

WASHINGTON STATE NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2010 SPRING EDITION

**SSWLHC ADVOCACY,
PRIORITIES, ISSUES &
ACTIVITIES**

- NASW-WA CHAPTER
WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 2010
"ETHICAL CHALLENGES IN SOCIAL WORK: MANAGING DIFFICULT CASES" DR. FREDERIC G. REAMER, SWEDISH MEDICAL CENTER, SEATTLE, WA
- NASW-WA CHAPTER
SATURDAY, JUNE 5
LASW/LICSW LICENSURE EXAM PREP ,
JONATHAN BEARD, MSW, LICSW SOMMER AUDITORIUM, HIGH-LINE MEDICAL CENTER, BURIEN, WA
- SSWLHC—NATIONAL
NOVEMBER 3—6, 2010
45TH ANNUAL MEETING & CONF. "SOCIAL WORK IN HEALTH CARE: LEAD TODAY OR FOLLOW TOMORROW"
TAMPA, FLORIDA

HOUSE VOTES PASSAGE OF HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION

As this Newsletter goes to press, the passage of the health care overhaul legislation in the House of Representatives is in the 24 hour news cycle. While not as radical a change as many health care providers had hoped for, and slow for all benefits to be implemented, just about everyone will benefit from the tighter regulations.

The bill encompasses several major changes:*

- ▶ \$250 rebate to Medicare prescription drug beneficiaries who have reached the "donut hole" in coverage (eff. within a year),
- ▶ provides immediate access to ;high risk pools for people with no insurance because of pre-existing conditions (eff: 90 days after enactment),
- ▶ Bars insurers from: (eff: 6 months after enactment)
 - denying people coverage when they get sick,
 - denying coverage to children with pre-existing conditions,
 - imposing lifetime caps on coverage,

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LICENSURE EXEMPTION ALLOWED FOR SOCIAL WORK REGISTERED COUNSELORS

By Brian Giddens, MSW

If you are a social worker who has held a registered counselor credential for five years following graduation from an accredited MSW program, but have not been able to accrue or account for the necessary supervision requirements, you may be in luck as to an exemption in the new licensure law.

If you apply for social work licensure by July 1, 2010, and pass the social work licensing exam, you can be licensed! This exemption was made to recognize that there are many social workers already practicing who may not have had access to the formal supervision requirements, but who clearly have years of experience in the field. Contact the Department of Health, Social Work Licensing website, <http://www.doh.wa.gov/licensing/default.htm> for more information.

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HEALTHCARE BILL PASSES THE HOUSE

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requires insurers to allow young people to stay on their parent's policies until 26 yrs.

- ▶ Requires individual and small group market plans to spend 80% of premium dollars on medical services; large group plans would have to spend at least 85%, (eff: Jan 1 2011)

- ▶ Increases the Medicare payroll tax and expand to dividend, interest and other unearned income for singles earning more than \$200,000 and joint filers making more than \$250,000. (eff: 2013)

- ▶ Provides subsidies for families earning up to 400% of poverty level, currently about \$88,000 a year. Require most employers to provide coverage or face penalties. Require most people to obtain coverage or face penalties. (eff: 2014)

- ▶ Imposes 40% excise tax on high-end insurance policies, (eff: 2018)

- ▶ Expands health insurance coverage to 32 million people (eff: 2019).

The 32 million uninsured who have been shut out of the current market are the largest beneficiaries of this new legislation. It should provide some peace of mind to those in our community struggling with insurance premiums or lack of insurance coverage. This legislation represents "The Civil Rights Act of the 21st Century" said Rep. James Clyburn of So. Carolina, the No. 3 Democrat in the House.

Within three months of the law taking effect, people who have been locked-out of the insurance market due to a pre-existing condition will be eligible for subsidized coverage through new high-risk insurance.

**Excerpted from Seattle Times 3/22/10*

SSWLHC ARRIVES ON FACEBOOK



The Society for Social Work Leadership in Healthcare has arrived on Facebook!

