



# Vital News

Volume 22 Issue 1

Published by the Office of Vital Statistics

March 2009

## Newest Members of QA Team

With the implementation of Electronic birth Registration (EBR) and the coming of Electronic Death Registration System (EDRS), the Quality Assurance Unit has added some additional team members. The latest to join our group are Ana Goold, Michael (yes, another Mike) Edwards, and Michele Watterson. Ana comes to us from the Paternity/Child Support Enforcement Unit where she has been the supervisor for the past two years. Ana has extensive experience from the private sector and can't wait to hit the road and start training the hospitals. Mike comes from the private sector with extensive training and computer experience. Mike will bring that experience with him when he heads out! Michele has a good training background from her years of teaching and has a strong computer background as well. Michele is anxious to jump into the EBR mix!

As these folks get through their training program and begin to shadow Jana, Chris, and Cindy, county staff will also have the opportunity to meet them. We're sure you'll be just as pleased as we are to have them on our team!!

## CDRAC Update

The Chief Deputy Registrar Advisory Committee participated in changes to the Infant Birth/Death Match process, whereby counties work with hospital's fetal and infant mortality staff to obtain the necessary copies of events. This process helps to ensure the correct record is filed for every delivery that occurs and that there is a record for every delivery.

The end of the year also brought us into a discussion on the use of DHL as a carrier for vital records. The suggestion was to switch to Federal Express. In January the discussion continued to determine the actual costs for ground versus air and the impact on the counties. It was decided that no shipments should be made on Fridays so that records did not have to sit somewhere until Monday, increasing the possibility of them going astray. We are still fine-tuning the process and will be keeping everyone posted when finalized.



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## MEET 'N GREET

The Public Health Statistics - Data Management Unit is under the supervision of Felipe Lorenzo-Luaces, Research and Statistics Manager, and Gary Sammet, Operations Manager. It is comprised of Debra Briggs, Vickie Marr, Velida Osmanovic, and Sherry Wheat.

This unit is responsible for data and statistical related functions for all vital statistics events. Staff work closely with the Public Information Office, media, researchers, public interest groups, and other state and national agencies. Staff also coordinate and review requests for research studies, and coordinate DOH IRB approval. They manage the follow-up procedures on low-weight babies, as well as the linking of birth and infant death records, and verifying proper registration of events for these records.

The unit distributes routine data to a variety of agencies, including the Social Security Administration (SSA) for the enumeration at birth and the death verification programs, the Department of Highway Safety for flagging driver license records, the Clerks of Court for purging the jury lists, the Supervisor of Elections for flagging voter lists, and the Division of Retirement for discontinuing payments to deceased individuals, in addition to numerous other agencies. Staff also works with DOH-IT (Information Technology) and DOH-HPE (Bureau of Community Health Assessment) to utilize the cloverleaf system which automates the generation and distribution of routine data files along with email notifications, thus eliminating manual intervention and improves the timeliness and security of the data.

We are very proud of the staff for their continued support and dedication.



Front: Velida Osmanovic, Debra Briggs, Gary Sammet Back: Vickie Marr, Sherry Wheat, Felipe Lorenzo-Luaces

## Customer Service Tips On Handling An Irate Client

The following is an article by  
Nancy Friedman of  
*The Telephone Doctor*

If your job entails facing or taking calls from unhappy, irate customers, you've got your work cut out for you. Employees who deal with customers are especially vulnerable to outbursts from people who are going through an emotional, stressful time. Handling these types of customers takes time and training, but it can be accomplished effectively. Here are some of the Telephone Doctor's best techniques for turning unhappy customers into satisfied customers.

### Get Off on the Right Foot

Realize that upset, angry customers are not unhappy with you, but with the situation. Don't take the hostility personally. You are merely the rod that redirects the violent lightning. You can do a great deal to diffuse the anger before you ever pick up the phone or start the conversation with the customer. How? By smiling first! You can really "hear" a smile over the phone and, of course, see it in person. It's very difficult to be rude to someone who is warm and friendly.

### Anatomy of a Hostile Customer

There are four basic steps to handling an irate customer. Telephone Doctor calls them our ASAP techniques.

