



The Connecticut Department of Public Health  
**VIRTUAL OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING**



**VOPHN NEWSLETTER**



Welcome to the first issue of the Virtual Office of Public Health Nursing (VOPHN) newsletter. VOPHN represents a cross section of all Nurses working within the Department of Public Health. The mission of VOPHN is to strengthen and support the role of Nurses working in the public health arena to improve the health and safety of Connecticut's population. For a complete look at what VOPHN does, see story on page 2. Facilitating the timely exchange of information is one of the main areas that the VOPHN has been able to be a viable link and asset for nurses across the agency, academia, local public health nurses and community partners.

Please visit the VOPHN website to learn more about public health nursing at DPH and beyond.

<http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3136&q=413026>

The newsletter will be published four times per year, Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall. To submit an article, contact Barbara Dingfelder in the Office of Local Health Administration at 860-509-

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**NIGHTINGALE AWARD**  
**DPH Nightingale Award for Excellence in Nursing:**



The Nightingale award is a program developed by the Visiting Nurse Association of South Central Connecticut to be a collaborative effort to acknowledge outstanding nurses and elevate the nursing profession. The goals of the program are to encourage retention, inspire future nurses, focus public attention, and recognize the breadth and scope of nursing practice. Since inception, the program has grown to include Eastern Connecticut, Fairfield County, Hartford, along with the original program in New Haven.

In honor of National Nurses Week, the DPH sponsored its first annual DPH *Nightingale Awards for Excellence in Nursing*. The nominee was eligible for the 8th annual Hartford regional award. And the winner was .....

Pat Gannon , FLIS

See full story on Pat on page 4



Do you have a story to tell, notes from the field, pictures or other information about public health nursing? Please share it with other public health nurses through this newsletter.

Contact Barbara Dingfelder at: 860-509-7202 or Debbye Rosen at 860-509-7729



PHOTO: VOPHN MEMBERS

Nurses at the State Department of Public Health are allied through the Virtual Office of Public Health Nursing (VOPHN). The purpose of VOPHN is to:

- Identify and promote “best practice models”
- Discuss public health Nursing practice issue
- Provide support for the development of public health nurses within our systems.
- Promote voluntary collabora-

tions between stakeholders who are focused on shared interests.

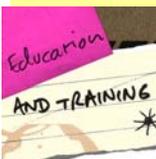
- Coordinate and promote continuing education opportunities related to public health nursing practice.
- Foster a collective public health nursing voice and response capability.
- Increase opportunities for information sharing and access to resources.
- Facilitate communication and networking with our community partners.
- Foster group participation in decision-making
- Provides recognition of nurses’ contributions to public health systems
- Provides a focal point for assessment of this workforce component including
  - ◊ Where are the nurses? What titles? Programs?
  - ◊ What potential roles will PHN be needed to fill

duing emergencies?

- ◊ How “ready” is our PHN workforce to respond ?
- ◊ What needs to be done to support readiness preparedness

Current members of VOPHN are :

- ◊ Dr Norma Gyle, Deputy Commissioner DPH
- ◊ Pamela Kilbey Fox, Office of Local Health Administration (OLHA)
- ◊ Wendy Furniss, Branch Chief, Facilities and Practitioner Licensing Branch (FLIS)
- ◊ Barbara Dingfelder, (OLHA)
- ◊ Andrea Lombard, HIV/AIDS Surveillance
- ◊ Kristln Sullivan, Planning
- ◊ Gloria Powell, Comprehensive Cancer Prevention and Control
- ◊ Eileen Boulay, Asthma
- ◊ Elizabeth Reynolds, Asthma
- ◊ Linda Bailey, Lead



## CONTINUING EDUCATION

On April 15, 2010 VOPHN and the Connecticut Association of Public Health Nurses (CAPHN) sponsored Public Health Nursing 2010: Community Needs and Creating Opportunities through Networks at Yale School of Public Health West Campus. # of participants attended. In addition to the slide presentations, the day featured poster presentations by Nursing students from Sacred Heart and Fairfield Universities . The highlight of the day was the oral reports of their experiences by Nursing Students from Hartford Public High Nursing Academy. The students shared their Academy experiences and future Nursing plans

Since 2007, VOPHN has coordinated 5 such conferences throughout the state

The next conference is planned for the fall of 2010. If you would like to participate in the next conference, contact Barbara Dingfelder: 860-509-7202 or Debbye Rosen at: 860-509 7729

Poster Presentations and Networking  
April 15th VOPHN conference



Visit the VOPHN website for more information:

<http://www.ct.gov/dph/cwp/view.asp?a=3136&q=413026>



## A Profile of Nurses Working in Connecticut's Health Departments-- State Health

Published in 2006, the report is an assessment to provide context for strategic planning to enhance a statewide public health nursing network

The Connecticut public health system was established in 1878. There are two tiers, the state health department and local health . Local health agencies vary in size, composition and provision of service.

