



# HEALTH FOCUS

Building Bridges Between Health and Learning

Health Services Department • Lincoln Public Schools • 5901 O Street • Lincoln, NE 68510 • (402) 436-1655 (Fax) 436-1686

## Changing Routine

by *Judy Zabel RN, MS, NCSN*  
*Supervisor of Health Services*



What is new in Health Services for the 2007-2008 school year? Where do I begin? The concept of change in the midst of routine comes to mind. Change means to alter, make radically different. Or it can mean to

replace one with another, to break away from sameness, duplication or exact repetition. Meanwhile, routine means a regular course of procedure, the habitual or mechanical performance of an established procedure (Merriam Webster Dictionary). Most of us are content with the routine. However, change happens and the routine can be altered or totally replaced. Each day is an adventure to be embraced.

So what is new in Health Services? Two major projects coming to fruition are the AED's (Automated External Defibrillators) in the Middle and High schools and the Sapphire School Nurse Health Office software which is being piloted in 9 schools. After the initial pilot, the rest of the Health Services staff will be trained on the new computer system, which will be introduced in the remaining LPS health offices. Other changes include, hiring of new Health Services staff and new building assignments for some school nurses. I have discovered that the treatment nurse schedule is a work in progress that is subject to constant change. Even though this presents its own unique challenges, it is something that we must undertake, to provide adequate staffing in buildings that require a nurse for clinical interventions and treatments.

What is routine? Opening the health offices for the new school year; the traditional *All Health Services Staff Update* where health technicians, school nurses, and various departments such as Risk Management, Benefits, Nutrition Services, the Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department come together to share updated information for the new school year. Time is also allotted for clinical skills update.

This is a busy time as we meet the eager kindergarteners, the shy 6th graders, the lost freshmen (for a day or two). As we strive to create a healthy learning environment, immunization records, physical exams, health history records, Individualized Health Plans (IHPs), and planning for case management for students with medical needs take precedence. Health screenings and health office visits which may include tummy aches, headaches, bumps and bruises and the need for some TLC, also take center stage.

School nursing never really gets "routine" as each student visit creates an opportunity for us to educate students and to show them that we care.

The school nurses had the opportunity to view the movie "Freedom Writers" as a part of their Professional Learning Community (PLC). The need and importance of seeing the potential in each student, was brought home after watching the movie. This precludes the "routine" of looking at past performance or family history as the predictors of success. We want to change how we view each student and change our attitudes and responses in order to motivate them to make positive, healthy choices.

Now it's time to begin the routine, but look at what you are doing with new eyes. Don't be afraid to question yourself. Is this the best way or just the way I've always done it? What have you read that is new and exciting? How would that work in "my building" or at LPS Health Services? These are some musings and thoughts that I share with you as we begin the new school year - a great year of changing routine.

"If you have knowledge, let others light their candles in it."

—Marget Keller  
(1810-1850)

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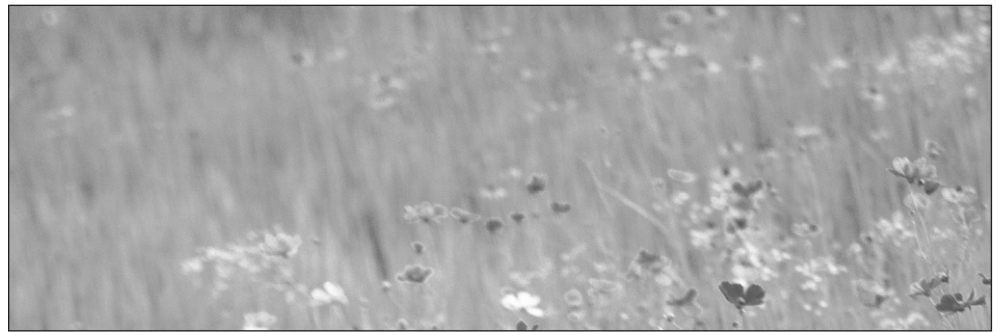


## LPN RENEWAL NOTICE

**ATTENTION ALL LPNS. Please remember that the deadline for renewing your license is on or before 10/31/2007.** You may renew online at [www.hhss.ne.gov/crl/crlindex.htm](http://www.hhss.ne.gov/crl/crlindex.htm). While this process is faster and more convenient, it also diminishes the risk of the paperwork being lost in the mail or during processing. Online renewal requires information such as your license number, social security number and a credit card. Please note that while most renewal information may be submitted on line, special circumstances such as a name change will require additional documentation to be submitted by mail. The renewal will not be completed until all of the necessary documentation is received.

