

## 'Perfect Team' Assists with Hurricane Matthew Response

The Alabama Department of Public Health responded to Hurricane Matthew by sending employees from throughout the state to assist the state of Florida in responding to the Atlantic hurricane. The Center for Emergency Preparedness (CEP) requested teams that included several disciplines from throughout the state be rostered and placed on standby.

On the morning of October 8, three loaded vans and two trucks pulling trailers left Montgomery for an arduous road trip that took them through very heavy traffic on the more than 12-hour trip. The two medical needs shelter teams and a team of 10 nurses were assigned to stand up a medical needs shelter at Bunnell Elementary School in the town of Bunnell in Flagler County, Fla.

For Kitty Norris, a nurse with the Bureau of Family Health Services, her first experience staffing a medical needs shelter was a positive one because she said the

public health employees made what she summarized as "the perfect team and everyone pitched in."

Norris said, "The four men on our team were very helpful and made sure we were taken care of. We were prepared to set up cots we had brought, but we were relieved that cots were waiting for us in a classroom after the long trip."

"I wasn't 100 percent sure what I was walking into," she said. "Thankfully, I had received training from the CEP at drills as part of the advanced team for setting up medical needs shelters, and also deployed with a first aid team at the 50th Selma Bridge Crossing Jubilee anniversary event in March 2015."

The team found the majority of the individuals in the shelter were elderly, Norris said. One had a Wound Vac, some had nebulizers, and many relied on oxygen.

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**Front row: Malcolm Givhan, Kitty Norris, Joanne Gilliland, Crystal Blackmon, Brenda Vaughn; middle row, Gloria Branch, Mary Jiles, Thelma McDade, Kim Spencer, Renee Overton, Myra Jeffries, Angie Keener, Hope Steadham, Patricia Helton, Kathy Brown, Annette Henderson, Takisha Whitehurst; back row, Rena Doyle, Peggy McGraw, Andy Baker, Debra Griffin, Carol Wilson, Deborah Slocum, Barbara Gibbs, Terri Brown, Jennifer Jennings, Karen Cobb, Kent "Oley" Olesen, Lisa Reeves, Rick Smith. Beth Kimbrall is not pictured.**

## Hurricane Matthew, continued from page 1

The patients were calm and cooperative. Helping ease anxiety for several of the patients were their dogs who were allowed to accompany their owners. Departmental nurses, social workers, and care assistants provided patients assistance with their activities of daily living, medical assistance as needed, assistance with discharge planning, and ensured they had their medications before they returned home. Several of the patients also had their caregiver with them.

A team from Mobile who had been deployed for incidents in the past described their Florida accommodations as “the Hilton of shelters” because it had generator power, running water and good security. They also had access to the school cafeteria, with breakfast and lunch served each day. Although there were no shower facilities onsite, on their off hours Andy Baker and Kent “Oley” Oleson drove the teams to local gyms to take showers.

It was fortunate that the damage from Hurricane Matthew wasn’t so severe as expected and that power was restored to the area quickly. While the team had expected to stay five days, they returned Monday night at 6 p.m.

Wellness Division Nurse Joanne Gilliland said everything went very smoothly during the deployment, and she will not hesitate to participate at shelters again. Another positive was networking. Gilliland became acquainted with fellow nurses from throughout the state, plans to stay connected with them on Facebook, and generally keep in touch.

Carol Wilson, nurse supervisor with the Autauga and Elmore county health departments, said, “Kitty Norris was wonderful as our go between to the Central Office and keeping those of us deployed up to date on changes. I would go again; this group was wonderful to work with.”

Nurse Brenda Vaughn of the Immunization Division agreed that this will not be her last deployment. “This was my first experience with helping in a disaster

situation,” she said. “It was a very positive and rewarding experience. I will gladly help when asked the next time.”

## Planning and Preparedness Prove Useful

Several years ago, the eight states of the Federal Emergency Management Agency Region IV formed an ESF8 (Health and Medical) planning coalition to support each other when a single state’s resources were not sufficient for a given disaster. The magnitude of the impact of Hurricane Matthew on Florida was anticipated to exceed its capabilities. The Florida ESF8 Health and Medical response group reached out for assistance.

In addition to personnel, ADPH has logistical resources which are available to be deployed in support of Alabama’s sister states. These include water filtration units, two 500-gallon water buffalos for potable water, light towers, mobile office, mobile pharmacy, medical cots in transport trailers, and 100-kilowatt generators to assist in keeping medical facilities operational.

Medical surge supplies are also stockpiled and have been readied for deployment as needed. These supplies include not only general medical surge supplies, but packaged supplies to deal with the special requirements of blast trauma, burns, obstetrics and pediatrics.

CEP Director Andy Mullins said that the disasters which the state has addressed over the past several years have guided planning efforts. Funds from the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Healthcare Preparedness Grants from the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response within the federal Department of Health and Human Services funded these preparedness efforts.

