You Are Our Best Recruiters

One of the strategies that the Department is focusing on in our strategic plan is “Recruiting, Developing and Retaining a Highly Skilled Workforce to Meet Future Needs.”

When I get a chance to talk to new employees at orientation, I always ask what brought them to DHSS. More times than I can count, the answer is along the lines of “a current employee recommended the Department as a great place to work” or “a friend works here and really likes it” or “I worked with DHSS employees in my former job and they always seemed to enjoy their work.” So word of mouth recruiting by all of you, whether intentional or not, seems to be one effective recruitment tool. I want to thank you and ask you to keep it up. I also wanted to let you know your efforts are paying off and are important to the Department’s future.

If you want to help recruit for us, you might also:

- Refer potential employees to our website to find out about specific job openings and how to fill out a merit application: www.health.mo.gov/information/employment.
- Follow and share job opportunities and other information from the DHSS social media sites.

Visit us on Facebook at facebook.com/HealthyLivingMo
Follow us on twitter at twitter.com/HealthyLivingMo
Stroke Patients Receive Faster Response Thanks to TCD Team

On March 23, Missouri designated 43 stroke centers, the newest component of the Time Critical Diagnosis (TCD) System. TCD is a statewide system that brings together the 911 emergency phone system, ambulance services and hospitals in a coordinated way to provide quicker and higher-quality treatment.

“I am proud of the work our TCD Team has accomplished,” said Bill Koebel. “With the designated Stroke Centers in place, individuals suffering a stroke will receive quicker response times and improved survival and recovery rates.”

The system builds on Missouri’s existing trauma system, which identifies specific hospitals as trauma centers specially equipped for the treatment of serious injuries. The Time Critical Diagnosis System includes hospitals that are designated as specially equipped to treat stroke and heart attack, particularly STEMI, a specific type of heart attack.

The work groups began in 2010, and the Stroke and STEMI Regulations were passed in May of 2013. The TCD program began the on-site Stroke Designation surveys in October 2013 and concluded the first round of stroke surveys in early 2015. All first round TCD stroke centers that had successful site reviews were designated on Monday March 23, 2015. The Bureau of Hospital Standards is currently in the 3rd phase of the TCD program and are currently accepting TCD STEMI Center Designation applications.

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Members of the Time Critical Diagnosis System Team consists of Brenda Rackers, Office of General Counsel; Donya Lowrie and Arlinda Kinkead, Bureau of Hospital Standards; Gail Vasterling, director; and Nicole Gamm and Peggy Huddleston, Bureau of Hospital Standards.
Supporting our Breastfeeding Moms at Work

One of the first decisions a mom makes is how to feed her child. Jana Anderson recently returned from maternity leave after the birth of her son, William James. Jana is a breastfeeding mom and works as an adult protective community worker II in the Central Registry Unit. Jana appreciates being able to continue to provide breastmilk for William after returning from maternity leave by using the lactation room in 912 Wildwood.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) recognizes breastfeeding as the ideal nutrition for infants and works to promote, support and protect breastfeeding. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that infants receive only breast milk for the first six months of life, and after the addition of solid food, breastfeeding should be continued for the infant’s first year of life and beyond.

“I can’t imagine working for a place that does not support breastfeeding moms,” said Jana. If it was not for the lactation room, I would have not been able to continue to provide breastmilk and nurse my beautiful miracle.”

The 912, 920 and 930 Wildwood and Knipp buildings have dedicated lactation rooms. Due to space limitations, not all district offices have dedicated lactation rooms, but arrangements will be made as needed. Please contact your supervisor if you need assistance finding a private place to express milk.

Most lactation rooms have a hospital grade electric breast pump available or arrangements can be made to provide one as needed. A pumping kit will need to be purchased separately.

The Affordable Care Act requires health insurance companies to provide electric breast pumps. For more information on what is provided to Missouri state employees go to: http://mchcp.org/news/breastPumpBenefit.asp.

“Keep in mind, there are a number of different brands and types of breast pumps available,” said Kathy Mertzlufft, state breastfeeding coordinator. “Some pump companies might provide a lower grade of pump through a durable medical equipment company than what is available through retail markets. It is recommended to contact a lactation consultant to see which breast pump is best to meet your needs.”

