education and training opportunities for advanced-practice nurses. Specifically, the measure would increase Medicare funding to hospitals and affiliated nursing schools that form partnerships to advance the careers of clinical specialists, nurse practitioners, certified nurse anesthetists and certified nurse midwives. An analysis of the measure indicates that this could increase the number of advanced practice nurses by as much as 25%. An online transcript posted by the Library of Congress suggests that Medicare currently provides ONLY \$150 million toward nursing education, while medical education receives approximately **\$9 BILLION** for graduate education. The proposal is endorsed by eight Nurses' Associations and well as the AARP. The RN-AIM Board will be polled during our August 28th meeting concerning our endorsement of the proposal, particularly since Ms. Stabenow represents Michigan.

**Summary of the Task Force on Nursing
Education Report**

The Task Force on Nursing Education has completed its work and presented seven recommendations to the Department of Community Health Director for changes in statutes, rules and policies to improve the education of nurses and the practice of nursing in Michigan. An Executive Summary has been compiled that provides the recommendations, the background for the development of the Task Force, the charge to Task Force members, the description of the process followed to develop the recommendations and the description of the Stakeholder Council that advised the Task Force regarding its charge.

The final report of the Task Force will be available online at www.michigan.gov/mdch/ocne. It is also available at www.michigancenterfor nursing.org and www.micomon.org. RN-AIM was ably represented in the Task Force work by Susan Meeker, the Chair of the Council on Administration and Education. We thank Susan for her excellent work as a Task Force member.

RN-AIM 2009 Annual Conference Update

The conference is rapidly approaching and registrations are beginning to come to the central office. The Planning Committee has put together a series of speakers to increase your clinical knowledge and there will be many opportunities for networking with colleagues, as well as vendors to be visited and an auction that will include items from each of the regions. Registrations forms can be completed and the fee paid by check, Visa or MasterCard. If you wish to sponsor a student, that would be most appreciated. I hope to see all of you October 8th and 9th at the Inn at St. Johns in Plymouth.

The CONFERENCE BROCHURE, including the REGISTRATION FORM, can be found on our website: www.RN-AIM.org. A copy is also being provided via an attachment to the email that is distributing this newsletter. If you do not have access to a printer, please call the number listed below and a hardcopy will be mailed to you.

Another Resource to Help Nurses and Patients/Clients

Tobacco Free Nurses is the first national program created with the objective of helping nurses quit smoking and assist their patient and clients to quit as well. The Program provides resources to nurses to aid quitting for themselves and their patients. The goal of the program is to promote tobacco control as part of the agenda of nursing organizations nationwide. The website is www.tobaccofreenurses.org. The three million nurses in the US can be a powerful force in the global fight against tobacco use. While Michigan has done much to assist in this goal, there are still many communities throughout the state that have not adopted smoke-free workplace statutes or policies.

On the website, nurses will find many resources, some specifically written by or about nurses and tobacco control, evidence-based resources to use in clinical practice and media materials (posters, brochures and flyers) that can be downloaded for your use. The materials have been developed by the US Department of Health and Human Services, and urge nurses to talk to their patients and clients about quitting smoking and to offer effective resources to assist them.

Introducing the Michigan Neonatal BioTrust for Health

The Michigan Department of Community Health is seeking your input via a survey about the use of leftover blood spots from the newborn screening, required by law, for public health research. The blood spots will be those not used to determine the infants' status regarding a number of congenital diseases. These blood spots will not be identifiable to anyone involved in the research using the filter paper blood spots. Any Michigan resident over the age of 18 years may complete the survey. Staff from the Birth Defects Program invites you to visit: www.michigan.gov/newbornscreening and click on the link "Michigan BioTrust for Health" to learn more about the proposal and complete the survey. The survey is open to all Michigan citizens and, as a health professional, it would be very helpful for the program to hear from nurses throughout the state.

. . . and another group is seeking assistance from our members in assuring that patients and clients are aware of the dangers of pesticides . . .

The Michigan Environmental Council has developed information on protecting our citizens from pesticides. Their information describes the problem of pesticides in our environment and its impact on health, with special emphasis on children's health and the health of pregnant women. Pesticide exposure in children is linked to increases in cancer as well as hyperactivity, developmental delays, behavioral disorders and motor dysfunction.

Studies indicate that the greatest risk in fetal development comes from exposure during the first three to eight weeks of gestation when the neural tube development is occurring. For more information, please contact www.environmentalcouncil.org, the March of Dimes website at www.marchofdimes.com/michigan/ or Beyond Pesticides at www.beyondpesticides.org.

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Announces the Initiative on the Future of Nursing

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Initiative on the Future of Nursing will hold its second committee meeting on Monday, September 14th. The agenda for the open session is now available at the Institute of Medicine website and individuals who wish to listen to the content of the meeting may do so via a webcast of the meeting that will be provided by the Kaisernetnetwork.org. The webcast will be accessible via a link on the project website www.iom.edu/nursing on the day of the meeting.

The meeting will include an overview of the Prime Minister's Commission on the Future of Nursing and Midwifery, presentations on fulfilling the potential of the nursing workforce and an overview of the status of health care reform. Presenters include Commissioners of the United Kingdom's commission, leaders in the field of nursing and health policy experts.

RN-AIM.org Website

We will be adding a listing of Michigan nurse job opening websites to www.RN-AIM.org. As we learn of more, the listing will be updated. Stay tuned . . .

And last, but not least, the musing...

I hope you are engaged in the discussions regarding the health care plan currently under consideration by the US Congress. The opinions of health care professionals and, nurses in particular, need to be heard in this discussion in order to ensure that the product eventually voted on is the best and most encompassing of citizens as is possible. As a nurse, you can help guide the discussion by attending a meeting held by your U.S. Representative and/or Senators. For a list of meetings currently planned, visit the Michigan League for Human Services at www.milhs.org. If you are unable to attend a meeting in your district, call your of Congressman, particularly if he/she is on one of the three House committees that approve health legislation. You can do so by using a toll free number (1-800/245-0215) that connects you to the Capitol switchboard. And/or e-mail your Representative and ask them to think of children and the uninsured when they vote for whatever legislation eventually emerges.

Share your concerns about health care reform with your Senators and Representatives and offer your support for excellence in health care and coverage of our most vulnerable citizens.

The majority of Americans support health care reform. A new poll completed by Time Magazine reported the 55% of citizens said it is more important to pass "major" health reform initiatives rather than making "minor" adjustments to the existing system. Sixty-three percent (63%) said they would support providing health care coverage for all Americans, even if the government had to subsidize those who could not afford it. Furthermore, 56% said they support a "public health insurance option" with private health care plans.

Many disturbing myths are circulating about the proposed legislation. You can help dispel those rumors by familiarizing yourself with the components of the plans, and sharing accurate information with your patients and clients.