

Nursing, dental hygiene students collaborate to provide oral care

Oncology patients in hospital have special concerns

The nursing and dental hygiene programs in the School of Nursing and Health Professions have teamed up this semester to care for the oral health needs of critically ill patients at Deaconess Hospital in Evansville.

The collaboration allows nursing and dental hygiene students to share their expertise. Nursing students learn more in-depth knowledge of oral care; dental hygiene students learn about patient needs and hospital protocol.

Deborah L. Carl, program director of dental hygiene; Gale Hoehn, instructor in nursing; and Phyllis Maddox, assistant professor of dental hygiene, developed this semester's pilot program. They plan to expand the project next semester, giving nursing and dental hygiene students more time together in the hospital setting.

Most of the persons receiving the oral care are oncology/respiratory patients who are immuno-suppressed, making them more susceptible to infections.

"This can be due to their chemotherapy or illness or both," Carl said. "Because they have a lot of pain in the mouth, they are often not practicing good oral care. Any infection can compromise the treatment outcome."

Hoehn supervises the nursing and dental hygiene students each Friday at the hospital. The dental hygiene students participate in a pre-conference with nursing students to learn about the patients before making their



Elizabeth Courtney

Rebecca Emery, a dental hygiene student, performs an oral examination for a patient at Deaconess Hospital while Erica Brown, nursing student, observes.

rounds. Participation is optional for the patients.

The experience has made Aimee Ogle, a dental hygiene student, more aware of the needs of people in the hospital. "We do an oral exam to see what kinds of problems they're having. We go through with them how to brush and floss. For those who have dry mouth, there are special rinses and toothpastes that we recommend," she said.

Welborn Foundation funds two grants: worksite wellness, cancer awareness

The Welborn Foundation of Evansville has awarded two grants totalling more than \$200,000 to the School of Nursing and Health Professions. One grant program involves assessing the need and interest that area businesses have in implementing worksite wellness programs; the other is a program to promote screening awareness for breast and cervical cancer for African-American women.

Katie Valadares joined the School of Nursing and Health Professions in December as coordinator of the Worksite Link to Wellness program, which received a \$65,000 grant for a six-month pilot program. She earned a master's degree in social work from St. Louis University and an M.B.A. from Webster University. Prior to joining USI, she had practice administration in the St. Louis area.

Pilot worksite wellness programs are now in progress at five area businesses or non-profit organizations following focus group research with 30 business leaders.

Valadares said the focus groups included representatives from businesses that had a wide range of experience with worksite wellness. Some already had implemented or were developing a program; others simply had an interest in learning how to begin. The focus groups included both profit-making businesses and non-profit organizations.

Businesses or organizations chosen for the pilot program have an

Dean's Notes



Dr. Nadine Coudret

Measuring and improving community health

Recently, in a national publication, the Evansville-Vanderburgh County community received an unfavorable ranking as a community with unhealthy women's lifestyles. This report purported to use 30 factors in its assessment of women's health. Included in their measurements were diet, exercise, smoking, obesity, depression, teen pregnancies, cancer, and average life expectancy. While the scientific merit and basis for the ranking in this report is suspect at best, it does call attention to the need for valid community health indicators and the impact of healthy lifestyles on health.

Efforts to measure the health status of the Evansville community began in the mid '90s when local hospitals funded a community health audit. The report indicated that major health care savings could be accomplished in the Evansville community if more healthy lifestyles were adopted by residents. The Partnership for Health Care Information, composed of Deaconess Hospital, St. Mary's Medical Center, Tri-State Business Group on Health and the University of Southern Indiana has continued the reporting of area health-care data. The United Way, St. Mary's Medical Center, Deaconess Hospital, and the Welborn Foundation also provide reports relevant to measuring the health of the Evansville community.

In March 2001, the Welborn Foundation, as a leading advocate for Evansville community health, prepared a report titled "Leading Community Health Indicators" that identified measures of a healthy community. The Foundation used Healthy People 2010, the Jacksonville, Florida, "Indicators for Progress," and community input

to prepare the report which is being used as a guide for its grant funding decisions.

