

THE SWVMHI NEWS

Southwestern Virginia Mental Health Institute

Volume XXIX, No. 7

Health Healing Hope

November 30, 2007

OUR MISSION: We promote mental health in Southwestern Virginia by assisting people in their recovery.

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Today, I have turned this column over to T. Russell McGrady, M.A., M.B.A., Clinical Director, who has agreed this month to summarize the High Performance Organization efforts at SWVMHI.

The great management sage, Peter Drucker, once wryly observed, “Eventually all great plans devolve into work.” This observation is not lost on several groups of SWVMHI staff members who have agreed to tackle some of our most stubborn challenges, all within the framework of the “High Performance Organization” (HPO) initiative. These staff members volunteered to become what are currently referred to as “Change Agents” after completing the three-day HPO training. Change Agents (stay tuned for a possible name change) consulted with senior management in defining some of the most pressing issues facing the facility and are currently in the process of clarifying these issues and deciding how best to confront the obstacles they present to our ability to better fulfill our facility mission.

A “high performing organization” is one that best makes use of the varying abilities, interests, and motivation of all of its members in ever higher levels of service to the organization’s mission. In the past, traditional organizations settled into a division of labor in which management “managed” and the rest of the staff “got managed” as they performed their respective duties. The realization that leadership and creativity are not limited to the few in the corner offices and must be obtained from throughout the entire organization has had a profound effect on the way we work in today’s world. Healthcare is no different in this regard, nor is public mental healthcare. We are rich in the diverse training, experiences, and sensibilities of our staff, and are therefore well positioned to take advantage of this strength as we struggle with some perplexing problems. Having been chartered by the Executive Management Committee, the all-volunteer Change Agent teams are taking the lead in this effort.

Due to various factors, SWVMHI is admitting a steadily high number of individuals every year with extremely acute mental health, behavioral, and medical needs. We must continue to perform this service while remaining within tight limitations on our resources. The Institute continues to progress toward a recovery-oriented system of service delivery, and will continue to be evaluated by the Office of the Inspector General, and others, to measure this progress. Efforts to become increasingly coercion-free, including lowering use of seclusion and restraint, continue to be front-burner initiatives, as are the connected issues involving the enhancement of staff and patient safety. All of these matters are central to our overall mission to facilitate recovery from mental illness, as well as our vision for the future and the shared values that drive our efforts. Each of these areas of focus is represented by at least one of the Change Agent teams.

THE CHANGE AGENT TEAMS

1. The Mission/Vision/Values Team has been working to create and clarify a Vision for the Institute that supports our Mission Statement and embodies our facility values. A Vision statement is meant to capture a longer-term view of what an organization seeks to become as it continuously strives toward fulfilling its Mission. The Values an organization embraces are meant to guide the day-to-day behaviors of all members of the staff. SWVMHI’s values are: Communication, Honesty with Compassion, Trust, Teamwork, Self-Initiative, Leadership at all levels, and Honoring Day-to-Day Tasks.

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Making each of these inter-related values more than mere words can be difficult. The Mission/Vision/Values Team has made significant progress in doing this, and is now working closely with EMC to complete this work and roll the information out to all staff members in a variety of ways over the coming months.

2. Collaborative Treatment Planning Team. In the recent Inspector General survey of recovery-oriented care delivered at SWVMHI, our treatment planning process and documentation was identified as needing fundamental adjustment. The current system does not reliably reflect a collaborative and “person-centered” experience in which the individuals we serve are meaningfully involved in constructing a plan for their recovery that is truly “theirs.” At the same time, staff members routinely say that the current Treatment Plan document is not particularly useful as a tool to specify and coordinate the various treatment activities that are fundamental to facilitating good treatment outcomes. The multi-disciplinary **Collaborative Treatment Planning Team** is working to develop a treatment planning document and process that is truly patient-centered, collaboratively developed, and useful to staff in guiding the treatment process.

3. Communications Team. The Joint Commission consistently finds communication shortcomings to be at the center of adverse treatment outcomes in the nation’s healthcare organizations. This is not surprising to anyone who has ever been asked to look into the underlying causes of a poor result, and yet communication issues are enormously complex and difficult to address. The **Communications Team** is tackling this problem by focusing on improving the nature and effectiveness of information flow between the various levels of staff at SWVMHI. At its heart, communication is about the movement of information between individuals and groups of people, and effective communication occurs when staff members have all of the information required to perform their tasks as well as they can be performed. This team of Change Agents has identified an area on which to focus initially, recognizing that making improvements in one form of communication strengthens others in turn.

4. Consultation Team. In today’s operating environment, responsible use of resources is an absolute requirement. It is not news to any of us that we are continuously being asked to do more with less, as is the case in any industry anywhere, yet time, effort, and capital are always limited. One of the primary consumers of resources in our environment is the use of outside consultations for forms of care we do not deliver at SWVMHI. Ensuring that we are as efficient as we can be in this area, while still meeting our responsibilities as healthcare providers is imperative, and the **Consultation Team** of Change Agents focusing on this issue is currently generating and analyzing relevant data in hopes of finding new ways of stretching resources while continuing to provide the quality care for which we are known in our region.

5. Staff and Patient Safety Team. One of the benefits of providing services in a more recovery-oriented environment is the improvement that is seen in staff and patient relations. The **Staff and Patient Safety Team** is focusing on changing the nature of much of the interaction that occurs between staff and those they serve to reflect a more collaborative and respectful tone. By facilitating greater levels of involvement in decision-making, the treatment experience becomes progressively less coercive, less marked by struggles for outright control that can often lead to violence and injury. As one team member recently summed up the team’s ultimate focus, “We just want to make this a better, safer place to recover and to work.”

