St. Clair County Health Department Recognizes Public Health Nurses during National Nurse’s Week

While not as visible as an acute care nurse, public health nurses play an important role in our community and are a vital part of the services and programs provided by the St. Clair County Health Department.

The St. Clair County Health Department is recognizing its nurses as part of National Nurses Week. National Nurse Week begins on May 6, the birthday of Florence Nightingale, and ends on May 12.

Public Health nurses work in communities and neighborhoods to promote the health and safety of the public and help create healthy communities. They work in a variety of settings such as health departments, schools, homes, community health centers, clinics, correctional facilities, worksites, out of mobile vans and even dog sleds, according to the Association of Public Health Nurses (APHN).
According to the Association of Public Health Nurses, a public health nurse works to protect and promote the health and safety of the populations by fostering high nursing practice standards, promoting and providing educational opportunities, and advancing the public health nursing role.

At the Health Department, nurses work in Personal Health Services, Community Health Services and Infectious Disease Prevention. Our nurses are working to assure healthy communities by providing immunizations to children, working to provide care to women, helping to educate the public regarding various public health issues, and monitoring communicable diseases.

Nurses working in the Infectious Disease Prevention Division report and monitor infectious diseases and clusters of disease which may present public health threats, such as Tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases and influenza.

“A public health nurse is someone that cares about the community,” said Mary Beth Kalmer, R.N., B.S.N., a Public Health Nurse in the Infectious Disease Division Prevention of the Health Department. “I like my job and watching my patients get better and hopefully stop disease progression in my county.”

As a Staff Nurse Renee Gomric, R.N., works in the Personal Health Service to promote the health of women, infants, children and families by offering prevention, education and supportive services in the clinic, throughout the community and in the home.

“We try to help people who need it get the resources they need,” Ms. Gomric said. “If you help mom and dad, you help brother and sister. I do this for the kids.”
Marcia Weilbacher, R.N., B.S.N. and Kathryn Weisenstein, R.N., B.S.N are the nurses who work in the Community Health Division. They work primarily in the Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program, and the WISEWOMAN Program. These are case management programs that encouraged women to get their annual well-woman screenings, and diabetes and cardiovascular screenings. For any client whose screening results are abnormal, Marcia and Kathy begin Clinical Patient Navigation to case manage the client through her diagnostics services.

(From left to right) Kathryn Weinstein, R.N., B.S.N. and Marcia Weilbacher, R.N., B.S., Community Health Services.

(From left to right) Cathy Stein R.N., B.S.N., Nursing Coordinator—Clinic Services; Carmoleta Youck, R.N., B.S.N., Nursing Manager—Community Services; Robin Hannon, R.N., M.S.N., Director of Personal Health Services and Mary Galvin, R.N., B.S.N. Nursing Manager—Clinic Services.


[Image of National Nurses Week 2016]