Local efforts to determine the status of health in the community have been greatly enhanced by state and national studies that report county, state, and national-level health community status. Such reports are available on the Internet from the Center for Communicable Disease (<http://www.cdc.gov>), Department of Health and Human Services Health Resources and Services Administration (<http://www.hrsa.gov/>), county and state departments of health-Indiana (<http://www.IN.gov/isdh/>), and a number of organizations that focus on particular disease entities such as the American Cancer Society and March of Dimes.

The school has four initiatives that directly address major health issues in the community. The first two programs have been in progress for several years. Programs three and four are new 2002 Welborn Foundation-funded initiatives. (See story page 1.)

Program One: Health-care services for inmates in county correctional facilities

Program Two: Prenatal and infant death prevention

Program Three: Employee Lifestyle Program-Work-site Wellness

Program Four: Breast and Cervical Cancer Awareness Program for African American Women

Each of the preceding efforts provides faculty practice and service learning opportunities for students and contributes to improving the health of community residents. Faculty and students also are involved in gathering and reporting community health data for the community. Selected reports can be accessed from the school home page (<http://health.usi.edu>). The school is committed to working with health-care providers and community leaders to improve the measurement and quality of community health. It is a commitment and effort that I hope you share with me regardless of the community in which you live. Working together, we can improve the health of our communities.

Evansville-Vanderburgh County Community Health Status

*Health Status Indicators	Vanderburgh County	Indiana	Median for all U.S. Counties
Smoking	28.4%	26.9%	23.2%
Overweight adults	38%	34.1%	33.7%
Average self-reported unhealthy days in past month	6.1 days	5 days [†]	5.1 days
Self-rated health status reporting fair or poor health	17.7%	14.8% [†]	14.7%

*Sources: <http://www.IN.gov/isdh/>, <http://www.community.health.hrsa.gov>, www.welbornfdn.org

[†]Relates to peer counties

Program Notes

Dental Assisting and Dental Hygiene

Dental sealant clinic

Dental hygiene students held the annual dental sealant clinic for fifth grade students from Cedar Hall and Howard Roosa Elementary Schools in April. This is the 10th year for this event which serves almost 75 children each year. The program began in 1993 with Cedar Hall children and was expanded in 1999 to include Howard Roosa. Since 1993, 361 children have been treated and more than 2,500 sealants have been placed.

Clinics and reviews

Junior dental hygiene students provided continuing education opportunities for community dental hygienists when they presented scientific table clinics and periodontal case reviews at the April 10 meeting of the Ohio Valley Dental Hygienists' Association. The clinics and reviews were developed as a part of clinical and classroom experiences.

Health Services

Graduate program

Members of the first class in the graduate program for health administration were on campus February 22-23 for presentations and classes.

Most of the instruction in this program is delivered on the Internet. Students convene on campus several

times during the semester on Friday evenings and Saturdays, a schedule that allows them to fit the master's program into their professional lives.

The speaker for the Friday evening session in February was Sister Ann Bremmer, chief operating officer for St.

Francis Medical Center in Pittsburgh. Her topic was the future of faith-based health care. She also was involved in student activities on Saturday.

Kevin Valadares, assistant professor of health services and health administration, said the combination of Internet and on-campus instruction has proven effective. When the students are on campus, they are involved in presentations, debates, and group activities.

Applications for the fall class are now being accepted. See the Master of Health Administration Web site at www.usi.edu/gradstud/healthadministration.asp, or contact Carol Hermes, program director of health services, at 812/465-1183 or hermes@usi.edu.

Minor in public health

A minor in public health is now available. Four of the courses in the 21-hour program were developed for Internet delivery by Dr. Otis Stanley, an adjunct faculty member in the School of Nursing and Health Professions. He became associated with USI in 1997 after retiring from the U.S. Army as a colonel and chief of medical training for the Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Stanley holds doctoral degrees in public health and veterinary science.



Sister Ann Bremmer, right, discusses faith-based health-care issues with Carol Hermes, USI program director of health services.