The state Department of Public Health (DPH) utilizes general classifications for nurses and two functional levels:

### STAFF

- ◇ Clinical Nurse 1
- ◇ Nurse Consultant
- ◇ Utilization Review Nurse Coordinator

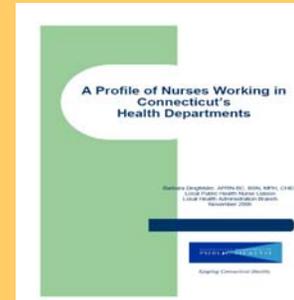
### SUPERVISOR

- ◇ Supervising Nurse Consultant

In addition, nurses work in non nursing titles throughout the agency as staff and managers. 75% of the nursing positions at DPH are within regulatory services

A link to the entire report is below

[http://www.ct.gov/dph/lib/dph/infectious\\_diseases/immunization/vophn/ctphnprofilerept\\_02-07\\_2\\_\\_\\_final.pdf](http://www.ct.gov/dph/lib/dph/infectious_diseases/immunization/vophn/ctphnprofilerept_02-07_2___final.pdf)



Celebrate Nursing-Looking at Our Past and Celebrating Our Future

**SEPTEMBER 29, 2010 8:30-11:00AM**  
470 Capitol Ave.  
Conference Room C

Come to this very special event to celebrate nursing and the important work that each of us do. To help celebrate please share your story and pictures that define nursing practice, describe what inspires someone to choose nursing as a profession, experiences that keep us inspired, and the rewards of being a nurse.

**PLEASE BE SURE TO OBTAIN SUPERVISOR'S APPROVAL TO ATTEND**



Lillian Wald

In 1893 she coined the term "public health nurse" to describe nurses whose work is integrated into the public community.



## Scope and Standards of Public Health Nursing Practice



### VOPHN LOGO

Above is the VOPHN logo, symbolizing the bridges we are building to foster public health nursing in Connecticut.

- The scope and standards were updated by a working group convened by the American Nurses Association. Published in 2007, the scope and standards
- ◇ Articulates the essentials of public health nursing
  - ◇ Is the core resource for nurses who focus their professional life in public health nursing
  - ◇ Articulates six standards of nursing practice and ten standards for nursing professional performance
  - ◇ Each standard sets a measurement criteria that reflect the values and priorities of the public health nursing specialty

**Public health practice embraces all those actions that are directed to the assessment of health and disease problems in the population; the formulation of policies dealing with such problems; and the assurance of environmental, behavioral, and medical services designed to accelerate favorable \*health trends and reduce the unfavorable\***

**\*Afifi, Abdelmonem A. & Breslow, Lester (1994), The maturing paradigm of public health. In: *Annual Review of Public Health*, Vol. 15, 223-235, here: 2324**

### PAT GANNON 1ST Annual DPH Nightingale Award winner



Pat Gannon has been employed since August 2000, as a Nurse Consultant at the DPH, FLIS. Pat is assigned to the complaint unit and is responsible for investigating complaints and conducting licensure and certification surveys in a variety of health care settings including general hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers and long term care facilities. Pat continually exceeds expectations with regards to the quality of her investigations and survey competence and knowledge. Pat has proven to be a vital asset in the Department's ability to respond to customer needs. Based on the varied nature of consumer complaints, Pat has demonstrated flexibility, initiative, and exceptional clinical skills. She is able to apply diverse and customized

services to every investigation she is assigned. Although Pat has been involved with many serious and contentious investigations in her role as a regulator, she has gained the respect of the health care industry. Pat is adept at applying state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to licensed health care institutions which is crucial to the quality of her investigations and allows her to maintain an impartial perspective to provide a non-biased, objective review of the issues. At the same time, her in-depth knowledge of the regulations allows her to provide technical assistance to institutional staff.

Pat is very dedicated to her work and is willing to work whenever it is necessary. Because of Pat's attention to detail during the investigative process, she has

demonstrated her genuine commitment to our citizens and has empowered them to feel that their concerns will be heard and fairly addressed. As a result of her investigations, one can be assured that her work product clearly reflects whether or not the care rendered to every patient identified in a consumer complaint was appropriate to meet the patient's needs in a safe, appropriate and dignified manner.

Within the Department, her peers have recognized Pat as being someone who practices the art of nursing with a strong knowledge base coupled with compassion and empathy for the recipients of care. She is viewed as a mentor for new staff and as someone who is able to provide consultative services to other staff members and health care providers. Pat approaches her role as a surveyor with patience and confidence. All of the above qualities identify an exceptional nurse, Pat Gannon.