

# CCHA News Notes

A Quarterly Publication

C O A S T A L C A R O L I N A S H E A L T H A L L I A N C E



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## PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- President's Update
- Upcoming Events!
- HIE Needs Assessment
- The Hot Spot

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We've had a busy Spring and Summer. The staff and I are working on a new initiative that we'll be sharing more about in the months ahead. We have received a Duke Endowment and Cape Fear Foundation grant to develop a mobile simulation laboratory. We are interviewing nurse educators as quickly as possible to start this new program. The CARES HAM radio system is completely operational and new operators are being trained for each member hospital.

The CIO Team and staff has completed a white paper and presentation to

the board for a Health Information Exchange (HIE) initiative. There will be grant money and stimulus funds available to regional networks like ours to develop electronic records that can be shared with regional providers. The board has approved exploring this initiative and we'll be doing a needs assessment during the next two months to determine next steps.

The CCHA staff has been renegotiating several of our major contracts and new initiatives are also underway with most of our teams. We currently have 25 teams that are meeting to investigate

ways to improve performance, benchmark/network, look at quality initiatives and do group purchasing. Look at our website to see if you are missing an opportunity to participate in one of these worthwhile teams.

Mark your calendars for Alliance Day on Friday, October 30, 2009. We will be returning to the Sun Spree Hotel on Wrightsville Beach and the staff has planned a great educational program. Thank you for your continued support of our Alliance. Have a good summer!

*Larry Matheny*

## UPCOMING EVENTS!

- ◆ **Radiology Patient Safety Seminar**  
September 19th, 2009  
\* [msmith@coastalalliance.org](mailto:msmith@coastalalliance.org)
- ◆ **SANE Workshop**  
October 19th-23rd, 2009  
\* [msmith@coastalalliance.org](mailto:msmith@coastalalliance.org)
- ◆ **Resident's Reception**  
October 13th, 2009  
\* [kward@coastalalliance.org](mailto:kward@coastalalliance.org)
- ◆ **Alliance Day**  
October 30th, 2009  
\* [kward@coastalalliance.org](mailto:kward@coastalalliance.org)

\* Contact for more information

## CARES Attends 2009 Dayton Hamvention

While the CARES System has been on the air for nearly six months, CCHA continues its efforts to maintain the system and constantly improve its daily operation. To that end, CARES Executive Committee Members Danny Hampton, Paul Magnabosco and Bill Morine along with Michael Smith of CCHA attended the 2009 Dayton, Ohio Hamvention. Sponsored by the Dayton Amateur Radio Association, the Dayton Hamvention is the world's largest amateur radio gathering.

The purpose of the Executive Committee's participation in the Hamvention was twofold. First of all, the committee saw a unique op-

portunity to meet and share ideas with other Ham radio based emergency communication systems throughout the country. The committee members spent much of their time with an organization named SCHEART. SCHEART is the South Carolina Healthcare Emergency Amateur Radio Team. Similar to CARES, SCHEART is an emergency communication system linking hospitals together. Unlike CARES, SCHEART is a statewide initiative that connects approximately sixty (60) hospitals. From discussions had with SCHEART the two organizations have decided to collaborate and

link our two systems together in case of disaster. This will give the hospitals of CCHA an even larger safety net than the one currently maintained by the CARES System. While modifications to each of our systems will need to be made to make this a reality, the Executive Committee is hard at work on the project and will notify the member hospitals upon completion of the project.

The second reason for the Executive Committee's visit to the Hamvention was to celebrate Danny Amateur of the Year; Hampton being named the 2009 which is one of the highest honors you can

receive in the ham radio community. CCHA congratulates Danny on this great accomplishment.

*Michael Smith*



## HIE Needs Assessment

During the past two years Health Information Technology has become a hot topic. With the current political climate that is geared towards health IT (See The Hot Spot on Pg. 4) the CCHA IS Directors Team is exploring the opportunity of Health Information Exchange (HIE) as a CCHA initiative.

Health Informa-

tion Exchange (HIE) is defined as the mobilization of healthcare information electronically across organizations. HIE provides the capability to electronically move clinical information among health care information systems while maintaining the

meaning of the information being exchanged.

The CCHA Board has approved conducting a comprehensive HIE needs assessment to assess the need and viability of creating an HIE throughout our regions. CCHA has hired Computer Sciences Corporation (CSC) to assist in conducting this assessment.

As of July 1, 2009 the HIE needs assessment is in full swing! We look forward to sharing the results in the coming months!

For more information contact  
awood@coastalliance.org

*Angela Wood*

## Infection Control/Employee Health

The Infection Control/Employee Health Team continues to monitor compliance with The Joint Commission's National Patient Safety Goals as they pertain to the Infection Control and Employee Health. Information from individual hospital's JCO review and ideas for

meeting the JCO standards are shared at each meeting. On March 26, 2009, Paul F. Kamitsuka, MD, DTM&H, Clinical Associate Professor UNC School of Medicine, Hospital Epidemiologist NHRMC, did an educational session on "Antimicrobial Resis-

tance". The Alliance plans on inviting him back for another educational session this year.