Work with your supervisor to schedule break times that will meet your pumping needs. DHSS Policy 14.4 Lactation Rooms provides additional information. If you need assistance in finding a lactation room or another private place to pump, contact your supervisor, Office of Human Resources or Kathy Mertzlufft.

Jana Anderson and her son, William James. William was born Nov. 5. Jana continues to provide William breastmilk after her return from maternity leave by using the lactation room in 912 Wildwood. Jana works as an adult protective community worker II in the Central Registry Unit.

Contact Kathy Mertzlufft at 573.526.4792 or Kathy.Mertzlufft@health.mo.gov for questions or concerns, need information on breast pumps or other breastfeeding resources.
Taking the

POLAR Plunge

Jumping into 44 degree water was the easy part of a personal goal set by Melissa Seaver. Since her childhood Melissa has battled a weight problem. Over the last three years she has lost 184 pounds. On March 14, Melissa took the Polar Plunge, a project of the Law Enforcement Torch Run(R) for Special Olympics Missouri.

“I understand the physical challenge that someone might have because of a disability,” said Melissa. “Now I am capable of doing things I didn’t think I could do because of the physical challenges I faced.”

Completely changing her eating habits and hiring a personal trainer, Melissa has found a lifestyle that she can manage and sustain. One of her biggest achievements is being completely off of the diabetes medicine she was taking. She continues to challenge herself and has signed up for a 5K mud run with obstacles in Lexington, Missouri.

“Giving to other people is an amazing feeling,” said Melissa. “I am fortunate to have had the ability to change the barriers that I have experienced with my weight, some people are not so fortunate, so I want to do what I can to help them achieve their goals.”

Melissa raised $540 for Missouri’s Special Olympics. She works as a health program representative III for the Bureau of WIC and Nutrition Services.

Gov. Jeremiah (Jay) W. Nixon and First Lady Georganne Nixon kicked off the 100 Missouri Miles Challenge on April 15. Click to:
- Sign Up
- Log your miles
- Like 100 Missouri Miles on Facebook
- Follow 100 Missouri Miles on Twitter
- View photos from the event
- View video

Melissa Seaver, health program representative III, Bureau of WIC and Nutrition Services, participated in the Polar Plunge, a project of the Law Enforcement Torch Run(R) for Special Olympics Missouri.
SEOC ERC Tabletop Exercise - Vortex Fury

The Office of Emergency Coordination (OEC) conducted a Scenario Based Tabletop Exercise on March 26, 2015, in the newly-renovated Emergency Response Center (ERC). A morning session and an afternoon session were offered to all public health emergency response team members.

The scenario was based on several tornadoes that occurred in Moore, Oklahoma, in May, 2013. Actual video footage from the Oklahoma storm was presented to participants to set the stage for the exercise. Approximately 70 DHSS staff attended the sessions. In addition, personnel from the Department of Mental Health and OA/ITSD actively participated in the sessions. Several State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) staff attended the exercise as observers to gain a better understanding of DHSS’ role in an emergency event.

The exercise was designed to provide State Emergency Operation Center and ERC team members an opportunity to discuss their role and responsibility in a public health emergency.

If you are interested in being on a team please contact the ERC at DRMS@health.mo.gov or 800-392-0272.

Bite into a Healthy Lifestyle

Celebrating National Nutrition Month, the Strive for Wellness staff provided nutritional education materials to DHSS staff on Friday, March 13. Follow these 10 tips to a great plate:

1. Balance calories
2. Enjoy your food, but eat less
3. Avoid oversized portions
4. Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains and fat free or 1% milk and dairy products
5. Make half your plate fruits and vegetables
6. Switch to fat free or low-fat (1%) milk
7. Make half your grains whole grains
8. Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars and salt
9. Compare sodium in foods
10. Drink water instead of sugary drinks

For more tips, videos, meal planning and healthy recipes, go to: www.choosemyplate.gov.

Gregory Loehr, Richard Grindstaff and Betsy Thompson, Long Term Care Regulation Regional Office #6 read tips on eating healthier.
From monitoring building operations to sterilizing glassware to hazardous waste pickup, the Central Service Unit located in the Missouri State Public Health Laboratory (MSPHL) performs a wide variety of duties. The Central Services Unit is integral to the MSPHL’s daily functions as they provide the behind-the-scenes services to the testing units assisting in the identification and control of diseases and environmental health risks. Hundreds of samples are collected Monday through Friday by a courier service for specimen transportation with 167 pickup locations throughout the State of Missouri at select hospitals and 114 local public health agencies.

