

Electronic Birth Registration (EBR)



Vital Statistics met with Netsmart, Inc., to discuss the development of the web based tutorial for Electronic Birth Registration (EBR). The tutorial will be primarily for new birth registrars coming onto the scene at an online hospital. The early reviews are a thumbs up—it's exciting to see this new technology from the beginning!

EBR rollout continues with the addition of several new hospitals each month. Quite a few states are interested in our use of the signature pad and how we have approached Healthy Start.

Electronic Death Registration (EDRS)

Florida's EDRS is proceeding, but with a revised schedule. The pilot will most likely take place in early 2009, rather than fall 2008, as originally planned. We continue to work with the vendor in the development of an online web tutorial and are excited about the prospect of offering this to our funeral directors and online physicians.



Kudos to Brevard County CDR

Alexa Doepel, Chief Deputy Registrar, Brevard County Health Department, in conjunction with her local medical examiner, sent an informational letter to area funeral homes regarding issues related to cremation approval. Another mail out was to all physicians in the county and included the brochure for physicians, "What the Physician

Should Know about Certifying Cause of Death on the Florida Death Certificate".

The state office applauds Alexa's efforts in communicating with her medical examiner, funeral directors and physicians in this cooperative spirit — GREAT job!!!

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MEET 'N GREET

The Public Health Statistics - Medical Coding Unit is under the supervision of Gary Sammet, Operations Manager, and is comprised of Kitty Bell, Alfredia Bullard, Mila Castuera, Emilee Hobbs, Lane Pirtle, and Myrtle Robinson. Additional support is also provided by Felipe Lorenzo-Luaces, Velida Osmanovic, and Debra Briggs, who are part of the Data Management Unit.

The Medical Coding Unit is responsible for data entry and auditing of the medical portion of the death certificate. They also file medical affidavits, replacement records, and query death records with rare diseases or illegible entries. These issues result in the staff working closely with families of the deceased, funeral directors, physicians and medical examiners, and the chief deputy registrars.

Most of the staff has undergone specialized training for medical terminology and some training for underlying/multiple cause coding of the causes of death. They work closely with the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) to help ensure quality and accuracy of medical conditions reported for proper classification and research/statistical information.

We are very proud of the staff for their continued support and dedication, despite increasing record volumes and requests for services.



Front Row: Debra Briggs, Mila Castuera, Lane Pirtle
Back row: Myrtle Robinson, Kitty Bell, Gary Sammet, Alfredia Bullard

NAPHSIS Meeting

The National Association of Public Health Information Statistics and Information Systems (NAPHSIS) held their annual meeting in Orlando during the first week of June. The meeting gave us the opportunity to meet with other states and share information on similar issues. Sharing ideas, asking questions on how others deal with specific issues is invaluable.

Meade Grigg, Florida State Registrar, received NAPHSIS's Shining Star Award for his leadership and many contributions to the fields of vital statistics and public health. Those of us who work with Meade on a regular basis are well aware of his attributes, but it was good to see him receive this well deserved national recognition.

The meeting agenda was built around the 75th anniversary of NAPHSIS and the contributions NAPHSIS has made to the public health community over the years. Florida state office staff, Karen Freeman, Kenny Higginbotham, Betty Shannon, Kathy Stephens, and Sharon Dover, provided support as well as participated in several sessions and breakouts.

While in Orlando, the Netsmart User Group met and compared notes as to where each of the states were in relation to our common vendor for the electronic registration process. No one is doing it in exactly the same way, but still the similarities are strong. Working as a group affords us the ability to develop a more workable product with Netsmart, whereby all benefit.



Barcode Scanner & E-Vitals

Since the implementation of e-Vitals in 2004, the state office has encouraged county offices to use a hand held or portable barcode scanner when inputting safety paper audit control numbers into the system. Using the scanner eliminates the possibility of transposition of numbers, a critical factor when reconciling safety paper. The scanner is also useful when searching for an application or request in e-Vitals.