Each of these five teams is made up of staff from throughout the Institute. Along with their respective EMC liaisons, who provide for effective information flow between each team and EMC as a whole, team members struggle to find time to work on their respective projects while continuing to perform their regular job duties. The teams solicit information from other staff members, pulling others into the process to leverage their personal expertise and insights. This “building the bridge while you walk on it” approach is labor intensive and takes time, but the ultimate outcomes bring us that much closer to our facility mission of “...promoting mental health in Southwestern Virginia by assisting people in their recovery.”

~Russ McGrady, Clinical Director

NEWS AND NOTES FROM YOUR SWVMHI LIBRARY

Thankfulness for reading.

“Every man who knows how to read has it in his power to magnify himself, to multiply the ways in which he exists, to make his life full, significant, interesting.” ~Aldous Huxley

We missed sharing with you all in the last newsletter, as this spot was taken for our annual survey. So we respond with our first thanks to you who took the time to read and respond to the library survey.

The library has the HPO recommended The Team Handbook. The book has been likened to a “team cook book,” and we know some of you really enjoy the new recipes that come in several of the periodicals we carry. Hopefully there is some transference there, as we learn to work together better for SWVMHI with teamwork recipes.

We are mindful of (and thankful for) a new mindfulness title, Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression, Segal et.al. It should be a help to us all in our understanding of how cognition and emotion interact.

Additionally, we are thankful for having the funds to be able to update some of the basic psychiatric reference works we carry and also add such titles as:

Field’s Chronic Pain. One of several EBM/P series titles that is coming our way, it puts me in mind of, as we think on being thankful for gifts, books, to be specific, the Brand and Yancy title, the gift nobody wants, The Gift of Pain.

Other EBM/P series titles coming our way will address Psychopharmacology, Schizophrenia, Alcohol Use Disorders, and Bipolar disorders. We are glad we can read and increase our helpfulness in approaching these daily concerns in our work lives.

We’ve appreciated Miller for some time now and have an update coming, Motivational Interviewing in the Treatment of Psychological Problems.

Grateful that we come with the ability to read about how to help ourselves as well as our patients, we are looking forward to two new titles coming our way: Pargament’s, Spiritually Integrated Psychotherapy, and Griffith’s, Encountering the Sacred in Psychotherapy.

We have four months of belated thankfulness to extend to the following persons who have contributed materials to the library: Alicia Alvarado, Robyn Anderson, Angela Berry, Debbie Borders, Roxanne Bowles, Sheila Buchanan, Kristi Burks, Gail Campbell, LeSu Cole, Elaine Davis, Joseph Dibble, Mary Dotson, Marlene Doyle, Kris Gaffney, Laurie Goral, Jouette Graham, Sandy Harless, Katherine Hogston, Kathy Huff, Bonnie Jessee, Ashley King, Roy Layne, Cynthia McClaskey, Doreen Nally, Diann Marshall, George Martin, Dick Mears, Jim Moon, Tammy Olinger, Judith Reid, Bonnie Spangler, Steve Patterson, Ginger Self, Leiann Smith, Linda Sturgill, William Totten, Sharon Winebarger, and Nancy Wood.

We think you all believe with us that, “It is man’s duty to have books. A library is not a luxury, but one of the necessities of life.” ~Henry Ward Beecher

Thank you one and all for making our necessity so much richer.

~Ann Mathews, Librarian

COMMENTS AND MISC.

THANKS TO ALL...

Thanks to all who made the wonderful retirement reception happen Everything was just great!

I shall treasure the beautiful Thomas Kinkade painting – *The Light Of Peace*, the “awesome” scrapbook that captured so many memories, and the plaque that extended appreciation for my years of service at SWVMHI.

Throughout my years at SWVMHI, I became acquainted with many co-workers that I have the privilege to call “friends.”

I am greatly enjoying retirement and look back with many fond memories.

May God Richly Bless You All –
~Rita Farmer

During our recent loss of Scotty, friends and co-workers like you have shown our family abundant kindness and thoughtfulness.

Thank you for your sympathy, support, concern, and for keeping us in your thoughts and prayers.
~Wyatt, Willow, and Crystal Billings

OVERHEAD PAGES



When using the overhead paging system, please speak clearly (do not shout)—including when

calling codes. The paging system should only be used when there is an immediate and urgent need to contact someone and when other methods of notification have been unsuccessful.

Please remember that the paging system should not be used for routine announcements that can be handled more effectively via voice mail messages, e-mail, or other means.

MEDICARE SIMPLIFIES WEBSITE

Medicare has unveiled a new web site which will hopefully make it easier to compare and choose private prescription drug plans. The site lets people sort plans by annual costs, the amount of premiums, and what kind of coverage is provided once the recipient has reached the “doughnut hole.” A five-star rating system is used to compare the plans on such factors as accessibility of care, quality of care, and customer satisfaction. There are also links to let you know which health-care providers are in each plan and which allow you to calculate what out-of-pocket costs will be. The web site is www.medicare.gov. The information may also be accessed by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (633-4227). Beneficiaries can continue to enroll for 2007 coverage through November 30, 2007. The open enrollment period for 2008 begins November 15 and ends December 31.

SUCCESSFUL CLEAN-UP DAY

The Waste Minimization Committee would like to thank everyone for a successful “Clean-up Day.” All were very enthusiastic about this special day that encouraged cleaning our patient and work areas.

