

STATEWIDE TRAINING

With all the hoopla involved in bringing about our statewide meeting, it's hard to believe it has come and gone so quickly! There were more than 100 people in attendance at the Wyndham Riverwalk Hotel in Jacksonville, July 18-19. Representation was so good, we even had a *rabbit* in attendance!!!

Deputy Secretary Robert Eadie opened our meeting and spoke on the importance of the work done in vital statistics and how each one's individual efforts help to make a better program for Florida. We appreciate him taking time out of his busy schedule to speak with us.

Much information was shared at this gathering of vital statistics professionals. We covered topics such as birth and death registration as related to the newly revised certificates, issuance and access to vital records, safety and security, and a myriad of other subjects generated by the various discussions. The general consensus is that the workgroups were the most popular feature and everyone would like more of the same at any future meetings. Attendees felt this was a great opportunity to share ideas, and the fact that each group was facilitated by a fellow CDR made it more personal. Several ideas were put forth at the meeting and the state office is in the process of reviewing them for follow-up and possible change in procedures.

Quality Assurance would like to thank the members of the Chief Deputy Registrar Advisory Committee (CDRAC) for their contribution in putting this meeting together as well as for their assistance in acting as workgroup facilitators. As always, CDRAC is a *vital* component in the vitals team!

CDRAC UPDATE

CDRAC would like to thank all the CDRs for their questions when we were together at the recent statewide meeting — they ranged from how you do VitalChek requests, how you handle reluctant physicians, to how you get on the committee. Our years of experience were put to the test, but all parties seemed happy with the responses (that includes the state office, too!).

One of the things to come out of the meeting was the need to review the burial transit permit process. We will be working closely with the state office on this review.

The CDR Operations Manual (COM) is in the process of being updated and the members have been asked to provide input. CDRAC continues to ask the question, "when will deaths be online?" The state office assures us they are working on the process and hopes to have them available soon.

So it's easy to see we will busy in the upcoming months.

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MEET 'N GREET



Bill, Anne, Michelle, Dave

With this issue we'd like to introduce you to our **Administrative Services** staff. The lead position is currently vacant, but Bill Hughes, as acting administrator, stays busy keeping us solvent and in balance; Michelle Campbell assists Bill with the accounting chores and the numerous tasks that keep us afloat; Anne Sisson-Meusel handles the human resources for the state office, an awesome task for 128 staff positions; and Dave Sanford is well known to county staff as he is the purchasing agent and source for ordering the many forms we use throughout the state. We're fortunate to have such able people dealing with the administrative needs of our office.

KATHERINE'S LAW

The governor recently signed into law legislation that allows for the issuance of a certification of a Certificate of Birth Resulting in a Stillbirth. This law is known as Katherine's Law and Florida is the 14th state to implement such a law.

This issuance will come from the state office only; county offices will not issue, but should refer the applicant to the state office. Funeral directors who get questions from families should also refer them to the state office. The issuance will come from the fetal death certificate, but will not be considered as proof of a live birth. Copies will be available from 1930 to the present.

Time has been allowed for the state office to incorporate this new certificate into rule; develop the certificate and application; update the e-Vitals system to allow for such issuance and tracking; and construct an informational brochure for the funeral director, physician, medical examiner, and hospital to provide to parents. We expect availability of the certificate sometime in the fall.

Questions on the issuance of this special certificate should be directed to Kevin Wright, at (904) 359-6922.

NO AUTOMATIC "FREE" BC TO NEW PARENTS

There seems to be something of an "urban legend" roaming around in Florida hospitals. The state office receives daily inquiries from parents wanting to know where their "free" birth certificate is for their baby. They are convinced they were told they would get a free copy and "remember" getting one with their last child.

There is no automatic free copy of a birth certification. Most facilities provide a packet of information upon the mother and child's release, which may include information on how to obtain a certification from either the county or state office, but there is a fee associated with this service.

The birth registrar works with the mother in completing a birth worksheet from which the actual birth certificate is constructed, so it may be that the parents misunderstand this process and conclude that they will get a free certification. Perhaps they question if there is a fee for completing and filing the birth certificate and when told that there is no fee involved, it is misinterpreted. It's really hard to say how the misunderstanding actually originates, but we don't want parents failing to order a birth certification under the misconception they will automatically get one in the mail, free of charge.

We ask hospital birth registrars to work with the parents and explain they may obtain a certification of their child's birth certificate from any county health department or from the state office. Information on obtaining the certification from the state office can be found on our website at: http://www.doh.state.fl.us/planning_eval/vital_statistics/index.html.

The revised Vital Records Registration Handbook & the *new* Birth & Death editions of the handbook are available for downloading from the website at: http://www.doh.state.fl.us/planning_eval/vital_statistics/index.html.

