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New DCBS Commissioner Named

CHFS Secretary Janie Miller last week announced that Patricia R. Wilson will lead the Department for Community Based Services (DCBS), CHFS' largest agency. DCBS staff provides child and adult protective services and determines eligibility for Medicaid, welfare assistance and food stamps. About 4,700 DCBS staff members serve families in every county.

"Patricia Wilson's experience as a front-line worker and a supervisor, combined with her work developing policies and consulting with similar agencies across the country, gives her both the knowledge and the perspective to move the Department for Community Based Services forward," Miller said.

Wilson most recently served as an executive adviser with DCBS, coordinating the state's upcoming Child and Family Services Review, a federal review of each state's child welfare system's performance against national standards. She also has experience as a front-line worker, supervisor, state administrator and national consultant. As a consultant in child welfare financing and program design, she has worked with social service systems in other states. She also consulted with the Child Welfare League of America before becoming its Southern Region director from 2004-05.

For 19 years, Wilson served as a front-line family service worker and supervisor in Boyle, Lincoln and Garrard counties. Her previous CHFS roles include internal policy analyst with the Office of Program Support and with the Office of Policy and Budget; and assistant director of the DCBS Division of Policy Development.

Wilson, of Danville, received both a bachelor's degree in education and a master's degree in social work from the University of Kentucky.

Aide Recognized by Co-workers

The McLean County DCBS office in Calhoun recently presented Carol Robertson, a social service aide, with the first Boni Frederick Memorial Award.

Robertson's supervisors say she is always willing to go beyond the call of duty for her clients. For example, during the holiday season, Robertson visited a client who had recently finished taking medical treatments. She took the client updated photos of the client's children arranged in a photo album.

"Now the mom has current pictures of her children to look at and be encouraged to continue on her path to get better and get them back," said Kim Smith, Robertson's colleague. "Carol goes above and beyond to help our clients."

Bruce Linder, director of service regions, presented the award Dec. 18 at the McLean County office. Robertson's family and friends were there to watch her receive the award.

Thank you to CHFS Wellness Committee Members

The CHFS Worksite Wellness Committee would like to thank the following members for volunteering their time and assisting the committee in promoting healthier lifestyles for all CHFS employees. These members attended monthly meetings, helped plan wellness programs and assisted with events. Maintaining and encouraging employee wellness in the areas of healthier lifestyles, nutrition, physical activity and smoking cessation plays an integral role in productivity and in enhancing the work environment. Thank you for your time and assistance.

- Donna Chapman, Medicaid
- Karen McGaughey, Office of Human Resource Management

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- Norm Johnson, Department for Community Based Services
- Jubal Turner, Disability Determination Services
- Lynn Hosley, Department for Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services
- Sharon Carter, Department for Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services

Also, we would like to thank Mike Schardein for serving as the committee chairperson for 2007.

Deferred Comp has Seminar for New Employees

Kentucky Deferred Compensation is an optional, state-sponsored benefit available to all state employees. Kentucky Deferred Compensation is the easy, tax-sheltered way to supplement your retirement needs. At Kentucky Deferred Compensation, we want to help new employees like you take full advantage of this important tool for helping you achieve financial independence at retirement. Join us for a brief enrollment presentation on Kentucky Deferred Compensation, and take the actions necessary to:

- Learn about the different risks and rewards associated with investing.
- Discover the best way to invest your money to help meet your retirement goals.
- Enroll in our 401(k), Roth 401(k), 457, Traditional and Roth IRA supplemental retirement saving plans immediately.

A seminar for new employees will be 12:10 to 12:50 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 31, at 101 Sea Hero Road, Suite 110, Frankfort. Lunch will be provided. Due to limited seating, pre-registration is required. To register, call Carol Cummins or Kerry Azbill at (502) 573-7925 or (800) 542-2667. Please call for an enrollment kit if you are unable to attend.

Living Well: Hot or not?

Sally Wadyka, a reporter for MSN Health and Fitness, reviewed and identified what health trends were hot and those that were not last year. The news ranged from the very good (healthier restaurant food) to the very bad (dangerous lead toys). Even though we have entered a new year, some of the health issues will carry on as health professionals continue to address concerns and new breakthroughs.