Offices and units in the facility were visited by members of the committee, the “Green Team,” who distributed cleaning supplies and blue recycle cans. James Parks and Nathan Shelton visited areas in the afternoon that needed a special paper pick up. In all, about 1,000 pounds of paper and 500 pounds of cardboard were collected for recycling.

Watch for the schedule! The Waste Minimization Committee will be sponsoring regular “Green Days” in the future. If you have a special recycling project in mind or need assistance, let us know.

Recycling is Everyone’s Responsibility!
Become a Member of The GREEN TEAM!!

~Sharon Neitch, OTR/L

A TRUE TEAM EFFORT

As everyone is aware, Southwestern Virginia Mental Health Institute became a tobacco-free facility on October 10. Staff and patients alike have come together in a concerted effort to fulfill the Commissioner's directive to improve the quality of health for everyone. This has been a true team effort as indicated by the support staff and patients have received in their efforts to cease tobacco use.

As of the date of this newsletter, SWVMHI is 51 days into being a tobacco-free facility with minimal problems resulting. Some of the positive results of our becoming a tobacco-free facility include:

- Everyone is able to walk throughout the facility and grounds in a smoke-free environment.
- There has been a dramatic decrease in the debris resulting from tobacco use strewn upon the physical grounds.
- We are demonstrating more efficient and beneficial use of break times.
- Hopefully those who have committed to tobacco cessation are now reaping the benefits including better tasting food, more time to do other things, better overall physical health (feeling better!), and more money:
 - If you were a one pack a day smoker, you have already saved approximately \$156.00. If you were a two pack a day smoker, you have already saved approximately \$312.00.
 - If you used one can of snuff every two days, you have already saved approximately \$117.00.

However, the most important result is that SWVMHI is not only committed to providing excellence in care for the residents of southwest Virginia, we are also committed to setting a positive example for all. In our long history we have, and will continue to face, many challenges and obstacles. Becoming a tobacco-free facility was another unique challenge. However, with the help of our patients, staff, visitors, and vendors, the transition to a tobacco-free environment has been accomplished with minimal problems and disruptions. We appreciate your support!

~Don Chisler, Physical Plant Services Director; Debbie Boelte, Social Work Director;
Cindy Jones, R.N., Infection Control; and Anthony Gage, Community Services Director

Environment Influences Smoking Habit

A recent article from Indiana University Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences researchers reveals that being married to a nonsmoker and working in a completely smoke-free environment play key roles in long-term success for young adults who quit smoking.

The participants are part of a 27-year longitudinal study of the natural history of cigarette smoking and involved 327 people who had quit smoking as young adults. Of these, 219 remained abstinent for at least five years.

Logistic regression was used to examine odds ratios of prospective predictors of long-term abstinence versus relapse.

Overall, the study showed that 67% of participants maintained long-term abstinence and 33% relapsed. The strongest predictor of avoiding relapse was marrying a nonsmoker. The factor with the largest independent effect was external environment, that is, working in a completely smoke-free building. The study was supported by the National Institutes of Health, which has funded the IU Smoking Survey since it began in 1980.

~Macy, Jonathan T., Seo, Dong-Chul, Chassin, Laurie, Presson, Clark C., and Sherman, Steven J. **Prospective Predictors of Long-Term Abstinence Versus Relapse Among Smokers Who Quit as Young Adults.** Am J Public Health, Aug 2007; 97: 1470 - 1475.

SEVEN TIPS TO HELP WITH TOBACCO CRAVINGS

Breathe. Practice deep breathing to remain calm and relaxed.

Believe. Believe you're happy being a non-smoker.

Bypass. Bypass tempting situations until you're ready for them.

Break. Break your routine. Try new things or places with different people.

Begin. Begin an exercise program of walking at least 20 minutes three times a week.

Busy yourself. Keep a book or crossword puzzle with you at all times to avoid getting bored.

Bring. Bring your Nicotine Replacement Therapy with you and use it on a regular basis.

CORNER SHOT

Want to lose your junk mail? Here are some options from *Natural Home* magazine:

- For \$1, you can remove your name from the Direct Marketing Association list. Check out dmaconsumers.org.
- Visit optoutprescreen.com to remove your name from credit card and insurance mailings.
- When you're buying something online or subscribing, check the box that says, "Please do not rent, sell or trade my name or address." If this box doesn't exist, make the request by phone, e-mail or letter.

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA CAMPAIGN PRIZE WINNERS

The following employees enrolled for the Commonwealth of Virginia (CVC) Campaign at the Kick-off and won prizes:

Cindy Jones - \$25.00 Walmart Card
Ann Mathews - \$25.00 Food City Card

Virginia Tech T-Shirt Winners:

Judith Goodman, Lucita Chapman, Alicia Alvarado,
Patricia Evans, Greg Griffey, Jerry O'Dell,
Joseph Arp, Cheryl Veselik, Jennifer Cregger

UT T-Shirt Winners:

John O'Keefe, Rhonda Greene

Virginia Tech Visor Winners:

Lisa Berry, Sandra Cannon, Nancy Wood, Keith Hagy,
Bonnie Jessee, Mary Beth Counts, Steve Perry,
Norma Brickey, Betsy Perkins, C.J. Copenhaver, Debra Ellis

Thanks for supporting CVC!



SHARING + CARING = HOPE
GIVE HOPE!!

~Denise Deel, RT(R)(M), Radiology Supervisor

OPERATION SANTA CLAUS 2007

Dear SWVMHI Staff and Friends,

Each year at Christmas, you are given a chance to lend a helping hand by getting involved with Operation Santa Claus here at the hospital. Each year, many of you open your hearts and help make Christmas a special time for our patients.

