

## Electronic Death Registration (EDRS)

Progress continues on the Florida Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS). The vendor, Netsmart, Inc., is working on revisions to our existing death system. Conference calls have been taking place with the Netsmart user group, 10 states using the Netsmart product. Working in partnership with these other states, sharing ideas and EDRS experiences, helps ensure a good product for all.

Development of training materials is progressing. The state office has been consulting with other states who are operating an EDRS (not necessarily the same system as Florida), asking about their training materials and what worked for them when implementing their systems. Web tutorials seem to be a preferred method and something we have discussed here in Florida. We will be pursuing this format and the possibility of offering continuing education

credits upon successful completion of a tutorial. You will be hearing more on that as we progress. Mike Ellison, our EDRS Project Manager, is onboard to oversee and track EDRS progression. Late 2008 is still the target for piloting in Duval County.

The next workgroup conference call will cover the EDRS process for medical examiners as online users. At the onset, most private physicians will be using the Fax Attestation process, but physicians certifying higher numbers of death will be encouraged to become an online user. Hospice physicians are an example of a group that would be targeted as online users. We will be sharing up-to-date EDRS information on future CDR conference calls.

Questions related to EDRS should be directed to the state office, Sharon Dover at (904) 359-6900, ext. 1021.

## Vital News Available In Electronic Format

Vital News subscribers who would like to receive their copy electronically should email Sharon Dover at: [sharon\\_dover@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:sharon_dover@doh.state.fl.us)

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## MEET 'N GREET



Front Row: Ray Centeno, Michael Callao, Ruth Della Torre  
Back Row: Theresa Gazalah, Darlene Newmans, Kay Edwards

The Distribution Unit is under the direction of Darlene Newmans, Records Center Manager, and is comprised of Michael Callao, Chiquita Sneed, Ray Centeno, Ruth Della Torre and Kay Edwards. We also have the assistance of a few very capable folks from a senior workforce company called Experience Works, who assist us with mailing of certifications.

This unit of dedicated staff works closely with the Search Unit verifying that the correct record has been retrieved, and they then update the e-Vitals tracking system as to the status of the request. This timely process also includes manual entry of audit control numbers when photocopies are issued in lieu of computer certifications; they document the State File Number that is linked to that audit control number. They also prepare abstract certifications where information is retrieved from one of our many birth and death ledgers, produce all "not found" statements for those requests where an event cannot be located, and prepare the Commemorative Birth and Marriage Certificates for submission to the Governor's Office for signature.

This small unit processes a large amount of work and is an integral link in the vital statistics chain. We value each of them!

## Honing Those Customer Service Skills

Customer service is one of the most important aspects of any successful business. When you are in the business of public service, the need is even more vital. There's not one of us who could not benefit from refining these critical skills in order to better relate to our customers.

The following is a list of "no-no's" abstracted from the Independent Funeral Directors of Florida (IFDF) publication, *The Independent Reporter*. Think about these tips and how it could improve your relationship with your customers.

### 1. It's Not Our Policy

When the customer hears this, they usually think, "Who cares?" Management and staff are normally the only ones truly concerned with internal policy. Do you really think the customer says to himself or herself as they enter or call your place of business, "Gee, I wonder what their policy is on this issue!"

This being said, sometimes our policies do make it more difficult to work with what a customer wants. So here's a suggestion: decide on your policy, then work as a team with your staff to find a positive way to explain it to the customer.

### 2. It's Not My Department

Tell the customer what you do, not what you don't do. If the customer gets to you and asks for something you don't handle, try the following: "Hi, I work in the \_\_\_\_ department. Let me get you to someone in the area you need." It's far more effective to go with the "I" statement rather than, "YOU have the wrong department." Lead with the positive.

### 3. The Computer's Down

This is a classic excuse we've all heard before, even if it might be true. This might sound better: "I'll be glad to help you, but it may take a bit longer as our computers are currently down." With this statement, you've explained the issue, but still offered assistance. Again, lead with the positive as to what you can do.