While a good number of county offices have taken our advice and are using a scanner, there are several who have not. We cannot emphasize this enough. If you have not invested in a scanner, it is worth the minimal cost for the peace of mind it offers the health department to know the safety paper is truly and more importantly, accurately being accounted for.

When purchasing a scanner, it must be able to read Bar Code 39 (3 of 9) and should be purchased as a kit that includes the scanner, stand, and connection cord. Questions on the scanner should be directed to Mike Grant, 904-359-6900 ext. 1056.

Universal Birth Certification

In July 2008, the State Office of Vital Statistics will begin issuing a new computer birth certification for events taking place between 2004 and the present. This new certification is an abstract of original records on file in the state office, and it contains additional information not found on the current computer birth certification, which will still be issued for events prior to 2004. Photocopy certifications of birth records will still be available, if requested.

The new certification will be printed on safety paper just as all Florida certifications are. With the issuance of the new computer birth certification, there will now be two variations of the computer birth certification:

1. Computer birth certifications from 2004 forward, which will contain more information than the current version of the birth certification and will include the following additional items: time of birth; birth weight; place of birth, including city; and parents date, and place of birth.
2. Computer birth certifications prior to 2004 will be the current computer birth certifications issued to date.

Welcome Aboard

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

Local Registrar:
 Jean Munden Alachua
 Paula Thaqi, M.D. Broward
 Teresa Goodman Citrus
 Mark Chittum Martin

Chief Deputy Registrar
 Tammy Revels Madison
 Celestine Boyd Walton

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

Legislative Update

The 2008-2009 Legislative Session ended May 2, 2008. This session contained a few bills having an impact on vital statistics.

• House Bill 7007, Safe Haven Protection for Surrendered

Newborn Infants, effective 7/1/08 - adds specific language to s. 383.50, F.S., “When an infant is born in a hospital and the mother expresses intent to leave the infant and not return, upon the mother’s request, the hospital or birth registrar shall complete the infant’s birth certificate without the mother’s name thereon.” This means if the mother abandons the infant at the hospital, just walks away, then the hospital cannot enter on the birth record, any information on the mother, even if it is part of their file. This is currently the procedure outlined in the Vital Records Registration Handbook, but

this bill now adds the strength of the law behind that procedure. The bill also expands the age or timeframe in which a mother has to surrender the newborn infant without fear of prosecution; it goes from three days to seven days.

• House Bill 663, Termination of Parental Rights, effective 7/1/08 — an unmarried biological father who fails to register with the Florida Putative Father Registry before a petition for termination of parental rights has been filed may not file a paternity claim under chapter 742, Florida Statutes. This bill provides for an exception from time limitations for filing a paternity claim if::

1. The mother identifies the father to an adoption entity as a potential father by the date she executes a consent for adoption;

2. The father is served with the notice of intended adoption plan;

3. The 30-day mandatory response date is later than the date the petition for termination of parental rights is filed with the court.

This bill also states if the registrant fails to report a change of address to the Florida Putative Father Registry, the adoption entity or adoption petitioner is not obligated to search further for the registrant.

• Senate Bill 1042, Putative Father Registry, effective 10/1/08 — allows the information in the Florida Putative Father Registry to remain confidential and exempt from public disclosure. The bill allows a birth mother, who provides a notarized request, to have a copy of any registry entry in which she is identified as the birth mother.

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. Be sure to verify with the county if there are additional fees.

Florida’s Top 20 First Names For 2007

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

BITS 'N PIECES

Filing times for vital records:
 Birth—5 calendar days
 Death—5 calendar days, with possible extension of 5 business days
 Fetal death—same as death

CDRs should be monitoring filing times and writing noncompliance on habitual offenders. Funeral directors and hospital birth registrars should be filing records on time, thus avoiding situations of non-compliance. Questions on filing times can be answered by the CDR.

Past issues of the Vital News can be found on the department’s website at the following address: http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Planning_eval/Vital_Statistics/VitalNews/vn-index.htm