This year is no different! You can help by giving a monetary gift to Operation Santa Claus or directly purchasing gifts for patients from the accompanying “Suggested Gifts” list.

If you have not helped before, we invite you to join in this time of giving. If you have given of yourself in the past, then you know how rewarding it is to guarantee a bright Christmas Season for our residents, some who would not be remembered at this time of year without your gifts.

Please contact Doug Smith, Volunteer Services Director, at ext. 855.

Operation Santa Claus is a celebration of the Christmas Spirit, thanks to all of you.
Merry Christmas!

Sincerely,

~Doug Smith
Volunteer Services Director



Suggested Gifts

Billfold/change purse

Cosmetics (no glass)

Shampoo (no glass)

Hair brushes/combs/handheld hair dryers

Aftershave (no glass)

Inexpensive clocks/watches

Inexpensive radios, headsets, cassette

players (with batteries)

Lotions/perfumes (no glass)

Toothbrush/toothpaste

Necklaces/earrings

Sweaters/jackets/windbreakers/coats

Raincoats/rain hats

Socks/t-shirts

Sweat suits

Toboggans/scarves/caps/hats/gloves

Pajamas/gowns/bedroom shoes/robes

Crafts kits and art supplies

Table/card games

Bingo/checkers

Stationery/tablets

All-occasion cards/postage stamps

Handheld hair dryers

WINNERS OF THE SWVMHI CAFE PUMPKIN CARVING CONTEST

FIRST PLACE: 'THE MORNING AFTER'

entered by Denise Deel

(Award: A Turtle Pumpkin Pie & \$5 Meal Certificate)

SECOND PLACE: 'JAZZY FAT CAT'

entered by Steve O'Brien & Wendy Marchant

(Award: Twelve Halloween Cupcakes)

There was a tie for THIRD PLACE:

'GREEN GOBLIN' entered by Jennifer Whitt and

'PUMPKIN BOO' entered by Sherry Crouse

(Award: A Treat Bag and Meal Certificate)

HONORABLE MENTIONS: Entries by Jen Billings & Barbara McCready



CONGRATULATIONS TO EACH WINNER!

HUMAN RESOURCES INFO.

NEW ONLINE WELLNESS RESOURCE AVAILABLE

State employees and their families now have access to a new online wellness resource through [Revolution Health <http://www.revolutionhealth.com/commonhealthva>](http://www.revolutionhealth.com/commonhealthva). The site offers a range of resources, from information on conditions and treatments to tips on how to develop and enjoy a healthy lifestyle. Here you will also find online tools like a BMI calculator, health assessments, and a Symptom Checker. You will also be able to set up and maintain a secure, personal online health record that will help you keep track of your medical history, allergies, prescriptions, and doctors' visits. Visit the [Revolution Health <http://www.revolutionhealth.com/commonhealthva>](http://www.revolutionhealth.com/commonhealthva) Web site to get started.

SWVMHI SPONSORS A SAM'S CLUB MEMBERSHIP

The annual membership cost is \$30.00. Employees may enroll anytime and should contact the Human Resources Office for details.
 ~ Annasue Cook, PHR, Human Resource Analyst I



EMPLOYEE DIRECT DEPOSIT AUTHORIZATION

Agencies have been asked to take proactive steps to improve participation rates. As of June 30, 2007, SWVMHI had 87.9 percent employees enrolled in Direct Deposit (or 535 employees).

If you are not already enrolled in Direct Deposit, you may visit www.doa.virginia.gov, and select DOA Forms to access the Employee Direct Deposit Authorization.

Direct Deposit—

- **Increases security and control** because the information and funds pass through fewer hands with less chance to be compromised or lost.
- **Saves time** that would otherwise be spent in bank teller or ATM lines.
- **Ensures that funds are deposited** even when employees are not in the office on payday, maximizing employee funds access and interest earnings.

Payline – <http://payline.doa.virginia.gov>

- **Allows convenient, secure, and repeat access to printable personal payroll data (including an electronic pay-stub)** from anywhere with Internet access, whether at work, home, or the local library.
- **Provides access to earnings and deduction history for the entire year**, not just one pay period.
- Allows early access to pay information, 3 – 4 days before payday and receipt of centrally printed paper Earnings Notices.

<u>DECEMBER: DATES TO CELEBRATE</u>	<u>JANUARY: DATES TO CELEBRATE</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bingo Birthday Month • Identity Theft Prevention and Awareness Month • National Stress-free Family Holidays Month • Read a New Book Month • Safe Toys and Gifts Month • Spiritual Literacy Month • December 2, 1949, Gene Autry's song, <i>Rudolph, the Red-nosed Reindeer</i>, hit the record charts. • December 7, Anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day (1941) • December 9, Christmas Card Day • December 10, Universal Human Rights Month • December 15, National Firefighters' Day • December 22, Winter Begins • December 25, Christian Christmas Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 1, New Year's Day • January 1 – 7, Diet Resolution Week • January 8, Birth Anniversary of Elvis Presley (1935 – 1977) • Celebration of Life Month • Cervical Cancer Screening Month • National Cancer Prevention Month • Family Fit Lifestyle Month • Financial Wellness Month • Human Resources Month • National Clean Up Your Computer Month • National Eye Care Month • National Get Organized Month • National Soup Month

