

PUBLIC HEALTH NURSING BOARD
OLD SAYBROOK
ANNUAL REPORT 2004/2005

The Old Saybrook Public Health Nursing Board (**PHNB**) approved to continue nursing services to residents of the Town of Old Saybrook with the VNA of Southeastern Connecticut (VNASC). Mary Lenzini, B.S.N., M.A., CHCE is the agency's President and Joanne Dymitruk R.N., M.S.N., M.B.A. is Vice President of Clinical Services. The VNA of Southeastern Connecticut will provide nursing services for FY 2005-2006 to the Town of Old Saybrook at a cost of \$79,082.00, \$416.00 less than last year's budget.

The VNA of Southeastern Connecticut provided the following health care services to the residents of Old Saybrook during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005:

- 30 nursing visits for the care of the ill, frail elderly, mental health support, maternal/child healthcare and communicable diseases.
- 4 homemaker visits to assist patients with their household chores so that they can remain at home.
- 413 nursing service hours for flu clinics, blood pressure screening, and communicable disease control.
- 400 flu immunizations and 17 pneumonia vaccines were administered.

The VNA of Southeastern Connecticut always explores alternate pay sources to provide nursing services. They use town funds as payer of last resort. VNASC was able to secure alternate funding to provide 185 visits for nursing, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and/or speech therapy. Additionally, 137 hours of home health aide services were provided.

The VNA conducted Cholesterol Screening, Diabetic Screening, and Blood Pressure checks at the Estuary Center as well as Blood Pressure screenings and Health Education Programs at Saybrooke Village, The town nurse attended the Food Pantry each week to offer Health Counseling. She also provides Blood Pressure Screenings at the Action Library. VNASC's President attended the Old Saybrook Woman's Club to discuss VNA services in Old Saybrook.

The cost to the town for these services was \$10,803.50 for the 2004/2005 fiscal year - up 45% from the previous fiscal period (2003/2004). The **PHNB** collaborate with the director of public health, and Board of Selectmen to oversee the activities related to the provision of healthcare. Jointly, we ensure that quality of service remains high, the needs of our community are met with comprehensive care and that the healthcare provider service contract is cost effective. We believe that the objectives set forth for the **PHNB** were met.

The **PHNB** is also charged with the control and dispensation of two private funds – the “Flanagan” and the “Loan Closet”. This year funds were approved by the **PHNB** to recognize the Town's School Nurses during National Nurses Week. As a general rule, the

PHNB awards a \$1,500.00 scholarship to an Old Saybrook high school senior planning to pursue a career in the healthcare field. This year, due to the **PHNB** fundraising efforts combined with the interest from the aforementioned funds, the board was able to grant two scholarships. The nursing scholarships were granted to Matthew Nucci and Caitlin Johnson both graduates of Old Saybrook High School.

The nursing shortage in Connecticut and nationwide is becoming critical as a result of the decreasing number of nurses in the healthcare delivery system and a decrease in the number of young people entering nursing education. Recognizing the need to take efforts to ease the nursing shortage, the **PHNB** established “**The Nightingale Fund**” this past year. Community donations made to this fund will be used to offer more scholarship support to eligible Old Saybrook graduates entering the healthcare field. The board is committed to increased fundraising efforts to support this important cause.

PHNB meetings are regularly scheduled at 7:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month of the year with the exception of the months of July and August. Meetings are held in the Old Saybrook Town Hall.

The Town of Old Saybrook is ably served by the following current board members: Janet Hodge-Burke, Sharon Craft, Cathy Custer, Diane Aldi DePaola (Chairman), Robert Hallisey, Donna Konarski (Secretary), and Thomas McKean (Treasurer).

Diane Aldi DePaola
Chairman