“Without these funds and the efforts of a dedicated preparedness staff, Alabama would be in a much different situation,” Mullins said. “Not only would the state not be able to assist the state of Florida, but might also lack the resources to meet the needs of the citizens of the state during disaster situations.”

## Alabama Department of Public Health

### Mission

To promote, protect, and improve the health of individuals and communities in Alabama.

### Value Statement

The purpose of the Alabama Department of Public Health is to provide caring, high quality, and professional services for the improvement and protection of the public’s health through disease prevention and the assurance of public health services to resident and transient populations of the state regardless of social circumstances or the ability to pay.

The Department of Public Health works closely with the community to preserve and protect the public’s health and to provide caring quality services.

## Alabama’s Health

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# Providers Learn About Trauma-Informed Care and Public Health Emergencies

Health care providers often serve patients who have been impacted by public health emergencies and chronic health conditions. Donna Leslie, clinical director of the Montgomery Area Mental Health Authority, addressed a lunch-and-learn training September 21 at the RSA Tower. Providers were given information on how to respond to the mental health needs of patients who have been impacted by trauma. Participants, shown left to right, are Peggy Lassiter, Baldwin County Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator and Social Work Manager, PHA 9; Phyllis Waits, Calhoun-Cleburne County Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator; Leslie; and Barbara Etheridge, PHA 7 Emergency Preparedness Coordinator.



## Perry County Prostate Cancer Screening



The Perry County Health Department and Urology Centers of Alabama hosted a free prostate cancer screening in Marion September 17. Each year screenings are held in several underserved rural counties. Those shown here are among the people who helped make the popular event in Marion possible.

## Charles Brown Retires



**Charles F. Brown, right, retired effective December 1 from the Office of Facilities Management following 31 years of state service. He is shown with Director Victor Hunt.**

## Alabama Highlighted in 2016 Breastfeeding Report Card

Alabama was one of four states whose breastfeeding programs were featured in the 2016 Breastfeeding Report Card produced by the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity. The article in Stories from the Field is titled “Alabama Supports Breastfeeding Friendly Environments.” The story notes that through coordination and partnering, the Alabama Breastfeeding Committee implemented

local lactation groups in each perinatal region to address breastfeeding issues and provide education to local health professionals. As a result, Alabama mothers have more opportunities to start and keep breastfeeding. The report card may be viewed at <https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/data/reportcard.htm>.

For more information about breastfeeding, please contact Michell Grainger, M.S.N., RNC-OB, IBCLC, State Lactation Coordinator, (334) 206-5673.

## Physicians Recruited Through J-1 Visa Waiver Program Featured in National Publication

Albertville physicians Rommel Go and Maria Rabin, natives of the Philippines, were featured in the September 16 issue of Bloomberg Business News. The article is titled “Two Filipino Doctors Find the American Dream in Rural Alabama.”

The couple met when Go was completing his residency at New York’s Mount Sinai School of Medicine. The article stated that in 1998, Dr. Rabin moved to Albertville to work under the J-1 Visa Waiver program, which allows foreign-born physicians to earn green cards if they practice in underserved areas. Go arrived a year later. The couple married, stayed in Marshall County, and became U.S. citizens in 2010.

Dr. Go spoke of some initial experiences before the community learned to trust him. Dr. Rabin commented that adjusting to rural life was a challenge. There are limited restaurant and retail offerings, she said, but she appreciates the kindness of patients who give them homegrown vegetables or eggs their chickens laid.

The Alabama J-1 Visa Waiver (State-30) Program is a state and federal partnership that sponsors international medical graduates who agree to practice in an underserved area for at least three years after completing their residency. This program allows foreign medical graduates to obtain a waiver of the two-year home residence requirement. The Office of Primary Care and Rural Health serves as a liaison with the program.

## Tower Toastmasters Recognizes Founding Leaders

The Tower Toastmasters Club honored outstanding leaders at a special celebratory meeting October 25 in Montgomery. Charter members and public health employees Teresa Fair and Agnes Oberkor and former employee Ben McGhee were honored for their commitment and achievements in founding the club, and Dr. Tom Miller was recognized for his continued support. A departmental partnership with the club includes offering initial membership fee sponsorships to interested Alabama Department of Public Health employees.

The four toastmasters were presented crystal achievement awards for their contributions to communication excellence and their long-time leadership. Tower Toastmasters has been awarded President’s Distinguished club status for each of the four years of its existence.

Toastmasters International assists employees with development and enhancement of their communication

and leadership skills. The United States Office of Personnel Management recognizes Toastmasters International’s contributions in helping to promote an organizational culture of continuous learning and an environment for professional growth for all employees.



