

HEPATITIS HEALTH

Florida Hepatitis Program Has New Administrator

On October 28, 2005, HIV/AIDS Bureau Chief Thomas Liberti announced the appointment of **Philip E. Reichert** as the new Program Administrator for the Hepatitis Program.

Phil began his public health career at the Pinellas County Health Department (CHD) in 1979 in the STD (then VD) Control Program. Relocating to Tallahassee in 1983, he became the STD Control Program Manager for a 14 county area in North Florida (then HRS District 2), where he worked until he became the first HRS District 2 AIDS Program Coordinator in 1988. He earned his master's degree in public health in 1989 from the University of South Florida, and has worked in HIV Early Intervention and Prevention at headquarters in Tallahassee since 1995.

Phil wrote one of the first local Ryan White Title II contracts in 1990, and was involved in prevention community planning at its inception in 1994.



Phil "Mr. Camera Man" Reichert doing his imitation of Steven Spielberg.



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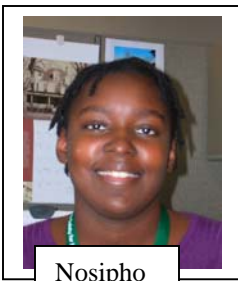
- New Staffers in Hepatitis Program
- National Hepatitis Conference
- World AIDS Day
- Hepatitis Awareness Day at the Florida Capitol
- Hepatitis 101 Course
- Financial Assistance For Hep Meds

More Staff Additions for the Hepatitis Program

Cheryl Urbas joined the Hepatitis Staff recently as the new Field Services Coordinator. In 1999, while finishing up her master's degree from Florida State University, Cheryl went to work in the Bureau of HIV/AIDS, eventually landing in the Prevention Section. She is currently in charge of vaccine accountability and is responsible for quality improvement in the Hepatitis Program. Cheryl can be reached at (850) 245-4444, ext. 2589.



Cheryl Urbas



Nosipho

Nosipho Beaufort is the new Office Manager for the Hepatitis Program. Nosipho (pronounced "No-see-poe") has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Carleton College in Minnesota. When she arrived in Tallahassee in 2002, Nosipho began work on a graduate degree. She has excellent skills in over 18 different computer programs, and will be assisting with meeting planning, the Viral Hepatitis Council functions, database analysis as well as other duties. Her phone # is (850) 245-4444 ext. 2430.





National Hepatitis Conference In DC



The **2005 National Viral Hepatitis Prevention Conference** took place December 5-9, 2005, in Washington, D.C.

The focus of the conference was the prevention of viral hepatitis through every stage of life. Attendees received the latest scientific updates related to hepatitis A, B and C. Workshops included:

- Providing services to injection drug users and men who have sex with men
- Overcoming health disparities
- Designing, implementing, and evaluating successful outreach, education and counseling activities
- Identifying and overcoming barriers to integrating hepatitis prevention activities into existing programs and
- Obtaining funding and other resources

Phil Reichert attended and provided two poster presentations. One poster showed a study of hepatitis vaccine accountability around the state, and the other illustrated the evaluation of Florida's Hepatitis Program conducted via a contract with the University of Arkansas (A grant for this evaluation was provided by the CDC). Both poster presentations were developed and authored by former Hepatitis Program staffers Sandy Roush and Jodi Baldy.

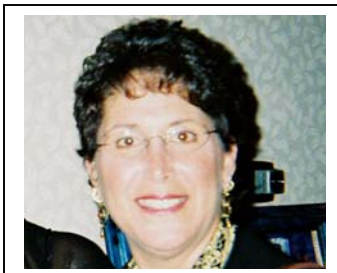


Elaine Thomas from Hillsborough CHD and Susanne Crowe with the State lab in Jacksonville stand next to the poster presentation at the National Hepatitis Conference.



A mighty fine poster

Andi Thomas, Executive Director of Hep-C ALERT, Inc. in Miami, gave a presentation on the Addiction Recovery Hepatitis Intervention Project (ARHIP) at the Washington conference. You can access the presentation on their website: www.hep-c-alert.org. (Scroll down to the "QuickNews" column on the left).