As a way to enhance our visibility, the Washington Chapter of SSWLHC has created a Facebook page. This online presence gives members a new way to engage in discussions of relevant social work and healthcare issues, as well as share feedback to the board. We will post legislative updates, excerpts from the newsletter, and continuing education offerings. Because the page is open to SSWLHC members and non-members, anyone with a Facebook account can become a "fan" of the page. This provides a fresh way to introduce ourselves to a much wider audience, attract new members, and connect with social workers living outside the Puget Sound region. Your input is welcome as we establish this social networking opportunity, and we encourage you to become a fan!

Send your questions and comments to Tricia Matteson at trimatt@comcast.net

SSWLHC SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

The SSWLHC WA Chapter is accepting applications for its 2010 Student Scholarship. The scholarship is awarded annually in the amount of \$2000.

PURPOSE OF AWARD:

- To raise the visibility of the Social Work profession in the area of health care,
- To honor and support an outstanding student who is committed to pursuing a Social Work career in health care.

DESCRIPTION OF AWARD:

- The scholarship winner will receive a cash award for \$2000.
- In addition, all applicants will receive a one-year membership in the SSWLHC.
- Recipient of the Award will serve as a liaison on the SSWLHC WA chapter board as Member-at-Large for one year. The recipient will act as a representative for the social work students; educating students about SSWLHC, informing students of organization events, and participating in monthly board meetings via conference telecommunications when possible.

ELIGIBILITY:

The award is open to any student in Washington state who:

- Is a Master of Social Work candidate of any Washington State MSW program,
- Will be enrolled as a 2nd year MSW student in the academic year 2010-2011, or will graduate with an MSW in 2011,
- Shows commitment to a career in health care Social Work, (clinical, program planning, administrative, or research),
- Holds U.S. residency or, if an international student, plans to work in medical social work in the United States for two years post graduation.

APPLICATION PROCESS: Applications will be due by May 28. Award announced by June 30, 2010.

Applicants are requested to apply by submitting their application through email to Mary Weatherley, LICSW at weatherley.m@ghc.org.

1. A brief cover sheet with name, address, telephone, email address and names of your 3 references.
2. A resume outlining volunteer, practicum, and paid work experience.
3. A personal statement not to exceed 500 words, describing an aspect of Social Work practice in healthcare in which the student is interested, explaining what the student believes to be his/her potential to make a unique contribution to that area of practice.
4. Three letters of references. Please have your references email their recommendations directly to Mary Weatherley, LICSW at weatherley.m@ghc.org

The recipient of the award will be featured in the Society newsletter and may be asked to receive the award at the fall SSWLHC educational meeting.

Questions? Contact Mary Weatherley at weatherley.m@ghc.org or 206-988-2643 or www.sswlhc-wa.org

IN FOCUS: LEADERSHIP PROFILE



DEE MANN AUST, MSW

Dee Mann Aust is the social worker's social worker. Her career spans clinical casework, supervision, department direction, to the directing of patient registration, financial services, and the hospital's clinical information system.

SOCIAL WORK INFLUENCE AND EDUCATION: Dee's social work career began in Wyoming where she grew up and completed her secondary education. While in high school, Dee began working at the local hospital. This experience introduced her to healthcare as a profession and she decided to become an occupational therapist. However, as a sophomore at Washington University in St. Louis, MO, she learned that she really enjoyed talking to patients and that led her to social work. In 1983, she received her Bachelor of Arts Degree with Honors in Psychology from Washington University. In 1984, she completed her Masters degree in Social Work from the George Warren Brown School of Social Work, also in St. Louis MO.

Following her MSW degree, Dee returned to her roots in Wyoming, where her family has lived since the 1800s and took her first professional social work position as a Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist in Sheridan Wyoming. In this capacity, Dee assessed medical psychosocial and employment histories and developed rehab plans detailed to achieve client employment goals. She also negotiated their work experience and employment opportunities.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE: Finding a professional social work job in Lancaster California, Dee accepted the position at Antelope Valley Hospital in 1985. Dee began six years of employment as a health care social worker, serving as the chief obstetrical social worker on a unit that delivered 400 babies a month. She also covered the 30 bed, level two, neonatal intensive care unit and a 28 bed pediatric unit. "My first love in this profession is pediatrics. Children know how to live in the moment and they rebound so quickly. I learned a lot about life from those tiny tots and their families."

