

Karen's Corner



We've heard it called many things, but no matter what the label, the leak of MCHM into the Elk River has presented challenges to the people of our state.

I have spoken before in this column about the cooperative and caring spirit we see in each other as members of the DHHR team. I have said that we work for the Department because we want to make a positive impact, and that we share the goal of improving the lives of families, communities, and the people we serve. We have been once again called to rely upon our commitment and our pervasive DHHR spirit as we work together through this new challenge.

From the moment we learned of this event, as a member of Governor Tomblin's team, I had the opportunity to partner with other state agencies as we worked through the aftermath of the chemical spill. As a team, we have accomplished a number of important things. We moved through a sequence of "DO NOT USE" instructions to a sequential flushing process to begin to bring life back to normal.

We distributed water. We made hospitals, nursing homes, and long-term care facilities our number one priority. We tested our schools and provided water to keep our children in the classroom. We utilized federal resources to direct water to homes and businesses in need. We consulted with experts. We answered questions. We focused a full force effort to activate our best resources to help people as they struggled through this experience.

We are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. We now focus on the restoration of public confidence in our water. This event caused people to not have full trust of our water, and it will take time to fully regain that trust. I ask that you continue to educate yourselves, as we hear from our experts who learn and share information. We intend to provide straightforward updates based on the best information available to us, and as always, invite your feedback and questions.

Special thanks go to the staff of the Bureau for Public Health, our Communications team, and everyone staffing the Center for Threat Preparedness Health Command. There were many people working long hours to see us through the important tasks we accomplished, and I appreciate that extra effort I have come to know I can count on from our DHHR team.

Through it all, as your Secretary, I give you my assurance that the health and well-being of the people remain our utmost concern. I appreciate the opportunity to be the bearer of that responsibility, and thank you for your ongoing show of support.

Karen L. Bowling, Cabinet Secretary

CEO Angie Booker: History Maker and Leader in Healthcare

February is Black History Month, and Jackie Withrow Hospital CEO Angie Booker holds a special place in history. Angie has spent the past ten years leading the Beckley long-term care facility and is the first licensed Black nursing home administrator in West Virginia. Angie earned her bachelor's degree in nursing from the West Virginia Institute of Technology and holds a masters in health sciences from Mountain State University. Angie was recently interviewed by staff members at Jackie Withrow on her career and accomplishments and shared the following thoughts.

"Being a Nursing Home Administrator is such a rewarding job as it provides an opportunity to assist individuals from all walks of life and various cultures. Most individuals who work in long term care centers frequently state, 'it takes a special kind of person to do the work we do each and every day in a nursing home.' I believe that a truer statement has never been spoken. The individuals who provide health care assistance to individuals in nursing care facilities truly love the work that they do, and I am among those individuals."



"Being the first licensed Black nursing home administrator in West Virginia makes me very proud. I have been licensed as a Nursing Home Administrator since October 1993, and over the last 20 years I have held the position of Administrator in five different long term care facilities. Out of all of these positions, working as the CEO of Jackie Withrow Hospital has definitely been my favorite job. The autonomy this job gives is far above the rest and the enjoyment I receive from working alongside the staff of this facility is awesome. The joy I receive from management and administration of personnel is an enjoyable "rush" that I cannot explain. The last 10 years of employment at JWH has been one of the highlights of my professional career."

OMIS System Improvement Leads to Increased Access to Child Care Applications and Screening

On Friday, January 10, 2014, applications for child care services went digital. West Virginia citizens are now able to be screened and apply for child care services online through the inROADS system. The Information Network for Resident Online Access and Delivery of Services (<https://www.wvinroads.org/selfservice>) is a self-service portal which allows citizens of West Virginia to screen and apply for benefits and programs offered by the State of West Virginia through the Department of Health and Human Resources.



The Child Care Services Team

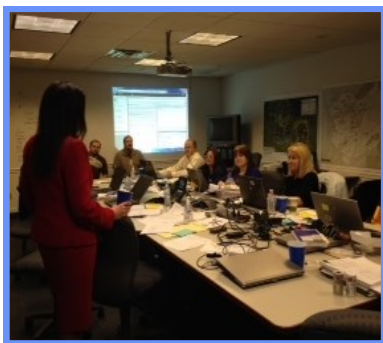
The addition of child care services to inRoads allows the public to apply for this service outside of the local Resource and Referral Agency offices (R&R) as well as outside of normal

business hours. Clients are still responsible for making a face-to-face visit with the R&R to provide all required verifications needed to obtain child care services and certificates.

Online applications will be sent electronically from inROADS to FACTS three times per day: 5:45 a.m., 11:45 a.m., and 3:45 p.m. When the files are loaded into FACTS, an intake is created for each application received. The intake is assigned to a county inbox based on the county the citizen has indicated in the application. The intake will remain in the county inbox until the citizen (client) comes to the Resource and Referral for a face-to-face visit. At that time, the supervisor or worker will access the inbox and assign the intake to a worker.

Should you have any questions regarding the child care intakes created in FACTS, contact the FACTS Help Desk at dhrfactsd@wv.gov or 1-800-291-0753. If a citizen calls a local R&R office with questions or issues pertaining to inROADS, please refer them to Customer Service at 1-877-716-1212 (8 a.m.– 5 p.m., Monday through Friday).

Center for Threat Preparedness – Activation of Health Command



Secretary Bowling speaks with Health Command team members.

back to work. On the way, you call your family to let them know that you don't know what time you will make it home tonight. That is exactly what happened to quite a number of your fellow State employees on January 9.

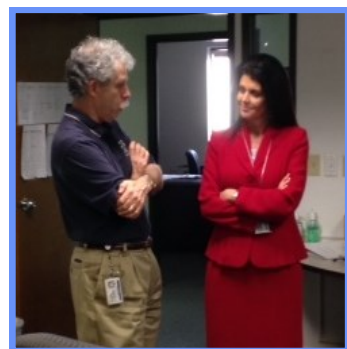
When the Center for Threat Preparedness is notified that a disaster has occurred in the state, they begin to rally the troops. DHHR Staff must be notified to work in Health Command. This is the coordination hub for the health and medical response for DHHR. Health Command maintains ongoing communications with the State Emergency Operations Center, which is the main headquarters for the State's overall disaster response. Health Command maintains ongoing communications with the leadership of the Bureau for Public Health and DHHR for situational awareness.

Health Command monitors the public health (local health departments) and the healthcare system to ensure that they are each able to continue to provide essential services to the citizens

of WV especially during times of disaster. This can include such functions as making sure hospitals, long term care facilities and dialysis centers have the supplies (including water) needed to provide adequate care to their patients. It can include gathering data on how many patients are being seen and treated at the various hospitals in the impacted area to make sure they aren't being overloaded and the medical surge systems are in place to provide adequate care to these additional patients. It can include the preparation of messages for the public based on what the identified needs are in the community during the disaster (such as boil water advisories).

It's about 5:30pm on a Thursday evening and your phone rings. You are on your way home after a long, hard day of work. You really don't want to answer, but you do. It is that recorded voice telling you that there is some kind of disaster and Health Command is being activated. You have to respond immediately. So, you turn around and head

We would like to thank all staff who volunteered to work in Health Command during our recent activations in January. You sacrificed time away from your families while the Health Command was staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You sacrificed taking care of your family while in Health Command by taking care of the approximately 300,000 people affected by a chemical spill. You sacrificed time away from your regular job and the backlog you faced upon your return because there is no time for "regular" work while performing the functions necessary during Health Command.



CTP Director Jerry Rhodes talks with Secretary Bowling.

We salute you! This response was possible because of you.