

### Karen's Corner



Winston Churchill once said, "We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give." These words are exemplified daily throughout the DHHR by employee dedication to our programs that better the lives of West Virginians. Many of our offices take this to another level by supporting outside initiatives that further enforce safety, well-being and meeting basic needs. One that I have been able to experience close at hand is this summer's Charleston-area employee drive to benefit Mission WV's Carry On Campaign, which aims to provide luggage and essential items to children in foster care.

The response over the month-long drive was overwhelming and inspiring as individuals brought in loads of backpacks, some already filled with stuffed animals, books, flip flops, toiletries and other useful items. We were able to donate boxes of toothbrushes, toothpaste, hair brushes, deodorant, coloring books and crayons – in fact, the contributions exceeded the storage space allotted and staff members were scrambling for extra boxes to pack up the donations. We even had some of our staff provide monetary offerings, which Mission WV will be able to use to purchase whatever else is needed.

I am so proud to lead a workforce full of people who have made helping others a priority in their jobs and personal lives. Each bureau serves a purpose, as does each individual employee, and together that leads to improving the health and well-being of all West Virginians. Whether it is through campaigns like Carry On, or everyday tasks of the Department, I am confident that we are making a difference and am so proud that we are unified through our shared compassion.

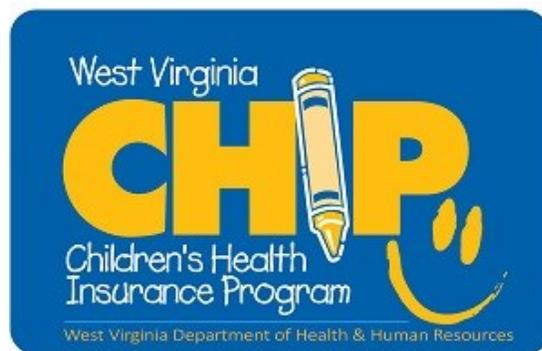


### West Virginia Children's Health Insurance Program Joins DHHR

Meet the new kids on the block: a very warm welcome to the newest arm of DHHR, the West Virginia Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). In actuality, CHIP is far from new; the program was established by Congress in 1997 to help working families who do not have health insurance for their children. Staff members of WV CHIP have worked closely with DHHR employees for many years, and during the 2015 Legislative Session the relationship between the two agencies was solidified with an official agency move.

To learn more about CHIP, please visit <http://www.chip.wv.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

A staff directory may be found at [http://www.chip.wv.gov/pages/staff\\_directory.aspx](http://www.chip.wv.gov/pages/staff_directory.aspx)



## William R. Sharpe, Jr. Hospital Employee Named Counselor of the Year



Linda Mealey, Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor and MICA program director for William R. Sharpe, Jr. Hospital in Weston, was named Counselor of the Year by the WV Association for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (WVAADAC). Linda received this honor in June at the WVAADAC Professional Development Summit, held at Canaan Valley Resort.

The award was a complete surprise to Linda, who has been a member of WVAADAC since 1996 and a member of the staff at Sharpe for the past four years. She previously worked for two community behavioral health facilities, Summit Center and Appalachian Community Health Center. In her daily work, Linda most enjoys seeing her patients get well. “Addiction and mental illness are treatable diseases,” she explains.

“Receiving Counselor of the Year is a great honor. I am proud of Linda’s accomplishment and the positive impact she makes daily in the lives of her patients,” said Cabinet Secretary Karen L. Bowling. “Linda’s work supports the message that treatment for mental illness and addiction is an important and necessary part of health care.”

When not at work, Linda enjoys being outside, building projects and most of all, spending time with her daughter, two granddaughters and one great-granddaughter.

## Communication Boards Added to Ambulances Statewide

In the world of emergency medicine, there is not a routine or typical call. A recent example of the challenges crews face happened when the Kanawha County Emergency Ambulance Authority (KCEAA) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) field providers were dispatched to a 911 emergency call. Upon arrival, the EMS crew quickly determined that the patient had communication difficulties resulting from strokes. The crew was still able to communicate with the patient thanks to a new tool, the First Responder Communication Board. According to Captain Thomas Bibb, Education Supervisor for KCEAA, “The EMS field providers were not only able to utilize the communication board to determine the patient’s chief complaint, which was unrelated to a stroke, but also the level of pain and onset time.” First Responder Communication Boards had been placed on all KCEAA ambulances just two hours prior to this emergency call.

The boards were purchased by the West Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services, EMS for Children (EMSC) Program. EMSC recognized a need to communicate with nonverbal patients and utilized federal funding to purchase a communication board for every transporting unit in the state of West Virginia. This tool allows an EMS field provider to appropriately assess and treat the nonverbal patient medically and with dignity. The First Responder Communication Boards may be used on pediatric, adolescent or adult patients. “The KCEAA field providers should be commended for recognizing the need and utilizing all available tools to assess and treat their patients,” said Vicki Hildreth, EMSC Coordinator.

For additional information regarding First Responder Communication Boards, please contact [Vicki.L.Hildreth@wv.gov](mailto:Vicki.L.Hildreth@wv.gov) or call (304) 558-3956.



Joan Green, President of Greenhouse Publications, developed the First Responder Communication Boards.