### 4. I'm New

Even if you are new, the customer expects you to know your job. Tell the customer, "Please bear with me, I've only been with \_\_\_\_ for 2 weeks." This can buy you time. Hearing the short length of time means more to the customer than just "I'm new." You must, of course, make every effort to find the answer to the question presented.

### 5. I Wasn't Here that Day or I Was On Vacation When that Happened

Do you really think the customer cares if you were there or not? Just hit the problem head on, apologize (on behalf of your office) without telling them where you were or weren't. Remember, to the customer, YOU are the company, regardless of where you were when the issue occurred.

*Nancy Friedman, President of Telephone Doctor Customer Service training in St. Louis MO, [www.telephonedoctor.com](http://www.telephonedoctor.com)*

## What's All That Stuff On The Back Of The DC?

Did you ever wonder why we have all that information printed on the back of the death certificate? That information was designed by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) for the national standard certificate in order to assist physicians when they are completing the cause of death on the record. It gives the physician an idea of how to enter the progression of the disease or injury in order to properly classify the cause.

The first list shown states that if any of these conditions are listed, we would like the physician to provide more information on the etiology of that condition. The record is acceptable with that condition, however. We get calls every so often from CDRs who think the presence of a word from this list of

disease conditions indicates a record should be rejected, which is certainly not the case.

The second list is the classic list of "buzz words" that are indicators of some type of trauma or external cause, and their presence should alert the physician that the case must be reported to the medical examiner. This list can also be found in the handbook and the COM. The presence of any of these words must generate a call to the medical examiner if the record does not indicate they have already been contacted.

If there are questions on the acceptability of a death record, contact Kenny Higginbotham at (904) 359-6900 ext. 1017.

## Welcome Aboard



The following appointments have been made to the position of registrar in the county health department:

### Local Registrar:

Lillian Rivera ..... Miami-Dade  
Belinda Johnson-Cornett ..... Osceola  
Robin Wright ..... Putnam  
Shannon L. Jacobs ..... Santa Rosa

### Chief Deputy Registrar

Johnnie Groomes ..... Hardee  
Lori Spadavecchia ..... Levy  
Maxine Thomas ..... Miami-Dade

The Vital Records Registration Handbook 2007 Revision & the Birth & Death editions of the handbook can be downloaded from the website at:  
[http://www.doh.state.fl.us/planning\\_eval/vital\\_statistics/index.html](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/planning_eval/vital_statistics/index.html)

# Hospital List of *CHAMPIONS*

Seven Florida hospitals maintained a PERFECT compliance rate for 2007. Kudos and high honors go out to these seven listed below!! Thirty-five hospitals maintained a monthly compliance rate of 95—99%. Another 35 hospitals succeeded in reaching a 90—94% compliance rate. These facilities are to be congratulated on their outstanding performance!

**100%**

- Collier ..... Physician’s Reg. Medical Ctr.
- Duval ..... Memorial Hospital
- Escambia ..... West Florida Medical Center  
NAS Hospital/Pensacola
- Nassau ..... Baptist Medical Ctr./Nassau
- Pasco ..... Comm. Hosp. of New Port Richey
- Walton ..... Sacred Heart of Emerald Coast

**95—99%**

- Brevard . Wuesthoff Mem. Hosp. Rockledge
- Broward ..... Northwest Medical Center
- Charlotte ..... Peace River Reg. Medical Ctr.
- Citrus ..... Seven Rivers Comm. Hospital
- Collier ..... North Collier Hospital
- Duval ..... Baptist Medical Ctr./Beaches  
..... Baptist Med. Ctr./Downtown  
..... Shands/Jax Medical Center
- Escambia ..... Sacred Heart Hosp. Pensacola
- Highlands ..... Florida Hosp. Heartland Div.
- Highlands Reg. Medical Ctr.