Nursing

Completion Ceremony

The Nursing Completion Ceremony for graduate students will be Sunday, May 5, at noon, in the auditorium of Harrison High School with a reception following.

Occupational Therapy

Conference presentation

Aimee Luebben, program director for occupational therapy, made a presentation in October on "Improving Documentation Skills" at the Sixth Annual Nursing and Health Professions Educator Conference sponsored by the School of Nursing and Health Professions. Janet Kilbane, assistant professor of occupational therapy, presented on "The Other Shoe: A Disability Du Jour Learning Strategy."

Radiologic Technology

Seminar host

The annual Indiana Society of Radiologic Technologists' One Day Seminar was held March 9 at USI. The University's radiologic technology program sponsored the meeting. Dr. Nadine Coudret, dean of the School of Nursing and Health Professions, presented a seminar entitled "Community Health Report Card."

Respiratory Therapy

Annual meeting

Respiratory therapy students will attend the 29th annual meeting of Region II Respiratory Care in Covington, Kentucky, April 24-26. For the third straight year they will enter the annual "college bowl" competition known as the Sputum Bowl. Last year the USI team placed second. The 2002

Correction

The name of one of the graduates who presented on the subject of "Radiation Induced Xerostomia" at the annual session of the American Dental Hygienists' Association in 2001 was incorrect in the last issue of *Synapse*. The presentation was made by Kimberly Fuller and Kimberly Hite.

See *Program Notes*, page 4

Faculty Notes

Deborah L. Carl, program director of dental hygiene, attended the Annual Session of the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) in March in San Diego. She serves as chair of the organization's standing committee of dental hygiene directors and will chair the ADEA National Allied Directors' Conference in June in Key West.

Phyllis Maddox, assistant professor of dental hygiene, presented the course, "Spit Tobacco," to members of the Ohio Valley Dental Hygienists' Association in March.

Deborah Carl, Phyllis Maddox, and **Mara Beth Womack**, instructor of dental assisting/hygiene, will attend the Indiana Dental Hygiene Educators Conference in May in Indianapolis.

Dr. Sheila Melander, associate professor of nursing, made a presentation in February at the Society of Critical Care Medicine Conference in San Diego. She participated on a panel for a session entitled "Nursing, Year in Review" and spoke on technological advancements.

Dr. Sheila Melander and **Colleen Walsh**, instructor in nursing, made an oral presentation in April at the Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Conference at the University of Virginia.

Colleen Walsh recently had six chapters published in the new textbook *Protocols for Acute Care Nurse Practitioners* edited by T. Barkley and

C. Myers. The book recently won the American Journal of Nursing Book of the Year award in two categories: advanced practice nursing and critical care nursing. Walsh's topics included orthopaedic conditions and emergencies. She also had a chapter published in the third edition of the textbook *Trauma: From Resuscitation through Rehabilitation* edited by K. McQuillen et al. She will speak in September at a national trauma conference hosted by the University of South Alabama Medical Center in Mobile. Her topic will be orthopaedic trauma and care for patients with this type of trauma.

Dr. Ann H. White, program director of undergraduate nursing, presented in February at the Mayo Medical Center 11th annual Nursing Research Conference "Research in Clinical Practice: Does It Really Matter," in Rochester, Minnesota. Her session was entitled "Mayo Summer III Student Nurse Clinical Decision-Making."

Judi Kuric, instructor in nursing, has been named "Rehabilitation" section editor and author of the "Spinal Cord Injury" and "Headaches" chapters of the new American Association of Neuroscience Nurses (AANN) Core Curriculum scheduled for publication in March 2003.

Mary F. Edwards, instructor and fieldwork coordinator in occupational therapy, and **Janet Kilbane**, assistant professor of occupational therapy, will present: "Critical Thinking in the Class-

room: A Focus on the 'Think'" in May at the 82nd Annual American Occupational Therapy Association Conference in Miami. **Aimee Luebben**, program director of occupational therapy, will present on "Developing Practitioner-Scholars: Using Professional-Style Conferences to Replace Exams."