An LPN who chooses not to renew their license online, may download a renewal form at the above email address, or call (402) 471- 4376 to request a form mailed to them. Once the form is completed, return it with a check made payable to LICENSURE UNIT. The renewal fee is \$78.00 for active LPNs.

Any LPN who continues to practice with an expired license, will be assessed a daily administrative penalty. Licenses that are not renewed or have been placed on lapsed or inactive status will be placed on lapsed status 30 days after the expiration date.



## Newsletter Committee Contact Information

Please forward any questions, comments or contributions to any member of the Newsletter Committee.

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## Allergy Tips

### WHEN TO SUSPECT AN ALLERGY

1. Recurrent red, itchy, dry, sometimes scaly rash in the creases of the skin, wrists and ankles.
2. Chronic cold-like symptoms that last greater than one to two weeks, or develop around the same time each year. Symptoms may include a runny nose, nasal stuffiness, sneezing and throat clearing.
3. Nose rubbing, sniffing, snorting, sneezing and itchy, runny eyes.
4. Itching or tingling sensations in the mouth or throat. Itchiness is not a usual complaint of a cold, but is very common with allergies.
5. Coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing and other respiratory symptoms. Coughing may be the only symptom; if increased at night or with exercise, suspect asthma.

### COMMON ALLERGENS IN THE HOME

1. Dust (dust mites and particles from other allergens such as pollen, mold and animal dander).
2. Pollen (trees, grasses, weeds)
3. Fungi (including molds that may not be easily seen with the naked eye)
4. Furry animals (cats, dogs, guinea pigs, gerbils, rabbits and other pets)
5. Latex (household articles such as rubber gloves, toys and balloons)
6. Food (cow's milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, soy, wheat and fish)

**Source: American Academy of Pediatrics, Guide to Your Child's Allergies and Asthma.**



## Sapphire Computer Update

*Interviewed by Hollis Ramsay, RN, MSN  
for Health Focus.*

I recently interviewed Kathy Hall, Health Technician and chairman of the Computer Committee about the new computer system that is being piloted at several Health Offices in the Lincoln Public School district. Kathy gave a candid update about the Sapphire system.

**Q. You have been using “Sapphire” the new computer system that will replace “Student Health Manager.” How is it working thus far?**

**A.** It is working great. It seems to flow quite nicely, especially the med setup.

**Q. What are the improvements?**

**A.** Medication setup is so easy. You go to one place and set up the name of the medication, the dosage and the schedule to be given. Then you just hit a button and you have a list of all the daily scheduled events.

**Q. Do you think it saves time when compared to Student Health Manager?**

**A.** The medication setup saves time. With the click of the mouse you have your daily scheduled events. The daily log doesn't really save time as there is one extra step to get to a student log. However, it is nice because you can enter as many “reasons” (symptoms) and “treatments” from the drop down list as needed, rather than just being able to enter one symptom, and then have to type the rest of information in the notes.

**Q. Is input and retrieval of information easier?**

**A.** It is not really easier, just different. We are still working with retrieving information and reports as everything is so different.

**Q. When substitute staff work in a pilot building, are they logged on to use Sapphire?**

**A.** No. If a sub is in a Sapphire building they will have to record on paper. Each Sapphire school should have a paper log run, readily available for a sub to use for daily medications. When the subs are trained they will then be able to use Sapphire.

**Q. At what point would you say, one may feel comfortable navigating the system, a few days, weeks, months?**

**A.** Everyone is different in their comfort with the computer, but I think within a few days most people will be comfortable using Sapphire. There are many drop down lists just as there is in SHM. In fact we have redone the drop down lists so I think everyone will be pleased to know that we have added some things. For example we now have “scab off,” and many different types of bites listed, as well as “fell asleep in class.” So there are some good changes.

**Q. Who do you call if you have questions?**

**A.** We will have computer buddies set up for each person and they will be assigned to help the new user.

**Q. What are the names of the pilot schools?**

**A.** They are Humann, Huntington, West Lincoln, Lux, Pound, Scott, Southeast, Northeast, and Lincoln High.

**Q. Which schools will be trained next?**

**A.** We haven't finished that schedule at this time.

**Q. When is the projected date for all the schools to have this system?**

**A.** We are hoping that all schools will be on by second semester.

**Q. Will all of the information from Student Health Manager such as Care**

**Plans, Personal History, Medication information be transferred to the new system?**

**A.** A lot of things will transfer. The care plans aren't being done on SHM right now; Sapphire is working on a module for care plans that is not complete at this time. We are still finding out about some things that can and cannot be transferred so it is a work in progress. Unfortunately the medication setups from SHM will not transfer, so please be prepared to reenter those. As always all of the old information will be archived for future reference. All screening and immunizations from the AS400 will be transferred. The screening module appears to be really nifty. Until all schools are on the system, we will not be using the screening and immunization areas to their fullest potential.