~From www.creativeforecasting.net

PERSONNEL CHANGES

NEW EMPLOYEES

Malissa Yingling, OSA/Admissions Clerk (Hrly)	10/01/2007
Sandra S. Rhymer, HS Care Worker (Hrly)	10/10/2007
Teresa M. Poe, HS Care Worker	10/10/2007
Sarah E. Turman, HS Care Worker	10/10/2007
Mechelle S. Fahnestock, RN	10/10/2007
Debra A. Roe, RNCA (Hrly)	10/10/2007
August Summer Olinger, RN	10/10/2007
Thomas Rowell, MOD	10/11/2007
Terri J. Young, OSA/Ward Clerk	10/25/2007
Alicia D. Hunt, FS Technician I (Hrly)	10/25/2007
Edith K. McKinnon, Housekeeping Worker	11/10/2007
Lindsay J.S. Wyatt, HS Care Worker	11/10/2007
Shannon R. Cook, RN	11/10/2007

SEPARATIONS

Rachael Peake, RN	09/25/2007
Linda Johnson, FS Technician I	10/09/2007
Jennifer J. Lowe, HS Care Worker	10/24/2007
Deana J. Stuart, HS Care Worker	10/30/2007
Virginia L. Fisher, OSA	10/31/2007
Anita T. Musser, Inventory Control Clerk	11/24/2007
William D. Funk, HS Care Specialist	11/24/2007



Winter Preparedness Week
December 2- 8, 2007

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management Public Affairs Office will produce media kits and design a special section on the VDEM web site to promote the statewide Winter Preparedness Week campaign.

PROMOTIONS/ROLE CHANGES

Angela R. Anderson, Rehab. Specialist to Geriatric Mental Health Specialist	10/10/2007
Ronald Parsons, Psychologist Senior to MH Unit Programs Director	10/10/2007
Linda S. Carroll, RN to RNCA	10/10/2007
Debra A. Roe, RNCA (Hrly) to RN Full-time	10/25/2007
Kimberly Kirschenman, FS Tech I (Hrly) to FS Tech I (Full- time)	11/10/2007
Evelyn Candy Lampkins, LPN (Hrly) to LPN (Full-time)	11/25/2007

SWVMHI CENSUS

	Admissions	Discharges	Passes	Avg. Daily Census
2007				
Sept.	108	112	5	164
Oct.	116	121	10	161

FIRE SAFETY FOR THE HOLIDAYS

Only fire retardant decorations shall be obtained for use at SWVMHI. Documentation regarding the fire retardant property of the decoration(s) shall be maintained for review by regulatory authorities.

1. In the event non-fire retardant decorations are required, the following procedure shall be followed.
 - a. Contact the Safety Director and/or Security Manager to justify need of the decoration.
 - b. If the Safety Director and/or Security Manager concur that the decoration is required, all surfaces, including front and backsides of the decoration shall be treated with a fire retardant chemical available from the Environmental Services Director. Note: non-porous decorations, such as plastic, cannot be sprayed to achieve the fire retardant properties.
 - After decoration is sprayed, the staff member responsible for spraying the item shall document decoration sprayed, date, chemical applied, and the employee's name. A copy of the documentation for each item shall be maintained on the ward, and a copy shall be sent to the Environmental Services Director. Copy shall be readily available for review by regulatory authorities.
 - If non-fire retardant decorations are to be stored for future use, each decoration shall be treated in accordance with the above procedure prior to future use.
2. Live Christmas trees are prohibited inside SWVMHI buildings. Fire retardant Christmas trees may be utilized inside buildings, provided they are utilized in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and fire retardant documentation is maintained.
3. All electrical powered decorations shall be UL inspected, have the UL tag affixed, and shall be utilized in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
4. Decorations shall not be attached to, or interfere with the operation of, fire doors, smoke detectors, fire alarm key stations, fire extinguisher cabinets, fire alarm bells/strobe lights, and sprinkler heads.
5. Decorations shall be kept a minimum of eighteen (18) inches below all sprinkler heads.
6. Decorations displayed in the Bagley, Blalock and Auditorium Buildings shall be appropriate for the patient care environment. Plastic, glass and metal decorations are prohibited in patient care areas.



~The SWVMHI Safety Committee

Methicillin Resistant *Staphylococcus Aureus* (MRSA)

What is MRSA?

Staphylococcus aureus (“staph”) is a common type of bacteria (germ) that is often found on the skin and in the nose of healthy people. It can also grow in wounds or other sites in the body, sometimes causing an infection. For example, staph is one of the most common causes of skin infections. Penicillin is a drug that was once commonly used to treat staph infections. However, over time many staph bacteria have become difficult to treat with penicillin and antibiotics related to penicillin. These new or resistant forms of *Staphylococcus aureus* are called methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, or MRSA. The illnesses they cause are the same as those caused by other staph; the difference is in how they are treated.

Who is at risk for getting these organisms?

Just like normal staph bacteria, MRSA normally does not cause disease unless it enters an opening in the skin. However, some people are at higher risk for carrying MRSA or becoming infected with this type of staph. MRSA more often occurs in people in hospitals and healthcare facilities. It can also occur outside the hospital in people who receive multiple antibiotics, as well as in people who have close contact with a person carrying the germ or by touching objects contaminated with MRSA (e.g., clothes, towels, bedding, athletic equipment, benches in saunas or hot tubs, bandages).

How are MRSA and other staph spread?

Staph bacteria (including MRSA) are most often spread by close contact with infected people or the things they touch. It is not spread through the air.

What are the symptoms of infection?

Many people carry staph bacteria on their skin without any symptoms. Symptoms of a MRSA or other staph infection depend on where the infection is located. Infections of the skin are the most common, and cause symptoms such as redness, warmth, pus and a wound that does not heal. Your doctor may refer to these infections as boils, furuncles, impetigo, or abscesses. Infections can also develop in the blood, bone, bladder, lungs, and other sites. Symptoms there will depend on the site of infection, but include fever and pain at the site.