Luebben has written a chapter called "Tools for enhancing the skills of rehabilitation professionals: Professional training and certification of occupational therapy practitioners" for the book *Assistive technology: Matching device and consumer for successful rehabilitation* for publication in May by the American Psychological Association. In February she was appointed secretary of the Fund to Promote Awareness of Occupational Therapy, a new national charitable organization.

Dr. Nadine Coudret, dean of the School of Nursing and Health Professions, has been appointed to the board of directors of the Evansville ARC Foundation and the beacon group.

Charlene Tripp, assistant professor of radiologic technology, attended the Indiana Society of Radiologic Technologists' Spring Meeting in Indianapolis in March.

The article, "Finding Meaning and Purpose in Teaching: A Challenge for the 21st Century," by **Dr. Eileen Morrison**, associate professor of health services, will be published in the International Forum on Logotherapy.

Program Notes

Continued from page 3

team includes Chris Bowlin, Misty Hoke, Jessica Kissinger, and Tamara Pettis. Club members raised funds for the trip by sponsoring a concession booth at the USI Spring Fest and by bagging groceries at Schnucks.

Screening

Respiratory care students recently performed pulmonary function screening at the Safe House Health Fair. Students participating were Melissa Fetter, Misty Hoke, Rachel Housman, Jessica Kissinger, Shawn Merkel, and Tamara Pettis. Anthony Schmitt, instructor in respiratory therapy, assisted them.

Deaconess donation

The Respiratory Care Department at Deaconess Hospital in Evansville has donated a complete pulmonary function machine to the respiratory therapy program. It will enhance student preparation by providing on-campus experience with a wider range of pulmonary diagnostic tools.

Special friend

Memorial Fund, Learning Resource Center signify Lilybell Day's belief in quality care

Lilybell Day has been a major donor to the School of Nursing and Health Professions since 1989 when she established the Charles E. Day – Nancy Day Farmer Memorial Fund in memory of her husband and younger daughter, both of whom died of cancer. She also funded the school's Day Learning Resource Center.

The memorial fund is dedicated to educating nursing students, as well as the Evansville community, in oncology patient needs, especially pain control and pain management.

In a telephone interview, Day said that she believes the role of the nurse in caring for the patient and in providing understanding and support to the patient's family should not be underestimated. A longtime Evansville resident, Day now lives in Naples, Florida.

She recalled with appreciation the nurses who cared around the clock for her loved ones during their illnesses. She said that nurses often would confer with the doctor — even in the middle of the night — about pain management for her family members.

Day's charitable gifts to the memorial fund now total nearly \$115,000. The fund has provided money for students and faculty to attend conferences to learn about techniques for pain alleviation, has underwritten workshops in Evansville to instruct nursing students and practitioners about current research and techniques in relation to pain management, and has supported events on cancer pain management.



The Day Learning Resource Center provides access to the latest teaching and learning technology.

Charles Day headed Evansville Concrete Company, which designed and poured the concrete driveway at the University Home. His wife also was associated with the firm for many years. He died in 1988.

In 1993, Lilybell Day committed \$300,000 to establish the Charles E. Day Learning Resource Center in the new Health Professions Center in memory of her husband.

Dedicated in 1995, the center offers access to state-of-the-art technology. It also provides a quiet area for independent and group study. The center's clinical skills lab is a dedicated area where students can learn and practice the various clinical skills required by their chosen profession.

Oral health

Continued from page 1

Leslie Flittner, a nursing student, said the collaboration has made her more aware of the importance of oral hygiene. Some chronically ill patients have a low platelet count that makes them more susceptible to bleeding, she said. Dental hygiene students recommend an extra-soft toothbrush or even gauze to cleanse the mouth.

Following the day's work, nursing and dental hygiene students participate in a post-conference for review and to recommend follow-up.

Hoehn said that patients and their families have been receptive to the oral care. Hematologists and oncologists at Deaconess also think the program is a good idea.

The sharing of education makes each student in each discipline more aware of what they can do for the patient, Carl and Hoehn agreed.