**Q. Presently how is student transfer of records from a Sapphire school to a Student Health Manager school being handled?**

**A.** Unable to answer this question.

**Q. Will the system be updated, (if there are any kinks noted) before we implement it in all buildings?**

**A.** Yes, that is why we are piloting a few schools before everyone is on Sapphire. The Computer Committee has come across many issues that we need to decide how to enter, as things are just arranged differently. An example would be the Asthma Action Plans, which will have to be figured out before the next group is oriented. These are some of the kinks that we are trying to work through before more schools start using Sapphire, making it more difficult to communicate. So please bear with us if there are a few bumps in the road. Sapphire also has some new modules that are to be finished in September, so there are even more new positive changes coming!

# Food Allergy Update

by *Jessie Coffey, RD, LMNT*

According to the American Academy of Allergy Asthma and Immunology, studies suggest about 4% of the U.S. population

- more than 11 million people - have food allergies. Ten years ago, that figure was believed to be only 1%.

Researchers are mixed on the reason behind the increase in foods allergies. Some say an increasing awareness is causing a spike in reports of allergies; others believe the reason for the increase lies in the way peanuts and other foods are processed; and still others believe children are exposed to too few allergens in a "super clean" environment. Despite the reasons behind the increase in diagnosed foods allergies, schools will need to become familiar with ways in which to accommodate children with food allergies.

**How Food Allergies Work-** A food allergy is an immune system response to a food that the body mistakenly believes is harmful. Although an individual could be allergic to any food, such as fruits, vegetables, and meats, there are eight foods that account for 90% of all food-allergic reactions.

These are: milk, egg, peanut, tree nut (walnut, cashew, etc.), fish, shellfish, soy, and wheat.

A small amount of the offending substance triggers the reactions, which commonly occur in the respiratory tract, digestive system, or skin in the form of a rash. Food reactions are often "fixed." This means that after months or years of avoiding a problem food, eating the "allergic" foods will still cause symptoms.

A more severe reaction to an allergen that is life threatening is an anaphylac-



tic reaction. Anaphylaxis is a sudden, severe, potentially fatal, systemic allergic reaction that can involve various areas of the body (such as the respiratory tract, gastrointestinal tract, and cardiovascular system). Often students with peanut allergies can go into anaphylactic shock from ingesting any form of peanut product. Some students have such a severe reaction that just breathing in peanut dust can cause a reaction.

## Handling Food Allergies at LPS-

Nutrition Services work to accommodate the diets of children with foods allergies and other special diet conditions, that eat with us. Not all diets can be accommodated due to the limited ability within the foodservice environment. Nutrition Service staff often only have available to them quantity cooking equipment, (large scale stoves, ovens and pans) and many of our kitchens have no microwave, limiting even further the items they can make in small quantities. Despite these limitations staff try their best to accommodate students with food allergies.

Substitutions are provided from the items on the menu as appropriate for the diet. Special Diet menus are sent to health offices each month to assist students in choosing items that fit into their diet. Some students have a diet that is very restrictive and they can only eat a few of the items that are served. We often offer these limited items as they fit into the menu, but do encourage parents to send meals from home on the days when we are not able to accommodate the students.

A team approach works best in working to accommodate these students. The health office is often the first point of contact with families who have special diet needs. Guiding the parents to complete a "Medical Statement for Students Requiring Special Meals" is an important first step. Often clarification is needed for a child that has an allergy. Children with soy allergies may be able to have soy oil and other soy derivatives that do not contain the protein. Often the parents or doctors office needs to be contacted to determine these important details.

Nutrition Services work to get these details to ensure a food allergic student is given only foods that are safe for them to eat. We want to ensure that the child is not receiving anything that could harm them, but we also want to be sure that we are not being overly restrictive and eliminating foods that they can have. There is a fine line between providing a safe meal and a healthy diet for students with food allergies.

**Label Reading-** Your best defense in keeping children who have food allergies safe, is label reading. Nutrition Services review food labels of items served in the cafeteria yearly and as new food items are added to the menu. Being at the building level you can read ingredient labels of food items that are brought into the school and look for items on the labels that could cause a problem. School parties, PTA events and school fun nights are occasions where food labels need to be looked at before the allergic child can eat the foods present.