“The courier service allows samples to be expedited for processing, reducing a significant amount of time compared to mailing them,” said Jackie Pfenenger, unit chief. “During fiscal year 2014, over 101,690 packages were picked up by the courier that is also utilized by the Bureau of Vital Records and the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.”

Disposal of biological waste generated through testing, sterilization and cleaning of glassware is also performed in the Central Services Unit.

“All members of the Unit are cross trained and willing to assist our laboratory customers at any time,” said Jackie. “We take pride in our work and I am fortunate to have such an awesome team.”
Welcome

New Employees


Take a Break

What is Personal Wellness Leave?

A recent rule change provides employees with the opportunity to use their accrued sick leave for activities related to personal wellness. Employees can use up to one hour of sick leave per month to do things such as attend a fitness class, go jogging or participate in a tobacco cessation, weight management or stress management program.

How do I use Personal Wellness Leave?

Employees may request personal wellness leave in the same manner they request other scheduled leave, such as doctor appointments. Personal wellness leave is coded using the SLPW code in DELTA. This leave is described in DHSS Administrative Policy 8.3 (Sick Leave).

You may have heard that taking a break during your work day can make you more productive. For more information on the benefits of taking a break, check out this article from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/family/minutes/tips/takeabreak.
Star Performance

I had an amazingly great customer service experience today... 

Theresa Driver -
I had an amazingly great customer service experience today when I called the Health Lab regarding water testing. You should be commended on your knowledge, kindness and professionalism. Being retired from state government myself, I am grateful for folks like you who represent our great state and public service. You are well trained and answered all my questions in such a great way!

Monica Hoy

Tish Garr -
While attending the CMS Basic Long Term Care Surveyor Training in Baltimore, MD, I tripped over an area in the hotel room between the bathroom entry way and broke my ankle. Not knowing it was broken at the time and hoping it would all be better in the morning I hopped my way to the bed, propped my foot and hoped for the best. Unfortunately, when the morning came it was worse. My coworker and travel companion, Tish Garr, worried about where I was, called my room. Next thing I know she was at my door with a wheelchair. Tish insisted on going to the ER with me. She was by my side throughout the whole trip. She got my meals, consistently checked on me and had my back 100%.
She is the epitome of self-less and one of the most genuine and kind people I’ve ever met.
Sincerely,
Meagan V. Martorelli

Tish Garr, facility advisory nurse II, Section for Long Term Care Regulation Region 5

...she had my back 100%
In Memory

James “Jim” McCoy of Jefferson City, passed away Sunday, March 1, 2015 at Capital Region Medical Center. Jim was a senior attorney for the Office of General Counsel at the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.

Jim is survived by his wife, Jackie; a son, Michael; two step-children: Anna and Ian Kilgore; his mother, Mary K McCoy and his mother-in-law, Helen Rudroff.

Thank You -

I want to thank everyone who brought a warm smile to Jim’s face during his brief illness. Jim was very happy knowing so many of you cared at DHSS. No words can express, no act of gratitude can relay, and no gift can represent what your kindness and support have meant to me and my family. Please accept this note as an indicator of my heartfelt appreciation for everything you did.

A special thank you to Jim’s co-workers in the Office of General Counsel and the Director’s Office, and my co-workers in the Center for Local Public Health Services. Your generosity alone has been overwhelming. The love and support you gave me during those difficult months were remarkable. Jim was blessed to work with such an amazing group of people and a wonderful Department.

God bless you all,

Jackie McCoy

DHSS staff on the Wildwood Campus and Division of Regulation and Licensure gathered for a photo in remembrance of Jim McCoy. Jim was an avid Royals fan.

View more photos.
Fighting the Fight Against Breast Cancer

Early detection is key when it comes to breast cancer. Carla Kolb in the Division of Regulation and Licensure was one of several DHSS employees who took preventative measures to be screened for breast cancer through the Ellis Fischel Mobile Mammography Van on February 24.

“I have two aunts that were diagnosed with breast cancer, so getting screened is very important to me,” said Carla. “The Mamm Van reminds me to get screened each year and it is very convenient.”

