

Students Explore Health Care Careers

Oklahoma City—Thanks to a commitment by Comanche County Memorial Hospital, Lawton, and Duncan Regional Hospital, this fall students at Duncan Middle School and Lawton's MacArthur Middle School students will begin exploring health care careers during an innovative program called HealthExplore™. The program combines one hour of fun, interactive science education with one hour of health care career exploration.

With demonstrations and hands-on activities, the program is designed to excite students about science and health care by immersing them in fast-paced, hands-on learning, giving them a competitive edge before going into high school. Students will explore topics, such as DNA, how our bones and organs work, the importance of being tobacco free, having good nutrition and more. During each hands-on session, students will also meet different health care professionals, who will share with students what they do, where they work and the equipment they use.

"HealthExplore™ is a high-energy learning experience for students and we are delighted that both Duncan Middle School and MacArthur Middle School have taken the initiative to provide these educational experiences to their students in partnership with the local hospitals," said Sheryl McLain, MS, executive director of Oklahoma Health Care Workforce Center.

To help cover HealthExplore™ program costs, each school is sponsored by an organization to provide students with the opportunity to participate for free or at a discounted rate. For Duncan Middle School, the Duncan Regional Hospital Health Foundation has covered tuition costs student costs through grants received

from Sanford Health System and Cotton Electric Charitable Foundation Inc. For MacArthur Middle School in Lawton, Comanche County Memorial Hospital has covered the majority of the program's costs and donated scrub tops for the students to wear as they participate in activities.

Coordinating the HealthExplore™ program between the middle schools and hospitals are Cindy Parks, enrichment teacher of Duncan Middle School, Cyndi Crook, director of DRH Health Foundation, Jennifer Powell, student coordinator of Comanche County Memorial Hospital and Katy Jackson-Seeley, eighth-grade counselor and activities director of MacArthur Middle School.

HealthExplore™ operates through a partnership between the Oklahoma Health Care Workforce Center and Mad Science of Central Oklahoma. For more information about HealthExplore™, visit www.ohcwc.com or call (405) 319-8690.



PHYSICIAN MANPOWER TRAINING COMMISSION

Financial Assistance For Nursing Students

Each day, we are reminded there are not enough nurses in Oklahoma. Employment of nurses is expected to grow as more trained nurses become available. Through educational assistance, the State of Oklahoma is committed in helping to provide well-trained nurses for the care of people in Oklahoma.

The Oklahoma Nursing Student Assistance Program, established by the Oklahoma Legislature in 1982, provides financial assistance to as many nursing students as funds allow. If a scholarship recipient works as a nurse in Oklahoma upon graduation, the financial assistance does not have to be repaid. Financial assistance is available for selected qualified students pursuing LPN, ADN, BSN, or MSN degrees.

With the addition of 261 new nursing student recipients, the Physician Manpower Training Commission will have provided 5,259 total scholarships for nursing students in Oklahoma since 1982 when the scholarship was created. This program has provided nurses to all 77 counties in Oklahoma with an emphasis placed on the rural communities.

Currently, we have 313 nurses that received funding through our program fulfilling their work obligation throughout the state of Oklahoma.

Further information is available on the web-site of the Physician Manpower Training Commission. The web-site is www.pmtc.ok.gov. The new application will be available on the web site in March, 2010. The application is also provided to nursing schools, hospitals and nursing homes in the State of Oklahoma for distribution.

Faith Community Nursing Basic Preparation Course Planned

Catholic Charities will offer the Basic Preparation Course for faith community nurses the weekends of January 28-30 and February 11-13, 2009. The two-weekend course will be held at Our Lady of the Lake Lodge in Guthrie, Oklahoma.

Participants must attend both weekends to complete the course. The course was revised in 2009 and will include local faith community nurses and community leaders with expertise in theology, ethics, legal, counseling, community resources and education. Catholic Charities is approved as a provider of continuing nursing education by the Kansas State Board of Nursing. This course offering is approved for 34 contact hours. Kansas State Board of Nursing Provider Number is SP1098-0710.

The course is open to registered nurses of all faith traditions. Registration is limited to 20 people and is due no later than January 4, 2010. Tuition for the entire basic course is \$650—includes \$75 nonrefundable deposit—covers tuition, materials, meals, and lodging.

If you are interested in more information or to hold your space, please call Marilyn Seiler at 405-334-1630, mjsjuly@yahoo.com or Mary Diane Steltenkamp at 405-523-3000 or mdsteltenkamp@catholiccharitiesok.org.



Mad Science is the world's leading fun science provider that sparks the imagination of children everywhere with exciting, live, interactive activities that will instill a clear understanding of what science really is about and how it affects the world around us.

The Oklahoma Health Care Workforce Center is a private non-profit organization dedicated to alleviating Oklahoma's health care worker shortages. The Center focuses on increasing the level of awareness among young people of the many opportunities available in a health career. The OHCWC was created through legislation (SB 1394) in 2006 and is privately incorporated. It operates as a public/private partnership.



Medication Errors: Reduce Your Risk

Experts estimate that nearly 98,000 people die in any given year from medical errors. A significant number of those deaths are due to medication errors.¹

The National Coordinating Council for Medication Error and Prevention defines a medication error as "any preventable event that may cause or lead to inappropriate medication use or patient harm while the medication is in the control of the health care professional, patient, or consumer."

Mistakes can happen

As a nurse, you dispense medication to your patients on a regular basis. Consequently, you're charged with knowing the "five rights" in administering medication—right patient, right drug, right dose, right time, and right route. And while you take every precaution to avoid making errors that may put your patients at risk, mistakes can happen.

Common reasons for mistakes include distractions and interruptions during medication administration, inadequate staffing, illegible medication orders, and sound-alike drug names and packaging.

Reduce your risk

To reduce your risk of liability, take the time to read medication labels—especially those that you're not familiar with. It is also your responsibility to know the drug's dosage range, possible adverse effects, toxicity levels, indications and contraindications. Understand the medications you administer and don't hesitate to ask questions. Consult your nurse drug guide, the physician, a pharmacist or your supervisor if you have any questions.

Further protect yourself and your career with an individual liability coverage policy. Professional

Liability Insurance protects you against real or alleged malpractice claims you may encounter from your professional duties as a nurse.

Even if you have Professional Liability coverage through your current employer, it may not be enough. That coverage may have some serious gaps, including:

- Policy limits may not be high enough to protect you and all of your co-workers
- You may not be provided with coverage for approved lost wage reimbursement, licensing board hearing reimbursement defense reimbursement.
- You may not be covered outside of the workplace, such as when you engage in volunteer or part-time work
- You may not be covered for suits filed after you have terminated your employment

In the event of a lawsuit, your own Professional Liability Insurance policy would:

- Provide you with your own attorney
- Pay all approved and reasonable costs incurred in the defense or investigation of a covered claim
- Pay for approved lost wages up to the limits of the policy
- Provide reimbursement of defense costs if licensing board investigations are involved
- Pay approved court costs and settlements in addition to the limits of liability, in accordance with the policy.

Arm yourself with the protection you need so you can focus on providing excellent patient care and reduce your exposure to liability.

For more information about Professional Liability Insurance, visit www.proliability.com.
¹www.nccmerp.org