In 1992 she was promoted to Director of the 20 member social work department. Dee developed Social Work department requirements for the hospital automated information system, and kept her hand in the clinical functions by co-facilitating a community based parent bereavement group and a mentor parent program for the NICU.

Another promotion in 1994 found Dee as Director of Patient Care Coordination at Antelope Valley Hospital. At this site, Dee's responsibilities were to manage the functions of Clinical Admitting Nurses, Bed Control, Utilization Review, Social Services and Discharge planning. In 1995, Dee's husband completed graduate school and with a job offer in the Seattle area, they moved both careers to the local community.

COMING TO SEATTLE: Dee's first social work position in Washington was with Group Health Cooperative, Redmond campus, where she worked providing social work and discharge planning services to critical care, medical/surgical units, drug and alcohol rehabilitation and the emergency department.

A major advancement in Dee's career came with her acceptance of a position as the first Manager of Social Services at Swedish Medical Center in Seattle. For many years, Swedish Hospital had a number of social workers in the system, working in various programs, but the social work staff did not relate to one another as a department. In July 1996, Dee accepted this new and unprecedented position and went to work developing policies and procedures, job descriptions and competencies, selecting employees, and coordinating service expectations with customer departments, physicians and administration. In addition, she provided the clinical social work and discharge planning services for the acute care neurology unit.

Within 15 months, Dee was promoted to Manager of Coordinated Care. In this role, she continued her management of social work in addition to directing case managers, all of whom provided case management, utilization review, psychosocial services and discharge planning. She also managed the build, training and rollout of a new health information system for utilization review and coordinated care. Dee also served as the project leader for a patient information team that directly supported patient registration.

PROMOTIONS KEEP COMING: By August 1999, Dee was promoted to Director of Patient Registration. In this capacity, she had to leave the social work and case manager management functions and assume the responsibility to direct a staff of approximately 100 employees and directed the functions of registration, insurance verification and authorization and financial counseling. She was also a project leader for the implementation of a scheduling software application that was rolled out to over 25 departments and participated in transition teams related to the alliance with Providence Seattle and outsourcing of claims management. During this time, Dee also managed to decrease dollars in Registration 'failed bills' by over \$2 million dollars and maintained that improvement.

In 2002, Dee was made Director of Patient Financial Services in addition to the title of Director of Patient Registration. In this additional role, she directed the functions of registration, financial counseling, systems support, and all billing functions including generation of claims. She directed the work

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Social Work Licensure update

This was the year that saw Social Work Title Protection *almost* make it through the legislature. As our newsletter goes to press, the special session is still meeting, but the title protection bill had been delayed in the Rules Committee and was not expected to move forward to passage this year. It's been a tough year for a short session given the budget concerns, so items like this, that were not focused on budget, fell to the background. In terms of support for the bill, it appears that the effort undertaken over the years to educate legislators is paying off. While there were some last minute concerns raised by the Washington Federation of State Employees and the Department of Health, it appears that those concerns have been dealt with and it is hoped that next year will see passage for title protection. SSWLHC members will be encouraged to participate in efforts to contact legislators about this bill during the next legislative session.

The SSWLHC will also need to pay attention to another bill that would further alter the licensing laws for social workers. During this session, 3006 was a bill that attempted to add further restrictions on social workers working towards licensure. This bill almost made it through, but ended up not making it out of rules committee. It is important that the SSWLHC work with NASW and the WSSCSW to ensure that the perspective of health care social workers is heard. We have connected with NASW and have indicated our interest in being included in discussions expected to be held this summer on a possible revamping of this bill. It is much better that we are proactive with this so that all social work interests are represented, not just those of social workers who work in one specific practice arena.

SSWLHC SETS SEMINAR AGENDA

Brian Giddens, President Elect and Chair of the Education Committee is working with his committee on the year's SSWLHC seminar offerings. Upcoming workshops will include:

May/June: The Social Work Role in Bariatric Surgery and Weight Management

Sept/Oct: Update on Medicaid and Long-Term Care

December: The Annual Legislative Session: Planning for the Upcoming Session.

If you would like to join the Education Committee, contribute to the content of the seminar and/or host any of these programs, please contact Brian at: 206-598-7910 or bgiddens@uw.edu

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OTIS AND WEATHERLEY APPOINTED TO SSWLHC WA CHAPTER BOARD



Kathie Otis, MSW,
Board Member at Large

At the
SSWLHC
Monthly Board
Meeting on
March 11, 2010,
Kathleen Otis,
MSW, Social
Worker at the
Community

Health Plan of Washington was appointed to a
one year term as Board Member at Large.