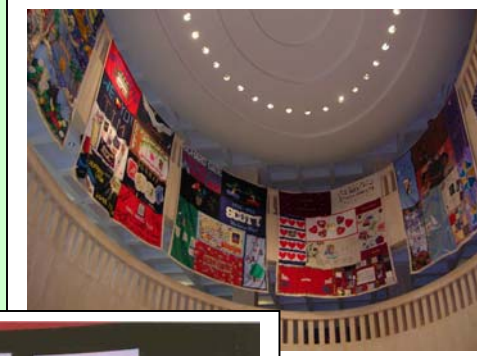
Andi Thomas

Throughout the presentation, Andi highlighted the outstanding collaboration between Hep-C ALERT, the Florida Department of Health's Hepatitis Program, Miami-Dade and Broward County Health Departments and participating residential drug treatment programs.

World AIDS Day

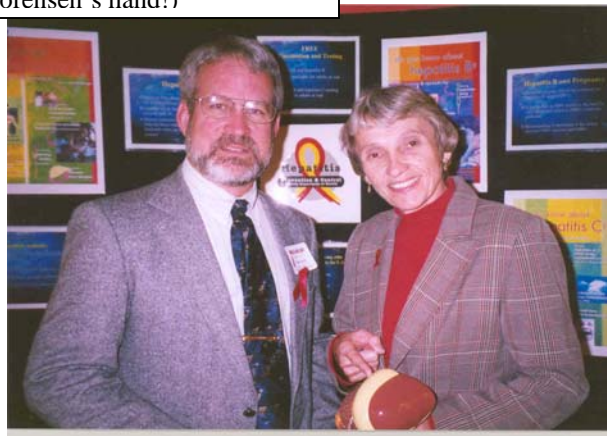
On December 1, 2005, people all over the globe joined together to commemorate World AIDS Day.

This year's theme was "Keep the Promise." The premise was a reminder that everyone must be committed to work hard to fight the spread of HIV/AIDS, and to work towards a cure for a disease that has no pity for age, race or sexual orientation.



Panels from the AIDS Quilt hang from the third floor rotunda in the State Capitol

Below: Phil Reichert & DOH Deputy Secretary Dr. Bonnie Sorensen in front of the Hepatitis Program display (Note the liver in Dr. Sorensen's hand!)



Above l-r: Cheryl Urbas, Leesa Gibson, April Crowley, Debbie Norberto, Bruce Campbell, Yolanda Foxx-Smith and Kim Ivery-Andrews

On December 1st, the Bureau of HIV/AIDS hosted a press conference in the rotunda at the state Capitol in Tallahassee. Other highlights at the Capitol included: an exhibit of a poster campaign created by various citizens of Florida, booths featuring local HIV/AIDS service providers and organizations and a display of some local panels from the AIDS quilt. This event was organized by Bruce Campbell in the Division of Disease Control, Bureau of HIV/AIDS.



Bruce Campbell talks to a local reporter



Above l-r: Bruce Campbell, Division of Disease Control Director Dr. Russell Eggert and Vanessa Crowther, Prevention Program Administrator for the Bureau of HIV/AIDS in the Division of Disease Control.



Above: Dr. Sorensen



Above, Yolanda Foxx-Smith & Jeff Turner with the Bureau of HIV/AIDS



Above: Craig Reynolds with Big Bend Cares

Save the Date!
Hepatitis Awareness Day

The Florida Department of Health (DOH) will host *Hepatitis Awareness Day* at the Florida Capitol on Thursday, February 9, 2006.

- DOH will provide hepatitis educational materials and resource information
- Educational booths will be provided by community partners
- DOH will hold a press conference at 10:00 AM. **DOH Secretary M. Rony Francois, M.D., M.S.P.H., PhD**, will discuss the importance of hepatitis testing and vaccine. DOH staff and community members will also participate in the press conference.

Hepatitis Awareness Day
February 9, 2006, 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM
Second Floor Rotunda
Florida Capitol
Tallahassee, Florida

Substance Abuse & Infectious Disease Cross-Training

On December 8 and 9, 2005, Florida's Department of Health, Department of Corrections and the Department of Children and Families collaborated with CDC, HRSA and SAMHSA to implement a two-day cross-training on *Substance Abuse and Infectious Disease: Cross-Training for Collaborative Systems of Prevention, Treatment and Care*.

The training took place in Tallahassee and was a forum where participants learned more about the common elements between substance abuse, corrections, infectious disease and mental health programs.