What should I do if I think I have a MRSA or other staph infection?

See your healthcare provider.

Are MRSA and other staph infections treatable?

Yes. Some staph skin infections can be treated simply by draining the sore and keeping the wound clean. For more serious infections, antibiotics can be used to treat these infections. If antibiotics are prescribed by your healthcare provider, it is very important to finish taking all the pills and to call your doctor if the infection does not get better.

What can I do to prevent MRSA and other staph infections?

- Wash your hands often, especially when you're exposed to someone with an infection or when you touch objects that may be contaminated.
- Keep cuts and scrapes clean and covered.
- Avoid sharing personal items such as towels, sports equipment, razors, etc.
- If a sore or cut becomes red, oozes, causes pain or isn't healing, see a doctor.
- Don't insist on antibiotics for colds or other viruses.
- If prescribed antibiotics, take all the pills, even if you feel better before they are all gone.

~From Virginia Department of Health

THE FIRST WAY TO HEALTH A Holiday Health Song



(Sung to the tune of
*The Twelve Days of Christmas**)

The **first** way to health, said the CDC to me
[Wash hands](#) to be safe and healthy.

The **second** way to health, said the CDC to me
[Bundle up for warmth](#), and wash hands to be safe and healthy.

The **third** way to health, said the CDC to me
[Manage stress](#), bundle up for warmth, and wash hands to be safe and healthy.

The **fourth** way to health, said the CDC to me
[Don't drink and drive](#), manage stress, bundle up for warmth, and wash hands to be safe and healthy.

The **fifth** way to health, said the CDC to me
[BE SMOKE-FREE](#), don't drink and drive, manage stress, bundle up for warmth, and wash hands to be safe and healthy.

The **sixth** way to health, said the CDC to me
[Fasten belts while driving](#), BE SMOKE-FREE, don't drink and drive, manage stress, bundle up for warmth, and wash hands to be safe and healthy.

The **seventh** way to health, said the CDC to me
[Get exams and screenings](#), fasten belts while driving, BE SMOKE-FREE, don't drink and drive, manage stress, bundle up for warmth, and wash hands to be safe and healthy.

The **eighth** way to health, said the CDC to me
[Get your vaccinations](#), get exams and screenings, fasten belts while driving, BE SMOKE-FREE, don't drink and drive, manage stress, bundle up for warmth, and wash hands to be safe and healthy.

The **ninth** way to health, said the CDC to me
[Monitor the children](#), get your vaccinations, get exams and screenings, fasten belts while driving, BE SMOKE-FREE, don't drink and drive, manage stress, bundle up for warmth, and wash hands to be safe and healthy.

The **tenth** way to health, said the CDC to me
[Practice fire safety](#), monitor the children, get your vaccinations, get exams and screenings, fasten belts while driving, BE SMOKE-FREE, don't drink and drive, manage stress, bundle up for warmth, and wash hands to be safe and healthy.

The **eleventh** way to health, said the CDC to me
[Prepare dinner safely](#), practice fire safety, monitor the children, get your vaccinations, get exams and screenings, fasten belts while driving, BE SMOKE-FREE, don't drink and drive, manage stress, bundle up for warmth, and wash hands to be safe and healthy.

The **twelfth** way to health, said the CDC to me
[Eat well and get moving](#), prepare dinner safely, practice fire safety, monitor the children, get your vaccinations, get exams and screenings, fasten belts while driving, BE SMOKE-FREE, don't drink and drive, manage stress, bundle up for warmth, and wash hands to be safe and healthy.

Good Health Habits for Prevention of Flu

The **single best way to prevent seasonal flu is to get vaccinated** each year, but good health habits like covering your cough and washing your hands often can help prevent respiratory illnesses like the flu. There also are flu antiviral drugs that can be used to treat and prevent the flu.

Avoid close contact.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

Stay home when you are sick.

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

Cover your mouth and nose.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

Clean your hands.

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

Practice other good health habits.

Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious meals.



CONGRATULATIONS to the Nursing Staff who have been working diligently to complete the lessons offered through the College of Direct Support.

Completers from September 1, 2007, through September 30, 2007:

COMPLETED THROUGH DOCTORAL LEVEL 3 (Completed 119 Lessons)

Denise Blevins	Kenneth Blevins	Margaret Call
Buddy Heath	Jenny Johnson	Marcy Meadows

COMPLETED THROUGH DOCTORAL LEVEL 2 (Completed 113 Lessons)

Christine Woods

COMPLETED THROUGH DOCTORAL LEVEL 1 (Completed 103 Lessons)

Rhonda Cress	Donna Kearney
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COMPLETED THROUGH MASTERS LEVEL 4 (Completed 92 Lessons)

Peggy Armstrong	Bobbie Clark	Kenneth Clark
Debra Hagy	Jennifer Snow	

Completers from October 1, 2007, through October 31, 2007:

During the month of October, additional classes for Functional Assessment were added. Response was overwhelming as evidenced by the 48 completers listed below.