**The Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA)**, which took effect January 1, 2006, mandates that foods containing milk, eggs, fish, crustacean shellfish, peanuts, tree nuts, wheat, and soy must declare the food in plain language on the ingredient list. Such ingredients must be listed even if they are present in colors, flavors, or spice blends. Additionally, manufacturers must list the specific nut or seafood that is used (e.g., almond, walnut, cashew; or tuna, salmon, shrimp, or lobster). If ever in doubt leave it out, it is better to be safe than sorry when it comes to food allergies.

If you have questions on an item or need assistance in meeting the needs of a student with a special diet feel free to contact me at 1745 and I would be glad to assist you. Currently only the regular lunch menus and the carbohydrate count menus are listed on the LPS website, but we are working to get the dairy free menus posted on the web for October. If you have any questions or comments please let me know at [jcoffey2@lps.org](mailto:jcoffey2@lps.org).

## In the Spotlight

**Kay Duncan**  
RN, CPN, MAA

My name is Kay Duncan and I am starting my 8th year as a school nurse for LPS. I have been asked to be in the spotlight for this issue of the Health Focus, so here goes.

I was born in Wahoo Nebraska and am the 6th child of my parents. I grew up with 4 brothers and 3 sisters (yes, there were 8 of us), in Prague, NE, where my parents and then my brother ran the grocery store until it closed in 1998. We all learned to run the cash register, unload the semi-trucks that brought in the groceries, slice meat and wait on customers. My first 'real' job was detassling corn, which I did for 5 summers—I saved enough money to put a down payment on my first car when I graduated from college. My Mom, Helen and one of brothers still live in Prague, which we all still call 'home.' The rest of my family is spread out through Nebraska, Illinois, Missouri, Utah, Oklahoma and Pennsylvania.

I attended Midland Lutheran College in Fremont, earning a Bachelors of Science degree in Nursing and moved to Lincoln in May 1981. My first nursing job was on a Med-Surg floor at Bryan Hospital. After six months of working Med-Surg, I switched to the Pediatric unit and realized that Pediatric nursing was my true love. In 1989, I took a position as the Pediatric instructor in the Practical Nursing Program at SCC. During my time there, I also taught Obstetric Nursing. I taught a few of my fellow LPS nurses while I was at SCC. While I was at SCC, I obtained my Pediatric Nurse Certification (along with

Marcia Jones), and I continue to maintain that certification today. In the past I was an item writer for Certification Exams. As a member of the Practical Nursing faculty, I was involved in the National League of Nursing Accreditation process and traveled to Chicago and Ohio to re-certify practical nursing programs. I received a Master's of Administrative Arts Degree from Doane College in 1999.

Beginning with the 2000-2001 school year, I became a school nurse. I have been at Hill, ECSE, Beattie, Rousseau and Saratoga. I truly enjoy working with the students every day. Each child is different and most are easy to 'cure.' The challenges are also a good part of the job—you learn every day on this job.

**The challenges are also a good part of the job—you learn every day on this job.**

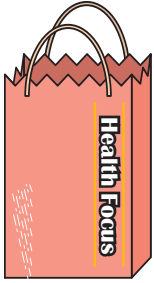
I have been involved in many committees while at LPS. I chaired the Staff Development committee for several years and am still involved with that. I am the chair of the Social Committee, am a team leader, and a member of the newsletter committee. This year I am an alternate faculty representative for LEA. Along with other school nurses and Pam Wollenburg, I have been actively involved in the Diabetes Project, in which we are designing a diabetes checklist to use for students with diabetes. We have not been able to find another project like this that is currently in use, so the LPS health staff may be the first to use a new teaching tool for students. Basically this checklist is done according to a child's age and what tasks they should be accomplishing in relation to their diabetes. Linda Biggerstaff and I presented the project this summer at the State School Nurses Convention.

My husband Dave & I have been married for 11 years. Dave is a bindery worker at Jacob North Printing. We have a 9-1/2 year old son, Isaac, who is the joy of our lives. Isaac is currently

in 4th grade at Cathedral Elementary School. He is involved in Cub Scouts, and sports, including wrestling. He took 4th place at the Huskerland State Wrestling meet this year, so that was exciting. This summer Isaac tried pedal tractor pulling for the first time, and got 1st place in Wilbur, so he was eligible to participate in the State Fair Pedal Tractor Pull. We are all active in our church, Cathedral of the Risen Christ as well as the school. We enjoy doing activities as a family and like to go on vacation. Every summer we spend several days at Two Rivers State Park where we 'camp' in the cabooses. Isaac calls that our 'family tradition.' As long as I have some air conditioning, a flush toilet and hot water, I am all for camping! We have also gone to a couple of Science Fiction Conventions—my husband is very active in the Iowa Science Fiction Clubs.