Left to right: Mary Hackney & Priscilla Wood with the Department of Corrections.



Left to right: Ryan Stokes and Mr. Folder Head from the Division of Disease Control Bureau of HIV/AIDS Surveillance Section teamed up with Michael Jon Bithorn from the Bureau's Early Intervention Program.

HEPATITIS 101 TELECONFERENCE

The Florida Hepatitis Prevention Program offers a one-hour basic introductory training course entitled "Hepatitis 101: for Counselors and Outreach Workers."

The course is presented in a telephone conference call format, and provides an introduction to hepatitis A, hepatitis B and hepatitis C. Prior to each course date, the "Meet Me" phone number, along with the PowerPoint Presentation, will be emailed to all registrants. Continuing education credit of one (1) contact hour is available for licensed laboratorians and nurses in the state of Florida.

For more information, please contact April Crowley, 850-245-4444, ext. 2580 (SC 205-4444, ext. 2580), or April.Crowley@doh.state.fl.us.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR HEPATITIS MEDICATIONS

Many drug manufacturers offer patient assistance programs, which can greatly decrease or entirely eliminate the costs of many medications. The requirements for program eligibility vary.

Some programs may be applied for directly by the patient, other program applications must be initiated by the healthcare provider (physician, pharmacist or agency).

Below are telephone numbers:

Product Name	Hepatitis Type	Parent Company	Contact Information
Infergen	HCV	InterMune	888-696-8036
Intron A	HBV, HCV	Schering	Commitment to Care 800-521-7157
Rebetron	HCV	Schering	Commitment to Care 800-521-7157
PEG-Intron	HCV	Schering	Commitment to Care 800-521-7157
PEG-Intron / Rebetol	HCV	Schering	Commitment to Care 800-521-7157
Roferon A	HCV	Roche	877-757-6243, option 4
Pegasys	HCV	Roche	Pegassist 877-734-2797
Pegasys / Copegus	HCV	Roche	Pegassist 877-734-2797
Epivir HBV	HBV, HDV	GlaxoSmithKline	Glaxo Wellcome Patient Assistance 800-722-9294
Hepsera	HBV	Gilead	800-226-2056

To receive a copy of Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America's **Directory of Prescription Drug Patient Assistance Programs**, call **1-800-762-4636**.

HEPATITIS B NEWS FROM THE IMMUNIZATION ACTION COALITION

TWO NEW WEB PAGES OFFER INFORMATION RELATED TO PROPOSED STRATEGIES FOR ADULT HEPATITIS B VACCINATION IN THE UNITED STATES.

First, CDC's Division of Viral Hepatitis (DVH) has posted notes online from an adult hepatitis B vaccination consultation meeting held in May 2005. DVH convened the meeting to discuss the implementation of proposed Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) strategies for adult hepatitis B vaccination.

The meeting summary, highlights, PowerPoint presentations, and participant information can be viewed at http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/diseases/hepatitis/partners/consultants_mtg_2005.htm

Second, the National Viral Hepatitis Roundtable (NVHR) has started a web page to advocate for a universal, age-based hepatitis B immunization recommendation. NVHR states, "We believe that vaccinating adults is a necessary and important step to eliminating hepatitis B in the United States, and that a recommendation which endorses age-based, rather than risk-based immunization, is the most effective way to achieve this goal."

Anyone interested in learning more about this issue is encouraged to visit NVHR's website where letters to ACIP from several organizations and individuals are posted. Go to: http://www.nvhr.org/acip_letters/acip.htm

The wife of physicist Robert Millikan was passing through the hall of their home when she overheard the maid on the telephone.

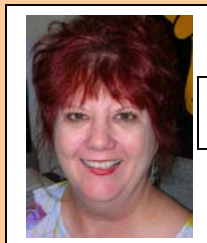
"Yes, this is where Dr. Millikan lives, but he's not the kind of doctor that does anybody any good."

Robert A. Millikan (1868-1953)
American physicist, Nobel Prize winner

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Hepatitis Health is brought to you by the Hepatitis Prevention Program in the Division of Disease Control, Bureau of HIV/AIDS at the Florida Department of Health. We want to know what you are doing in your community to prevent viral hepatitis. Please submit your articles and photos to:

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April Crowley



The Fab Four