Kathie came to WA State in 2006 following almost 30 years as a professional social worker in New York state. She began her professional career as a medical social worker at Rochester General Hospital in Rochester NY.. From there she worked for more than twenty years with New York Developmental Services Office as social worker and Medicaid Service Coordination Supervisor.

Upon arrival in Seattle, Kathie worked as a medical social worker for Highline Medical Center. She now works for Community Health Plan of Washington where she reviews inpatient behavioral health hospitalizations for appropriate level of care and discharge planning.

Kathie joined SSWLHC in 2008, and co-chaired the 2009 conference on Homelessness. She can be located at:
kathleen.otis@chpw.org



Mary Weatherley, MSW, Chair,
Scholarship Committee

Mary
Weatherley
has agreed to
take on the
responsibility
of committee
chair for the
SSWLHC
Scholarship
Committee.

Mary is currently working as the Manager of Social Work Services for Group Health of Puget Sound. In this capacity, she supervises medical social work services associated with GH clinics in the Puget Sound and Central WA areas.

Mary has reinvented herself several times over her career. Following graduate school, Mary came to Seattle, and provided clinical services at Harborview, UWMC, and San Juan County community mental health.

Mary joined Group Health as social work supervisor the first time in 1989. In 1999 she joined Harborview's Social Work Dept., was Director of the Medicaid Unit, and worked in Utilization Management before returning to Group Health in 2005.

Mary is a long time member of the SSWLHC, WA Chapter. She can be located at:
weatherley.m@ghc.org

DEE MAN AUST—LEADERSHIP PROFILE

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efforts of a third party billing company, managed daily revenue of \$5.9 million dollars and decreased days in accounts receivable by 37 days with an increase in cash collections.

By January of 2006, Dee was named Director of Care Coordination at Swedish. At this point she was directing a staff of care managers, social workers and clinical care associates serving the three Swedish campus locations and four emergency departments. Through work on processes, information systems, and improvement in staff morale, overall patient length of stay was reduced by 0.15 days within one year. In an organizational restructure, the Director of Care Coordination position was eliminated and Dee accepted a position as Director of Clinical Information Systems in 2007. In this role, she provided leadership in the overall implementation of Epic, a hospital clinical information system. However, as this role began to be much more focused on the implementation of software, Dee decided she wanted to have more clinical contact.

EVERGREEN TRANSITION In January 2008, Dee applied for and was hired as the Director of Care Management at Evergreen. She is delighted with the position as it brings her back into more contact with clinical social work, and she now lives fairly close to work and does not have the 520 Bridge commute. Dee is again directing a staff of case managers, social workers, and administrative assistants providing the services of case management, utilization management, documentation integrity, social work and discharge planning.

PERSONAL: I grew up in Wyoming. My family has roots in the Wyoming ranching community extending to the mid 19th Century. I am

definitely a rural girl at heart! I worked for the Forest Service during the summer while in college and I still love to get out to the woods. One of our favorite vacations has been snowmobiling in Yellowstone—a truly spiritual journey.

I am a graduate of WA University in St. Louis. The George Warren Brown School of Social Work is consistently one of the top schools in the nation. I received such a great education there! I continue to support the university, sponsor a scholarship, co-chaired a reunion, etc. I am so grateful for my Social Work education and experience. People skills and managing change are so translatable to management, project management or leading any kind of change.

My career has not had any direct path. I've had the fortune to work with a number of leaders who had the faith in me to allow me to try new things. And while I wouldn't have worked to become responsible for billing services, it was a wonderful learning experience that taught me a whole new view of how a health organization works. I also have a completely different understanding of insurance (don't get me started on reform!).

I have been happily married to Brian Aust now for 22 years. We have a very spoiled cat, Kirby, who was a Mother's Day gift from a fabulous team at Swedish! I enjoy photography (okay, pretty serious about it) scrap booking, making jewelry, working out (yep, I really do like it) and traveling. I have to have at least one "girl trip" a year to feed that part of my soul.