Things that were “hot” in 2007:

Sleep medications - In 2007, more than half of the population reported suffering from occasional insomnia. Research found that Americans are spending \$4.5 billion a year on drugs that give back a restful night of sleep. Along with medications, we are also seeking the perfect sleeping surface, with some going as far as purchasing a \$60,000 handmade mattress.

Go Green - This trend has swept the nation quickly and seems to be demonstrating some staying power. A consumer tracking company found that green product markets topped \$500 billion a year. This number may possibly be related to the increase in readily available organic foods from top discount chains like Wal-mart and Costco, an increase in products like environmentally safe cleaning supplies, buying phthalate-free plastic bottles and toys, and hybrid vehicles. Some big corporations are joining the movement by offering discounts to hybrid drivers as an employee incentive to join the go green movement.

Kids' Mental Health - A study released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention revealed that one in 150 American children has autism, which is continuing to show a significant rise. Also, our young people are dealing with health conditions previously associated with middle age, like high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and bipolar disorder. A recent study showed that bipolar diagnosis in young people

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has increased more than 40 times over the past decade.

Not “hot” in 2007:

Trans Fats - The amount of products that have added the zero trans fats to their products packaging has grown in popularity. The momentum then shifted over to fast food chains, restaurants and entire cities. New York City enacted a trans fat ban December which started in 2007 and Philadelphia. Health professionals estimate that if this movement went nationwide, it could possibly prevent up to 25 percent of heart disease cases.

Kids’ Cold Medicines - This year was bad news for the producers of cough and congestion medicine for children. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommended that over-the-counter cold medicines and cough suppressants not be given to children under the age of 6. The new recommendations came from reports of dangerous side effects or in many cases no effects at all. To further back this new recommendation, a recent study tested the use of a spoonful of honey versus cough syrup. Honey actually did more to soothe troubled young throats. That study is just a further validation that medicines should not be hastily given unless they are proven to work.

Toys from China – Lead-tainted toys made many headlines in 2007. These headlines left parents and consumers wondering if the toys they were buying were safe for their children.

Whether the health and fitness news was “hot” or “not,” it’s important to stay up-to-date with current news to help you lead a healthy lifestyle this year. Research suggests that by now most people have already given up their new year’s resolution. So if you’ve fallen off your goal, remember that it’s okay to take a step back as long as you get back on track and start again.

Check Again: Did You Wash Your Hands?

By Emily B. Moses

I would now rather eat a live cockroach than touch another person’s hands.

My feelings are completely rational, according to a 2007 survey commissioned by the Soap and Detergent Association (SDA), a United States trade association that represents manufacturers of cleaning products.

The survey found that while nine in 10 adults say they always wash their hands after using public restrooms, only three in four were observed doing so. In a word – blech!

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that cleaning your hands is the single most important thing you can do to keep from getting sick and spreading illness to others.

You should wash your hands:

- Before preparing or eating food
- After going to the bathroom
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has gone to the bathroom
- Before and after tending to someone who is sick
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After handling an animal or animal waste
- After handling garbage
- Before and after treating a cut or wound

When washing your hands you should:

- Wet your hands with clean running water, and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available.
- Rub hands together to make a lather, and scrub all surfaces.

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- Continue rubbing hands for 20 seconds. Need a timer? Imagine singing "Happy Birthday" twice through to a friend.
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet.

Remember: If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based gel to clean hands.

Prevent illness during this cold/flu/stomach virus/other terrible illness season. Wash your hands!

For more information about the SDA or hand hygiene, visit www.cleaning101.com.

Employee Enrichment

By Anya Armes Weber

The cold, gray days of winter can deplete our motivation. Lyndsay Swinton, a writer for Web site MFTRou.com (Management for the Rest of Us), suggests these five tips to recharge.

Restrain your ambition. Mishandled ambition will destroy your passion to be diligent. Worry less about who you want to impress and how you want to impress them.

Make clear goals. Plan your next steps so you can arrange for the resources or help from coworkers you will need.

Get experience. Take advantage of training opportunities, and talk to as many others in your field as you can. Learn what you are in for as your career progresses. Don't make the same mistakes colleagues made.

Set limits. Don't work beyond your capacity – always enlist help when you are in over your head. Try not to take work home with you often, and

take the much-needed breaks you deserve every day. Making time for the good things in life – family, fun, friends – will recharge your work battery.

Challenge yourself. Take the time to realize what skills you'd like to develop and what you can do to make that happen. You'll gain confidence that will translate both personally and professionally.