**A - Acknowledge** the person's feel-

ings and apologize for the inconvenience the customer has encountered. Make an effort to be sincere. In today's impersonal society, it's incredibly rare to hear the words, "I'm sorry that happened. Let me get the ball rolling to fix it." You'll probably spend about 80 percent of your time massaging the caller's feelings and 20 percent actually solving the problem.

**S - Sympathize** and empathize with the customer. Phrases like "I can understand why you're upset" can help soothe ruffled feathers. Pretend it's you. Then get busy solving the problem.

**A - Accept** 100 percent responsibility. This is probably the toughest part. Chances are excellent that you had nothing to do with the problem. However, it's your job to take the responsibility and help initiate a solution.

**P - Prepare to help.** Begin by re-introducing yourself – customers don't usually remember your name. State that you will be able to help. Use the person's name, if possible. This helps to diffuse anger. A willing attitude is essential, because if the customer senses insincerity or indifference, it will cause them to stay angry. It's exasperating to file a complaint with someone who obviously doesn't care.

### Excuses

Never make an excuse to a complaining customer. No one wants to hear "The computer is down" or "I'm the only one

here." That is your problem, not the customer's. When you give an excuse, the customer automatically hears "I'm not going to help you."

Sometimes you're not able to solve the problem on the spot. Many times you need more information from another department. Perhaps the situation needs to be handled by another person. Although these are legitimate courses of action, they usually upset the customer all over again.

If you need more information, TELL them. Ask them if they're able to hold or wait while you obtain it, or would they prefer a call back. "Joe, I need to check with our repair department in order to answer your question. It will take three or four minutes, are you able to hold/wait while I check?" Avoid untrue, frustrating phrases like "Wait a second." Nothing takes a second.

If you need to transfer a caller, let them know the name of the person they'll be speaking with, if you can. It's also good to explain the reason why you're bringing in a third party. "Joe, Mr. Smith in our repair department is the real expert in resolving your type of situation. May I transfer you directly to him? (or are you able to wait while I get Mr. Smith?)" The ASAP technique works! Try it and see!

<http://telephonedoctor.com/>



## Administrative Fines

An administrative complaint was filed against Lisa Harley-Speights, LFD, Morning Glory Funeral Home, St. Petersburg, Florida, for failure to file death certificates and burial transit permits on time. Ms. Harley-Speights was ordered to pay an administrative fine of \$3000.00 to the Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics, pursuant to section 382.026, Florida Statutes. An administrative complaint was also filed against Rowena Gallaher, LFD, Gallaher Funeral Home, Ft. Myers, Florida, for the same violations of statute, failure to file death certificates and burial transit permits on time. An administrative fine was awarded to the department in the amount of \$1000.00.

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)



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

### Local Registrar:

Patricia K. Dobbins Glades & Hendry  
Robert Palussek.....Highlands

### Chief Deputy Registrar

Sue Wolff ..... Glades  
Rafael Sanchez.....Orange

## 2008 Hospital Birth Compliance List of CHAMPIONS

Florida currently has 118 hospitals that offer regular obstetric services to pregnant women. In filing timely birth records with the Bureau of Vital Statistics, 15 hospitals maintained a **PERFECT** compliance rate for 2008. Kudos and high honors go out to these 15 listed below!! Sixty-one hospitals maintained a monthly compliance rate of **95—99%**. Another 18 hospitals succeeded in reaching a **90—94%** compliance rate. These facilities are to be congratulated on their outstanding performance!

In 2008, 83 hospitals filed paper birth records in the traditional manner; 35 hospitals filed as part of the Electronic Birth Registration System. The EBR hospitals are listed below in *italics*.

**100%**

- Brevard *Wuesthoff - Melbourne*
- Broward *Northwest Medical Center*
- Charlotte *Peace River Regional*
- Duval *Baptist Med. Ctr. Beaches*  
*Baptist Med. Ctr Downtown*  
*Memorial Hospital*
- Escambia *West Florida Medical Center*  
*NAS Hospital/Pensacola*
- Marion *Munroe Regional Medical Ctr*
- Miami-Dade *Mercy Hospital*  
*Mount Sinai Medical Center*
- Nassau *Baptist Med. Ctr Nassau*
- Palm Beach *Boca Raton Comm. Hospital*
- Santa Rosa *Santa Rosa Medical Center*
- Walton *Sacred Heart Hosp of*  
*Emerald Coast*