EBC PILOT HOSPITAL

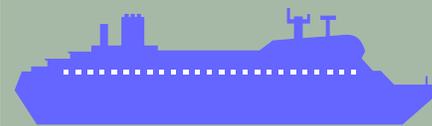
The state office is currently working with Baptist South Medical Center in Jacksonville to act as our first pilot hospital for an electronic birth system. Baptist South is the first "paperless" hospital in Northeast Florida and a perfect choice for us to begin this journey into a paperless, web based filing system for Florida birth certificates. We plan to run the pilot for about two months, and if all goes well, we'll continue the pilot phase with several other facilities. Stay tuned!!

WHAT'S NEW IN E-VITALS

The new report for the DocSequence Log allows the CDR to look at the range of numbers used from one day to the next and easily see that there were no breaks in the number series. The report can be set for any number of days and a report for a normal month is about three or four pages. Questions on this report should be directed to Ray Herz at (904) 359-6900 ext. 1054.



Welcome Aboard



The following appointments have been made to the position of Registrar:

Local Registrar

Neftali Fernandez, M.D. Glades & Hendry Counties

Chief Deputy Registrar

Bonita Grantham Calhoun County
 Rebecca Bird DeSoto County
 Cynthia Byler Liberty County
 Jane Gray Volusia County
 Judy Eaton Union County

IN MEMORIAM

Vital Statistics lost one of its elder statesmen; Everett H. Williams, Jr., State Registrar, 1947-1984; who died on Friday, August 4.

Mr. Williams bridged the time from a rural Florida to what we see today. As director, Mr. Williams was responsible for a number of innovations in the vital records field which were later adopted by other states. He was a nationally recognized expert in the field and was often consulted by other states and the National Center for Health Statistics. He served as President of the American Association for Vital Records and Health Statistics and held offices in the Southern Health Association, Florida Public Health Association, and the State Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers. He was also a member of the Florida Medical Examiners Commission.

When the state office was renovated a few years ago, a brand new storage facility was constructed to house all the vital records. That facility was named after Mr. Williams as a tribute to his many years of service to the office as well as to the citizens of Florida. His presence will be sorely missed.

PATERNITY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT— PARENTS MUST READ

When a mother is unmarried and there is a father who wishes to acknowledge paternity at the hospital, the birth certificate allows for this process. Both parents must sign the acknowledgment and these signatures must be either notarized or witnessed by two witnesses. Before the parents sign, however, it is required that they read an information sheet explaining the process and what they are agreeing to do.

This information was on the back of the old birth certificate, making it simple to just turn over and read. With the implementation of the revised birth certificate in 2004, this information was moved to a separate document. Hospitals are required to provide this information sheet to the parents prior to signing.

“What You as a Parent must know before Signing the Paternity Acknowledgment by Natural Parents”, DH 1568, Stock Number 5477-000-1568-3, can be obtained from the chief deputy registrar at the county health department. The form may be photocopied and is available in English, Spanish, and Creole.

Hospitals and birthing centers should contact the CDR for a supply of the form. CDRs should order a supply of the form from the warehouse.

The County Health Department phone list (with fees)
is posted to the Internet at:

http://www.doh.state.fl.us/planning_eval/vital_statistics/index.html.

The list is updated quarterly & can be downloaded at any time

The following was taken from the Reader’s Digest:

“I need to revise the death certificate I just handed you, “ my fellow doctor said to a nurse I was working with. “What’s wrong?” she asked.

“It’s a little embarrassing,” he said. Then, pulling her aside, he whispered, “I was in a hurry when I signed it and, well, I accidentally wrote my name under ‘Cause of Death.’”

Bits 'N Pieces

- CDRs: when faxing the **keying error form** to the Search Unit, please allow plenty of time for staff to retrieve the fax, research the inquiry, and get back with you. Remember, there are 67 counties sending such requests. If you have a client waiting, ask them if they can take a seat and you will get with them as soon as you hear back from the state office. Questions should be directed to Theresa Gazaleh at (904) 359-6900 ext. 1042.

TOP 20 FIRST NAMES FOR 2005

MALE		FEMALE	
1. Joshua	11. Ethan	1. Emily	11. Abigail
2. Michael	12. Christian	2. Isabella	12. Alyssa
3. Anthony	13. Jonathan	3. Madison	13. Mia
4. Christopher	14. Tyler	4. Emma	14. Victoria
5. Jacob	15. Ryan	5. Sophia	15. Sarah
6. Daniel	16. William	6. Ashley	16. Kayla
7. Matthew	17. Joseph	7. Samantha	17. Alexis
8. Alexander	18. Andrew	8. Brianna	18. Ava
9. Nicholas	19. Gabriel	6. Hannah	19. Elizabeth
10. David	20. John	10. Olivia	20. Jasmine

The statistical tables, & 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