The goal of the program is to provide the community with well informed and educated practitioners who can serve as advocates for immuno-suppressed patients in a variety of health-care settings.

Dental hygiene clinic offers services for children, adults



Kathy Moore, a student in dental hygiene, discusses oral health care with Charlie Crafton, a client in the dental hygiene clinic. The clinic, located in the Health Professions Center, is open to all members of the community, both children and adults.

Thank you, donors! *You make things possible*

The faculty, staff, and students express appreciation for gifts designated to the School of Nursing and Health Professions. Through the USI Foundation, many friends and alumni make programs possible which could not be funded without private support.

If you are interested in contributing to an individual program or activity in the school, please call 812/465-1151.

Grants

Continued from page 1

employee base ranging from 20 to 170 employees. The pilot group includes Bridges of Southern Indiana, Westpark Rehabilitation Center, Corpus Christi School, Schnucks (West Side), and High Point Child Care.

Each company or organization has chosen one employee to serve as peer health advocate, a liaison between the company and the School of Nursing and Health Professions.

The grant program will provide training for the peer health advocate. In addition, it includes an employee interest survey, a health screening, and an individualized program or event based on the particular needs of each company. Worksite wellness programs may include exercise classes, weight reduction, nutrition education, stress management, and smoking cessation.

Health information also will be made available to the employees of each company through on-site bulletin boards, Internet, and other types of communications.

Valadares said worksite wellness programs have the potential to improve the well-being of employees while positively impacting businesses. Tangible benefits of worksite wellness programs include improved morale, reduced turnover, increased recruitment potential, reduced absenteeism, health-care

cost containment, and an improved employee health status.

For more information about the grant, contact Valadares at mvaladar@usi.edu.

Debbie Kinney, a registered nurse and a student in the master's program in the School of Nursing and Health Professions, directs the grant program to promote awareness and provide cancer screening to African-American women in Vanderburgh County. The program, conceived as a three-year project, received first-year funding of \$139,500.

Kinney said that national research indicates African-American women have a lower incidence rate for breast cancer than Caucasian women, but their five-year survival rate for all stages of breast cancer is half the rate of Caucasians. African-American women are twice as likely to develop cervical cancer and nearly three times as likely to die from it.

Called The Witness Project® because it involves women witnessing to other women, the grant program will utilize volunteers in two different roles. First, witness role models, women who have had breast or cervical cancer, will make presentations to community or church groups about their experience with cancer. Second, lay health advisors will teach other



Valadares



Kinney

women about self-breast exams and the importance of Pap smears and mammograms to screen for cervical and breast cancer.

Kinney also is looking for groups of women — sororities, church groups, other organizations — interested in having presentations about these topics. Kinney can be reached at 465-1168 or dkinney@usi.edu.

The mammography unit of St. Mary's Health Care Services will provide the mammograms for African-American women reached through the grant program. Family nurse practitioner students in the School of Nursing and Health Professions will perform the Pap tests and breast exams. The Indiana State Department of Health's Regional Breast and Cervical Cancer Screening Program, the Greater Evansville Affiliate of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Cancer Institute also are collaborators.

The Welborn Foundation grants were announced in November. The School of Nursing and Health Professions plans to re-apply for continued funding of both programs.

Calling all Alumni

We welcome comments from our alumni and friends regarding accomplishments, career activities, and special events in your personal life (marriage and births).

Return form to:
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University of Southern Indiana
8600 University Boulevard
Evansville, IN 47712-3593

Name _____ Your student record name _____

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News

Jerrilee LaMar receives Distinguished Nursing Alumna Award

Jerrilee LaMar, manager of the Employee Education and Development Department at Deaconess Hospital in Evansville, has been named the first recipient of the University of Southern Indiana Distinguished Nursing Alumna Award.



LaMar

The award, presented by Dr. Nadine Coudret, dean of the USI School of Nursing and Health Professions, recognized LaMar's professional work that reflects the excellence the USI School of Nursing and Health Professions ascribes to and strives to instill in its graduates.