**95—99%**

- Alachua *Shands @ Alachua Gen.*  
*Hosp.*
- Brevard *Cape Canaveral Hospital*  
*James Holmes Reg. Med. Ctr.*  
*Parrish Medical Center*  
*Wuesthoff - Rockledge*

- Broward *Broward General Medical Ctr.*  
*Holy Cross Hospital*  
*Memorial Hospital Miramar*  
*Memorial Hospital West*  
*Plantation General Hospital*
- Citrus *Seven Rivers Comm. Hospital*  
*Citrus Memorial Hospital*
- Clay *Orange Park Medical Center*
- Collier *North Collier Hospital*
- Columbia *Shands @ Lakeshore*
- Duval *Baptist South*  
*St. Vincent's' Medical Center*  
*Shands/Jax Medical Center*
- Escambia *Baptist Hospital*  
*Sacred Heart Hosp. Pensacola*
- Hernando *Spring Hill Regional Hospital*
- 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*
- Jackson *Jackson Hospital*
- Leon *Capital Reg. Medical Center*  
*Tallahassee Mem. Healthcare*
- Manatee *Manatee Memorial Hospital*
- Martin *Martin Memorial Hospital*
- Miami-Dade *Baptist Hospital of Miami*  
*Homestead Hospital*  
*Jackson North Medical Center*  
*South Miami Hospital*  
*Lower Florida Keys Med. Ctr.*
- Monroe *Ft. Walton Bch Med. Ctr.*  
*96th Medical Group*
- Okaloosa *Health Central*  
*Florida Hospital Orlando*  
*Winnie Palmer Hospital*  
*Winter Park Mem. Hospital*
- Osceola *Florida Hosp. Celebration*  
*Hlth*  
*Osceola Regional Medical Ctr*
- Palm Beach *Bethesda Memorial Hospital*  
*Glades General Hospital*  
*Good Samaritan Hospital*  
*Jupiter Medical Center*  
*Palms West Medical Ctr*

- Pasco *St. Mary's Hospital*  
*Florida Hospital Zephyrhills*  
*Pasco Regional Medical Ctr.*  
*Comm Hosp of New Port*  
*Richey*
  - Pinellas *Helen Ellis Memorial Hosp.*  
*Mease Countryside Hospital*
  - St. Johns *Flagler Hospital*
  - Sarasota *Sarasota Memorial Hospital*
  - Seminole *Florida Hospital Altamonte*
  - Volusia *Florida Hospital Deland*  
*Florida Hospital Ormond*  
*Halifax Medical Center*
- 90—94%**
- Alachua *Shands/UF Medical Center*
  - Bay *Bay Medical Center*
  - Broward *Coral Springs Medical Center*  
*Memorial Reg. Medical Ctr*
  - Collier *Physician's Regional Med*  
*Ctr.*
  - Desoto *Desoto Memorial Hospital*
  - Duval *NAS Jacksonville*
  - Manatee *Lakewood Ranch Med. Ctr.*
  - Miami-Dade *Jackson Memorial Hospital*
  - Palm Beach *West Boca Medical Center*
  - Pinellas *Morton F. Plant Med. Ctr.*  
*St. Petersburg General Hosp.*
  - Polk *Regency Medical Center*  
*Lakeland Regional Med. Ctr.*
  - Putnam *Putnam Comm. Medical Ctr*
  - St. Lucie *St. Lucie Medical Center*
  - Seminole *Central Florida Reg. Hosp.*  
*South Seminole Comm.*  
*Hosp.*

We salute the hospital birth registrars, their managers, and county vital statistics staff, and we praise you for a job well done!! Keep up the good work!!

**BITS 'N PIECES**

CDRs— when **records are returned** to you for completion of missing items or for errors that require a new record to be prepared, you must keep in touch with either the funeral director or birth registrar and closely monitor the record's status. They must be returned to the state office as quickly as possible.

**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.htm](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/planning_eval/vital_statistics/index.htm). The list is updated quarterly & can be downloaded at any time. Be sure to verify with the county if there are additional fees.

**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](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/Planning_eval/Vital_Statistics/VitalNews/vn-index.htm)

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