*Angela Clemmons*



## NC Health Foods Initiative

In the crazy economic downturn all organizations are looking for ways to save money, both short-term and long-term. This is not an easy task for hospitals because for years we have been tightening our belt. All of the “low hanging fruit” has been plucked. Therefore, we are forced to be more creative in identifying savings. Hospitals continue to see patients, even if they do not have insurance or have the means to pay, therefore, our volumes are not going down that much, and we can’t reduce employees the same way other organizations do. However, there is a way to reduce our own health insurance costs.

According to NC Prevention Partners, most North Carolina employers are spending \$6,000 extra per employee per year because

of unhealthy behaviors. Very overweight workers have seven times more medical costs and miss more work days than employees at a healthy weight. Nine out of 10 North Carolina adults have at least one risk factor (tobacco use, poor diet, or physical inactivity) that increases their risk of cancer, diabetes, heart disease and other preventable illnesses. These factors cost North Carolina \$26 billion each year, and they are largely all preventable.

You can learn more about these startling statistics on the NC Prevention Partners website, [www.ncpreventionpartners.org](http://www.ncpreventionpartners.org) and [www.ncpreventionpartners.org/hospitals](http://www.ncpreventionpartners.org/hospitals) NC Prevention Partners can help hospitals create a plan to make health foods more available,

visible and affordable. Studies have shown that healthy practices in the workplace stimulate employees to continue such practices at home as well. 98 hospitals in North Carolina are currently working on establishing a health food environment in their cafeterias. NC Prevention Partners is working with many of these hospitals to achieve results. Your hospital can make it easier for staff and visitors to choose health foods by increasing access to healthy foods, lowering the cost of healthy foods, showing off your healthy foods, and labeling calories. If you have any question, please contact Anne Butzen at (919) 969-7022, ext. 218 or [anne@ncpreventionpartners.org](mailto:anne@ncpreventionpartners.org)

*Doug Yarbrough*

## Chief Nursing Officers

On Friday July 31, 2009, the Chief Nursing Officers of Coastal Carolinas Health Alliance will hold its fifth annual Nurse Leadership Conference at Sea Trail Golf Resort and Convention Center in Sunset Beach, North Carolina. Sponsored by Elsevier, Inc.; the purpose of the conference is to provide a forum for today’s and tomorrow’s Coastal Carolinas Health Alliance nurse leaders to learn about pertinent issues facing the nursing profession, exchange ideas, and interact with their peers from across the Alliance. This year’s conference is titled, “Translational Research & Evidence Based Nursing: How Nurse Leaders can bring Evidence Based Nursing to the Bedside”.

Speaking at this year’s conference will be Lois S. Marshall, PhD, RN, Leadership Program Consultant for Sigma Tau Theta International. Ms. Marshall has been a nurse educator for 30 years and she is involved in a variety of projects aimed at improving nursing leadership and the advancement of nursing research. She is a dynamic speaker who promises to make this year’s conference informative and enlightening.

As you can see, this year’s conference will be the most exciting ever. If you would like to attend please contact the Chief Nursing Officer or Education Director of your respective facility.

*Michael Smith*



## Emergency Directors

The CCHA Emergency Directors Team continues to track the Left Without Being Seen (LWBS) and the total length of stay (LOS) statistics. A review of each Emergency Department’s dashboard will provide additional important statistics to track as an Alliance. The end goal being the establishing of an Alliance Standard, using National Emergency Standards, this group has the ability to compare that with regional data. Ideas on reaching the national goals are shared at each meeting. The participating hospital’s LOS and LWBS stats were displayed as a poster board presentation at the July 31<sup>st</sup> Nurse Leadership Conference. The team is also looking at Narcotic Policies in the ER.

*Angela Clemmons*

## THE HOT SPOT!

### The Stimulus Package Impacts on Healthcare

- The legislation includes roughly \$36 billion in spending on Medicare and Medicaid incentives for the “Meaningful Use” of certified electronic health records (EHRs)
  - The provisions are designed to create a use incentive, not a purchase incentive
  - The \$36 billion estimate relies on two aggressive assumptions:
    - 90 percent of physicians and 70 percent of hospitals will be “Meaningful Users” by 2019
    - Increased adoption of health IT (HIT) will save the government \$15-\$16 billion
- The Office of the National Coordinator (ONC) has received elevated status and budget (\$2 billion)
  - The timelines for developing and approving standards are aggressive
  - New programs provide both financial assistance and implementation guidance/expertise
- \$1.1 billion to study comparative effectiveness
  - Research funds go to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Health Insurance Assistance for the Unemployed
  - COBRA premium assistance for unemployed workers
  - Expanded matching funds for state Medicaid programs
    - 6.2 percentage point increase in Medicaid FMAP amounts
    - Intended to help states handle expected beneficiary increases due to rising unemployment rate.

*For more information visit [www.coastalalliance.org/HIEeducation](http://www.coastalalliance.org/HIEeducation)*



## WELCOME KERRIE!

Kerrie Ward has become a familiar face at Coastal Carolinas Health Alliance! She is our new Administrative Assistant. Kerrie is a Wilmington native and is studying business at Cape Fear Community College. She is excited to join our team and we have welcomed her with open arms!



“My aspiration is to look back one day and see that I made a difference in the world, I am confident that healthcare is an industry where I can leave that footprint” -K. Ward

## CONGRATULATIONS ANGELA!

In May, 2009 Angela Wood graduated with a Masters of Public Administration from the University of North Carolina Wilmington. Her concentration is in Health Policy and Administration. Congratulations on this accomplishment!