LaMar earned a baccalaureate degree in nursing from USI in 1994

and a master's degree from University of Evansville in 1998. She is currently enrolled in a doctoral program in education. She is a resident of Poseyville, Indiana.

She has worked as a pediatric staff nurse, an assistant head nurse, a clinical instructor, and a staff development specialist. She is a certified Zenger Miller Frontline Leadership facilitator, a certified American Heart CPR instructor trainer, and an American Heart PALS instructor. She is a clinical teaching associate for USI and Ivy Tech State College.

LaMar is a member of Sigma Theta Tau and the 2000 recipient of the Excellence in Humor Award from the National Nursing Staff Development organization. She served as team leader for the Deaconess outreach program in Jamaica that includes students and faculty from the School of Nursing and Health Professions.

The award was presented October 23 during the first annual alumni gathering for the nursing program. The 2002 event will be held October 22 in Carter Hall.

Susan Ahmad joins faculty

Susan Ahmad joined the School of Nursing and Health Professions in November as program director for the occupational therapy assistant program.



Ahmad

She was previously program director of the occupational therapy assistant program at the Christian Hospital Northeast/Northwest in St. Louis. She also has worked as a registered occupational therapist at the Life Care Center in Bridgeton, Missouri, and at Personal Touch Home Health and in the skilled nursing facility at Missouri College, both in St. Louis.

She earned a B.S. in occupational therapy and an advanced practice master's degree with an emphasis in gerontology, both from Washington University in St. Louis.

Ahmad is an Accreditation Evaluator for the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy (ACOTE).

Peggy Graul certified as healing touch practitioner

Peggy Graul, coordinator of continuing education for the School of Nursing and Health Professions, received certification as a healing touch practitioner at the Sixth Annual Healing Touch International Conference, "Touching the Future," January 23-27 in Denver.

Healing touch is a multi-level program in energy-based therapy. The program of study leading to certification includes more than 120 hours of course work, a year-long mentorship process with a certified healing touch practitioner, 100 documented client sessions, and an extensive reading program.

Graul and two other faculty from the School of Nursing and Health Professions — Melissa Vandever, program director of graduate nursing, and Cynthia Goodwin, instructor in nursing — have a healing touch practice in the Holistic Healing Education Center located in the Health Professions Center at the University of Southern Indiana.

The School of Nursing and Health Professions, in conjunction with Deaconess Resource Center for Healthy Living, has sponsored 11 Healing Touch workshops since 1998 with 132 persons completing the Level I workshop, 43 completing the Level IIA workshop, and 26 completing the Level IIB workshop.



USI faculty member Peggy Graul, right, met Janet Mentgen, founder and immediate past president of Healing Touch International, at the organization's international conference in Denver.

Check your calendar

Nursing and Health Professions Continuing Education

Workshops and Conferences

Eighth Annual Case Management Conference, University Center, Carter Hall, May 9

Fourth Annual Advanced Practice Nursing Symposium, University Center, Carter Hall, May 17

Radiology for Dental Auxiliaries, Health Professions Center, Mitchell Auditorium, May 17 & 18

Perinatal Conference, University Center, Carter Hall, September 11 and 12

Pain Management Symposium, University Center, Carter Hall, September 26

Healing Touch Level I, Kordes Retreat Center, Ferdinand, Indiana, October 18-20

Nursing Alumni Event, University Center, Carter Hall, October 22

Seventh Annual Nursing and Health Professions Educator Conference, University Center, Carter Hall, October 23

Alternative Medicine Update for Dental Professionals, Health Professions Center, Mitchell Auditorium, October 26

Basic Parish Nurse Education Program, Kordes Retreat Center, Ferdinand, Indiana, November 6-10

Customized programs

For programs tailored to meet the specific needs of your organization, contact [Peggy Graul](#), Coordinator of Continuing Education School of Nursing and Health Professions University of Southern Indiana pgraul@usi.edu or 812/465-1161

Registration information: Contact Extended Services, 812/464-1989 or 800/467-8600; http://health.usi.edu/cont_ed/contined.htm


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