- Hillsborough ... St. Joseph’s Women’s Hosp.  
University Community Hosp.
- Indian River .... Indian River Medical Center
- Leon ..... Capital Reg. Medical Center  
Tallahassee Mem. Healthcare
- Manatee ..... Lakewood Ranch Med. Ctr.  
Manatee Memorial Hospital
- Marion ..... Munroe Regional Med. Ctr.
- Martin ..... Martin Memorial Hospital
- Miami-Dade ..... Baptist Hospital of Miami  
..... South Miami Hospital
- Monroe ..... Lower Florida Keys Med. Ctr.
- Orange ..... Florida Hospital Orlando  
Winnie Palmer Hospital  
Winter Park Mem. Hospital
- Osceola ... Florida Hosp. Celebration Health
- Palm Beach ..... Boca Raton Comm. Hosp.  
Glades General Hospital  
Good Samaritan Hospital  
Jupiter Medical Center
- Pasco ..... Florida Hospital Zephyrhills
- Seminole ..... Florida Hospital Altamonte
- Volusia ..... Halifax Medical Center

**90—94%**

- Alachua ..... Shands/University of Florida  
Medical Center
- Bay ..... Bay Medical Center  
Gulf Coast Medical Center
- Brevard ..... Cape Canaveral Hospital  
James Holmes Reg. Med. Ctr.  
Parrish Medical Center

- Broward ..... Broward General Medical Ctr.  
Holy Cross Hospital  
Memorial Hospital/Miramar  
Memorial Regional Hospital  
Plantation General Hospital
- Clay ..... Orange Park Medical Center
- Duval ..... St. Luke’s Medical Center
- Escambia ..... Baptist Hospital
- Hernando ..... Spring Hill Regional Hospital
- Jackson ..... Jackson Hospital
- Lee ..... Cape Coral Hospital
- Miami-Dade ..... Jackson Memorial Hospital  
Mercy Hospital  
Mount Sinai Medical Center
- Okaloosa ..... 96th Medical Group  
Ft. Walton Beach Medical Ctr.  
North Okaloosa Medical Ctr.
- Orange ..... Health Central
- Osceola ..... Osceola Regional Medical Ctr.
- Palm Beach ..... Palms West Medical Center  
St. Mary’s Hospital  
Wellington Regional Medical Center
- Pasco ..... Pasco Regional Medical Ctr.
- Pinellas ..... Mease Countryside Hospital
- Polk ..... Regency Medical Center
- Putnam ..... Putnam Comm. Medical Care
- St. Lucie ..... St. Lucie Medical Center
- Seminole ..... South Seminole Comm. Hosp.
- Volusia ..... Florida Hospital Deland

We salute the hospital birth registrars and county VS staff, and we praise you for a job well done!! Keep up the good work.

## Electronic Birth Registration Helpdesk

Helpdesk coverage has been expanded for EBR online hospitals. In addition to our regular 7 day a week helpdesk coverage, the state office Birth Registration Unit (featured in the March 2007 issue of the Vital News) is now available during regular business hours for application/program questions for EBR hospitals. These knowledgeable folks are familiar with the birth record, its structure, the intent of the items, and the overall birth registration process, so we’re excited about their joining the EBR team. The number to call is: (904) 359-6900 ext. 9009; this number will take you to the next available staff person.

Lockouts and other technical questions should continue to be directed to (386) 274-0860.

## Chief Deputy Registrar Advisory Committee

Several of the CDRAC members report they have been visited by other CDRs wishing to see their office operation. Luz Perez, CDRAC chairperson has also visited a few county offices at their request. This sharing of ideas and processes is one of the benefits of having strong leadership within the CDR community and we appreciate our committee members. Is it any wonder that the counties represented on CDRAC are at the forefront of innovative thought?

Shands/Lakeshore Hospital in Lake City will be the first CDRAC hospital to come online with EBR and that is expected to happen sometime in April.

## ***BITS ‘N PIECES***

CDRs, the **Application for Florida Birth Record** (county version), DH 1960, has been revised and forwarded to you. Be sure you have updated your county form to be in agreement with the state application, and also, that you have provided a copy of your revised application to Kevin Wright. You may email your application to Kevin or fax to 904-359-6633.

Past issues of the *Vital News*, are found on the department’s website at the following address:

[http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Planning\\_eval/Vital\\_Statistics/VitalNews/vn-index.htm](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Planning_eval/Vital_Statistics/VitalNews/vn-index.htm)

