



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

Health District Nurses Receive Governor's Unique Achievement Award for East Central Illinois, 2005

East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging Recognizes Community Health Nurses

This month the East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging nominated the Champaign-Urbana Public Health District division of Community Health Nursing for the 2005 Governor's Unique Achievement Award. The state gives the award to nominees from each district of the Illinois Department on Aging. The Health District Community Health Nursing Division is the selected nominee of the East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging.

Since 1937, the division of Community Health Nursing has brought an array of services to those in need, with an emphasis on providing vital support to seniors. Since 1996 the division has also served seniors throughout Champaign County – with support from the Champaign County Public Health Department.

The nomination letter (attached) cited the Community Health nurses' work to help older adults "age in place" in their homes and in the community. Between August 2004 and August 2005, the five nurses in the division made 3,420 home visits to older adults in need of medication management, advocacy or referrals to other services. Medication management includes filling medication containers and syringes and monitoring prescriptions to reduce errors and increase each client's adherence to his or her treatment plan.

The letter recognized the nurses' services to older adults who have diabetes or two or more other major medical diagnoses. It noted their services to African Americans and to older adults who are in the greatest social and economic need.

The East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging also recognized the Community Health Nursing Division for:

- Offering regular clinics for blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol checks and immunizations.

- Working as active members of the Champaign County Mental Health & Aging Coalition (initiated by the East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging) to increase senior awareness that “depression is not a normal part of aging.” The “Lemonade Stand,” a project of the Coalition, offers free lemonade to seniors as a way of engaging them in conversation about how to navigate life’s ups and downs.
- Providing monthly support groups for seniors with diabetes in congregate housing facilities.
- Working with allied health care professionals, including pharmacists, to review seniors’ medicines.

Health District representatives will receive the award October 5, 2005. The nomination letter is attached.

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