I enjoy being a school nurse, and I treasure the friendships I have made since I have started working here. One of my greatest thrills was to be nominated for the Helen Krieger award last year.





## Gayle's Grab Bag

I'd like to introduce myself to readers of the Health Focus newsletter. I am Gayle Thomas, the new Health Services Executive Secretary. I'm new to the LPS "system."

On a personal note: I grew up in Fremont and graduated from High School there. I moved to Lincoln in 1996. I have two sisters - my twin sister, Lynnette, lives in Seattle and my younger sister Evelyn, lives in Lincoln. I have two sons. Charlie, age 25 has an engineering degree from UNL and works for Iterius in the Haymarket; Andy, 24 is an Assistant Manager at Super Saver. Both are still single, last I knew.

In my spare time I participate in my latest passion, ballroom dancing. I started taking lessons two years ago and I just love it! My goal is to perform in an exhibition dance next spring. No it won't be anything like Dancing with the Stars but it will be extremely out of my comfort-zone. I also like to sing in my church choir on Sundays.

I have been very busy learning various aspects of my job and I am really enjoying it. It will take some time for me to familiarize myself with everyone's schedule particularly as it relates to finding substitute staff to cover absences. Please be patient with me during this transition. I enjoyed meeting many of you during the staff in-service and I look forward to getting to know everyone eventually. If you are working as substitute staff and attended the August staff meeting, I submitted your time which should be reflected in the September pay period. If you have any questions regarding this, please call me.

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### Medical Terminology For the Layman

**BACTERIA:** back door to a cafeteria

**BENIGN:** what you become after you turn eight

**CARDIOLOGY:** advanced study of poker playing

**CAT SCAN:** searching for one's lost kitty

## Under the Microscope

### Keeping tabs on what's new

We welcome these new employees to our Health Services family:

**Kathy Burke**, Health Technician, Holmes

**Linda Fowle**, Health Technician, Zeman

**Allyson Hazelwood**, Health Technician, Yankee Hill

**Elizabeth Montes**, Health Technician, Elliott

**Kathy Wendt**, Health Technician, Hawthorne

**Amanda Lulow**, Substitute Health Technician

**Mitzi Sands**, Substitute Health Technician

**Gloria Hernandez**, RN - Substitute School Nurse

**Megan Brannagan**, RN - Hartley/Meadow Lane

**Wendy Rau**, RN - Belmont/West Lincoln

### Change of Assignments

**Rob Adams**, Itinerant Health Tech to Health Tech. Brownell

**Sarah Virus**, Health Tech. Sub. to Itinerant Health Tech.

**Cheryl Way**, Health Tech (retired), to Health Tech. Sub

**Christy Firestone**, Health Tech. to a building Para

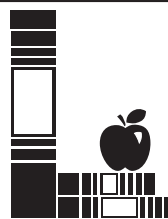
**Debbie Chandler**, Treatment Nurse to a Treatment Nurse Sub.

**Amy Feerhusen**, is taking a 1 year LOA

### LINCOLN BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Kathy Danek  
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5/07



## Community Information

**Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center Hospital Bonacum Room**

**Lower Level**

Contact Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation

**402-484-8300**

Kelly Lauer

**402-489-0759**

**Get Pumped!**

Support group for children with diabetes and their parents.

Meets 2nd Tues. each month 6:30-8pm

**Child Guidance Center 2444 O Street**

**475-7666**

Individual counseling Sibling & Family therapy

Group therapy

Play therapy

Psychological &

Psychiatric consultations.

TX. for victims of family violence.

TX. for victims of sexual abuse.

Home-based therapeutic support services.

Child-Centered/Family-Focused Counseling Services For Children and Adolescents and their Families.

**Saint Elizabeth East Tower Lower Level Rose/Franciscan Room**

**(402) 219-7000**

Diabetes Education

Program **(free)**

Sat. Oct 13, 2007

Discussion on neuropathy and new diabetic medications.

**Mourning Hope University Place 4919 Baldwin Ave**

**Call 488-8989 for info.**

Non-profit grief support network for children, youths, teens, young adults and their families who are grieving serious illness or death of a family member or someone significant in their lives.