One in eight women in the US will develop breast cancer in their lifetime. Mammography, clinical breast examination by a healthcare provider and breast self-examination are important in the detection of breast cancer.

“I got busy in 2012 and did not go get a mammogram,” said Brenda Maley in the Bureau of Community Health and Wellness. “In November of 2013, I almost let another year go by, but on November 14 of that same year, I was told I had cancer. Four doctors told me they could not feel a lump. If I had not gone in November of 2013, I would not have known I had cancer.” Brenda was diagnosed with one lymph node indicated with cancer. She underwent chemotherapy and full breast radiation.

“If you are 40 and older, please get a mammogram every year,” added Brenda. “You may not always feel the lump.”

Jessica Bax also knows the importance of breast cancer screening whose mother was diagnosed in January 2013 with Stage IV Inflammatory Breast Cancer. Sandy Stroupe, Jessica’s mom and former Division of Senior and Disabilities employee, is still fighting the fight against breast cancer.

“My mom has received chemotherapy for 2 years and 3 months, undergone chest and brain radiation and had a double mastectomy. She continues to receive chemotherapy and fight the battle. We are grateful for the support she received while working at DHSS and the support she and I continue to receive from our friends at the Department.”

In support for Sandy, DHSS employees wore pink for group photos which can be found on the next page.

“Women should know how their breasts normally look and feel and report any breast change promptly to their health care provider. Breast self-exam is an option for women starting in their 20s.”

American Cancer Society
Support for Sandy

DHSS staff on the Wildwood Campus show support for breast cancer awareness. Sandy Stroupe, former Division of Senior and Disability Services employee, was diagnosed with Stage IV Inflammatory Breast Cancer.

Division of Senior and Disability Services Bureau of Home and Community Services, Region 2 staff pictured include: Tim Jackson, Sara Avery-Williams, Tonya Schrum, Sharon Stokes, Crystal Taber and Leigh Beaird.

Division of Senior and Disability Services Bureau of Home and Community Services Region 2 - Butler County staff pictured are: Veronica Jameson, Lacey Williams and Brandy Holshouser.

Displaying their pink for breast cancer awareness include the Division of Senior and Disability Services Bureau of Home and Community Services Region 2 - Cape Girardeau County. Back (l to r): Tami Goldrick, Keith Keller, Kim Campbell, Carey Boyer, Rachael Carlton, Lorraine Davis, Karl Dambach. Front (l to r): Amber Sindle and Erica Keller.

Division of Senior and Disability Services Bureau of Home and Community Services Region 2 - Mississippi County staff include: Kathy Perkins and Irene Patterson.
Employees of the Month

Lisa Tillison, adult protective and community worker is March Employee of the Month. She sought help for a mentally and physically ill male client, who later thanked her for taking the time to save his life.

Lisa believed her client would benefit from a guardian, someone who would be legally responsible for his care. Lisa worked for months with the man’s physician, in-home providers and others to assemble the necessary documentation and presented it to the department’s Office of General Counsel, who filed a court petition for guardianship on the man’s behalf. Through Lisa’s diligence, the man now has a guardian and a conservator, and he lives safely in a residential care home.

Lisa lives in Kirksville. In her spare time, she enjoys spending time with friends and family, reading, baking and making greeting cards.

April Employee of the Month Roger Lehnhoff is a mover and shaker. Roger, maintenance supervisor, Chris Lute, maintenance worker II, and Perry Foster, Mark Rockers and Terry Stratman from the DHSS Warehouse moved 39 employees in one day. The move was prompted by the need for 18 Adult Abuse and Neglect Hotline employees to be housed in the same building as their colleagues in the Division of Senior and Disability Services. After moving the first group, Roger and the team did a U-turn and moved 21 Family Care and Safety Registry employees into the space vacated by the Adult Abuse and Neglect employees.

The one-day turnaround was critical due to the work both sets of employees perform. The Adult Abuse and Neglect Hotline responds to calls of adult abuse and neglect and needed to be operational quickly. So did the Family Care Safety Registry, which helps protect children, seniors and the disabled by providing background information to families and employers on registered child care and elder care workers.

Roger, a U.S. Marine veteran and avid sports fan, has been with the department almost 15 years. He and his wife, Brenda, live in Belle, Mo., and enjoy spending time with their five grandsons.

Roger also received State Employee for the Month of May. Congratulations!