COMPLETED THROUGH DOCTORAL LEVEL 4 (Completed 124 Lessons)

Dean Anderson	Luke Armstrong	Kenneth Blevins	Lorene Blevins
Teresa Blevins	Margaret Ann Call	Louetta Carnell	Michelle Clatterbuck
Robin Coleman	James Colgate	Clay Dolinger	Teresa Dunford
Rachel Evans	Robert Farmer	Marilyn Fields	Tina Frye
Linda Gilley	Dolores Greer	Christy Hall	Brenda Hancock
Judith Harris	Patsy Hart	Betty Hash	Jack Hawk
Rita Heath	Sandra Herndon	Philda Holman	Jacqueline Hughes
Donna Jackson	Tammy Jackson	Tamara Jenkins	Donna Kearney
Herman Kirk	Gerry Moore	Shirley Olinger	Virginia Parsons
Ronald Powell	Patsy Reedy	Sue Roberts	Bonnie Sexton
Pamela St John	Elizabeth Stamper	Patricia Thomas	Ruby Thomas
Allen Tolbert	Leslie Warden	Donna White	Liddie White

COMPLETED THROUGH DOCTORAL LEVEL 3 (Completed 119 Lessons)

Terri Griffey	Sandra Hamm	Drema Wilkinson
Christine Woods		

COMPLETED THROUGH DOCTORAL LEVEL 2 (Completed 113 Lessons)

Bobbie Clark	Kenneth Clark
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COMPLETED THROUGH DOCTORAL LEVEL 1 (Completed 103 Lessons)

Patricia Daughtery	Debra Hagy	Pamelia Martin
Irma Osborne		

COMPLETED THROUGH MASTERS LEVEL 4 (Completed 92 Lessons)

Garland Farmer	Tina Hayden	Glenna Thompson
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EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION – NOVEMBER 7, 2007

On a chilly November day, SWVMHI employees celebrated the quarterly recognition event with a 50's style sock hop. A total of 59 Making a Difference Awards were celebrated, along with 11 Cash or Leave Awards. Seven employees retired in this quarter and were recognized with a SWVMHI print. They were: Sue Akers, Adolescent Unit Programs Director; Mary Sue Chapman, Staffing Nurse Coordinator; Carol Davis, Rehab Specialist Supervisor; Elaine Eller, Psychiatric Lead Aide/Geriatrics; Charlotte Tolrud, Psychiatric Lead Aide/Adolescents; Elouise Vaught, Geriatric DSA III; and Mary Zedd, RNCA/Geriatrics. Twenty-three staff members were recognized for their years of service. These included Linda Sturgill, Administrative Asst/Food Service (40 Years); Sue Akers, Adolescent Unit Programs Director; Mary Sue Chapman, Staffing Nurse Coordinator; and Gaynelle Davis, Beautician/Central Rehab. (30 years); Lucita Chapman, RNCA/ERS (25 years); Cynthia McClaskey, Facility Director (20 years); Patricia Evans, Secretary Senior/Clinical Services (15 years); Karen Chavers, Director Staff Development and Training; Helen Gill, Psychiatric Aide/Admissions; Marsha Lawson, Pharmacy Assistant; and Ann Mathews, Librarian (10 years); Sandra Cannon, RNCA/Admissions; Kelly Cassell, Clinical Social Worker/Adolescents; Sue Chapman, RNCA/Infirmary; Mary Dotson, RNCA/Geriatrics; Teresa Dunford, Psychiatric Aide/Admissions; Michael Holt, Security Officer Senior; Janice Morris, Psychiatric Aide/Geriatrics; Janet Price, Psychiatric Aide/Admissions; Paulette Sinnette, Pharmacist/SWVTC; Heather Stanley; Pharmacy Asst/SWVTC; Lori Wagner, Psychiatric Aide/Adolescents; and Tammy Williams, Pharmacy Asst/SWVTC (5 years).

Employees of the Quarter

April, May & June 2007

Debbie Haga, Utilization Review

The number of admissions for SWVMHI has increased significantly in the last three years, and there are increasing numbers of persons with insurance coverage. This has caused a substantial workload increase for Debbie, who has to initiate the certification process for Medicare, Medicaid, and insurance, in addition to monitoring for continued stay. Debbie has become very skilled at appealing denials for insurance coverage. She has successfully appealed a number of cases and has won coverage for the stay resulting in increased revenue for the Commonwealth and less financial hardship for the patient whose care is now covered. Debbie has a difficult job to do—dealing with busy clinicians and outside vendors to authorize a patient's care. So much of her job depends on other people doing their jobs! But Debbie approaches her work with a smile on her face. She is always pleasant to people and has such a positive attitude about life in general.

Amy Martin, RNCA/ERS

Amy is a person who exhibits a consistent positive attitude and demonstrates a great amount of enthusiasm as well as organizational ability. She takes the initiative to organize all the paperwork in an easy-to-find manner. For instance, she continues to come up with folders for the nurses that give the exact dates of primary notes, TD ratings, assignments, and nursing assessments. She also organizes the TPC meeting papers one week in advance so that the day shift nurses have easy access. She types out documents such as the patient profiles and changes them when necessary to keep them up-to-date and legible. She has always followed up on patient assessments and taken the necessary steps to report changes and status to the physicians and other team members despite the potential communication handicap of working third shift. Amy provides education and support to colleagues and psychiatric aides, and she is a reliable resource for the nursing staff.

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Employee Recognition – Continued from Page 14

Cindy McCoy, Psychiatric Aide/Adolescent Unit

Cindy has been a lifesaver for the Adolescent Unit in recent months. She has been willing to work over anytime she is needed to provide coverage for the Adolescent Unit and also for other units. She has been willing to work on her days off and on weekends. One Wednesday afternoon, we had all relief staff pulled to the unit, and Cindy assisted with the admission process with seven patients who were being admitted to the unit that day because she was most familiar with the process. Even though she works many hours of overtime, this does not affect the quality of care that she provides for the patients. She is always a joy to work with. She always has a smile on her face and is a positive role model for others. She has a heart for working with children and has the best helping relationship with them. They respond well to her. Cindy is a top-performing employee who is very devoted to helping individuals with mental illness. She never complains and is always excited about her job.

James Parks, Environmental Services/Pest Control

James keeps the facility almost “bug-free” and is available at a moment’s notice to do an emergency spray or pick up a dead bird that has flown into the window. James assists in many ways behind the scenes and few know whom to credit. He has been observed on many occasions to go out of his way to help other employees with any problem they may be having, including assistance with computer programs, compiling data reports and graphs, helping to clean units, assisting the storeroom with unloading trucks, and emptying trash cans on the grounds. He has always been right up front when help is needed! He has taken great pride in improving the SWVMHI grounds and is a very active member of the Waste Minimization Committee. James has also chased and captured birds, squirrels, foxes and other animals to be released away from the facility.

July, August & September 2007

Sandra Guthrie, Occupational Therapist

Sandy is described as highly motivated to provide responsive and thorough occupational therapy assessments and treatment services to patients. She has identified the treatment teams as being crucial partners in the delivery of OT services and has concentrated on being of service to the teams so that they can be more responsive to the needs of the individuals we serve. She is down-to-earth and easily accessible. She communicates very well with patients, and they confide in her, and she is able to develop positive relationships with them to help them in their recovery. She also communicates important information to those who need it to make sound clinical decisions and has proven to be a source of expert clinical knowledge. She is recognized on the Admission Unit as a very excellent Occupational therapist.

Pamela Martin, Psychiatric Aide/ERS

Pam, a 30+ year employee, was awarded Employee of the Quarter for many reasons. She comes to work every day with a positive attitude. No matter what the workload, she never complains. She is willing to be pulled to other units and to take patients off grounds to appointments. When she goes with the patients, you have assurance that the patients will do well while out in the community. Pam is also the type of employee that you never have to worry about tasks being completed. She always jumps right in and does what needs to be done without prompting. Pam frequently displays teamwork, in that she is willing to pick up assignments or switch the schedule. She is always looking out for the best interests of ERS patients and staff. If anyone is having a bad day, she always makes time to talk to the person individually. She is a joy to work with, a role model, and a true asset to SWVMHI.

Continued on Page 16

Employee Recognition – Continued from Page 15

Nathan Shelton, Environmental Services Director

Nathan has developed excellent performance improvement initiatives for SWVMHI and the Admissions Unit. He maintains weekly communication with the Admission Unit Nurse Coordinators, relaying information, ideas, and issues to improve the wards. Working directly with nursing staff, he and housekeepers have jointly developed a routine schedule for assessing mattresses and changing them out as necessary. He has provided up-to-date information regarding regulations on medical waste and has posted reminders for staff. Nathan has worked diligently with housekeeping staff to improve the environment we all work in!

These six employees join Ronnie Heath, Psychiatric Aide/ERS, Thelma Rouse, LPN/ Admissions, Sharon Sollenberger, Admissions Clerk, and Nancy Wood, Unit Programs Director/ERS (Employees of the Quarter for January, February & March 2007). They, along with the winners for the last quarter of the year (to be announced), are all eligible to be awarded 2007 Employee of the Year.

Each was honored for the way in which he or she lives up to the SWVMHI Values which help us best promote mental health in the people we serve: **Communication, Honesty with Compassion, Trust, Teamwork, Self-initiative, Leadership at all levels, and Honoring day-to-day tasks.**

Here is an excerpt from the letter to these staff members, “While the contributions of many employees of SWVMHI support the mission, vision, and values of our hospital, and we are grateful for all of them, your contributions were judged by the Committee to be exceptional. Your work in support of the people we serve and your ability to embrace Recovery values and actions is a credit to the heart and the commitment you bring to your work.”

CHAPLAIN’S CORNER

CHRISTMAS THOUGHT: Donate a Bible



ROSE OF SHARON

As the Rose of Sharon, God is absolutely unique, solely exceptional.

“Wherefore thou art great, O LORD God: **For there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee**, according to all that we have heard with our ears.” II Samuel 7:22

As a worshipper, ask God for His beauty to be upon you.

And let the beauty of the LORD [my] God be upon [me]; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it. (Psalms 90:17).

If the beauty of God rests upon you and the work of your hands, your life and the task you offer to God will be endowed with the kindness, pleasantness, delightfulness, and favor of God. Imagine.

How has God shone His beauty to you? How did you know it was God because God’s beauty is unique and rare? Ask God to let His beauty be upon you.

Let your daily prayer be that God’s beauty be upon you and to establish the work of your hands.

**While beholding the beauty of God,
I was inspired to write. . .**

**You are beautiful to me.
You are beautiful to me.
Precious Lamb of God
Who Conquered on Calvary
You are Beautiful to Me**

**You are altogether lovely
You are altogether lovely
I could search the world
But You are all I need
You are Beautiful to Me**

**I praise and Worship Thee
I Praise and Worship Thee
You are Lord of All
You’re my Prince of Peace**

~ Lance Turner, Chaplain

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Cynthia L. McClaskey, Ph.D., Director

The editorial staff thanks all who contributed to this issue and welcomes your suggestions for improvement. We continue to seek volunteers to write articles and for the editorial board.

2008 SWVMHI NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE	
Deadline for Submission of Articles	Date of Publication/Distribution
January 22, 2008	February 1, 2008
March 17, 2008	March 31, 2008
May 19, 2008	May 30, 2008
July 21, 2008	August 1, 2008
September 18, 2008	September 30, 2008
November 17, 2008	December 1, 2008
Please submit your UNFORMATTED articles to Linda Bonham, Admin. Assistant, Office of the Director.	

As has been done in the past, when a large volume of information is submitted, extra newsletters will be issued during the year.