**Vice President for Education Victor Hunt, at left, is shown with Toastmasters, left to right, Teresa Fair, Agnes Oberkor, Tom Miller and Ben McGhee. President and Area Director Vikash Achutaramaiah is pictured at right.**

## Partners Link at 15th Annual Conference

“Linking Partners to Address Diabetes and Obesity” was the theme of the 15th Annual Diabetes, Cardiovascular and Obesity Conference November 18 in Montgomery. Among the conference objectives were a discussion of chronic disease risk factors and medical costs, and a review of evidence-based approaches to reduce the progression of chronic disease. Pictured, left to right, are Dr. E. La’Shaun Seay, Debra Griffin, Dr. Jim McVay and Dr. Evelyn Crayton.



# Motivational Moments

## Sharpening Your Service Skills

We all know that customer service is important. But did you know that is why your job exists? Did you know at the end of the day your eight hours should have been focused on customer service – regardless of your position? Have you thought about the fact that every dollar you earn is provided by those customers? Last question...if the customers literally paid you as you served them, how much would you actually make?

**Listening.** Listening is the most important customer service skill. Listen for what customers are saying and what they aren't saying (non-verbal communication). Listen for their sense of urgency. Listen for what they care about. Listen for their individual personality and serve accordingly. You would think we would be effective with it with all the listening we do, right? Not so. Research suggests that we remember 25 to 50 percent of what we hear. Stated in another way, when you talk to a customer for 10 minutes, you are only listening or capturing five to seven minutes of the conversation. Is this what you would want from your pharmacist, doctor, banker, sales person or supervisor?

**Empathizing.** Stepping outside of your own perspective and into the customer's view hones your empathy skills. If you remain distant and detached, your emotional state will always be different from that of the customers'. Empathize. It doesn't mean you agree. It means they matter. Implementing empathy can mitigate dissatisfied customers, creating a win-win situation.

**Pacing.** Every customer has a pace. You can tell from how they speak or write. Sharpen your customer service people skills by examining how fast or slow they walk up to you or speak. It doesn't always mean they are angry or happy. Some customers are more at ease, some are in a hurry, some speak quickly, and some just speak slowly. Adapt your pace to theirs and you will start connecting with your customers.

**Being Real.** Customers judge your care in customer service by how well you acclimate to their particular need. Bland and memorized talking does not help you connect with customers. In fact, it seems as disenchanting as the electronic/computerized voices.

When we get on our automatic mode of answering the phone or assisting a customer with routine questions, we can sound fake and inflexible. Change your rhythm to fit the customer and the situation. It's not difficult. Speak as if you were talking to a friend.

If you are willing to adapt your ways of listening, empathizing, pacing and being real, you can sharpen your customer service skills.

## What Is Your Control Quotient?

A tennis champion, who was two points away from winning Wimbledon, comes back the next year without dragging that negative experience in a way that impacts future performance. He or she wins this next year. To remain a champion, he or she moves on.

How well do you come back after a mistake or conflictive situation with one customer to serve the very next customer without impact? It is referred to as your Control Quotient, or CQ. CQ is your ability to take control over interactions with customers. People with high CQs are naturally better at personal control. In sports, this psychological ability is called a short memory. Having a short memory might be one of the most valuable assets a sports player can have. It can be one of the most valuable abilities that you possess.

Clearing the mind of the latest mistake and moving on is often what makes a difference between a pro and a champion. When Serena Williams, Number 1 in singles on six separate occasions, double faults – she must move on. A professional tennis player serves an average of 150 times or more in a match that goes full sets and there is no point dwelling over previous shots. "It helps to have a short memory. You have to be able to brush off a bad loss to compete next week," said Andy Roddick, former professional tennis player and World Number 1 during his career.

It is hard to shake off the negatives and get back into a positive mindset. But it is possible. According to the authors of the book "The Effortless Experience," CQ has the biggest impact on increasing the performance in today's service environment. The other ones are basic skills and behaviors, advanced problem

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# Civil Rights in the Workplace

## **Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) is the law.**

### **Do you know what EEO means?**

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO): is the principle that all people have the right to be hired, to work and to advance based on merit and ability.

### **Why are there EEO laws?**

Your civil rights in the workplace are protected under various Federal, state and Civil Rights local EEO laws and regulations, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (CRA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). EEO laws also protect employees and applicants against retaliation for filing a complaint about discrimination or for participating in the complaint process.

### **Forms of Discrimination:**

- Race/Color
- Religion
- Sex (including pregnancy, gender identity, and sexual orientation)
- Gender
- National origin (from a foreign country, background, or marriage/ Limited English Proficiency-LEP)
- Age (40 years or older)
- Genetic information - Employees or applicants that indicate that they (or a family member) have or have had a disease or disorder are excluded, or treated unfavorably or differently
- Disability (physical and mental)

**Know your civil rights, policies, and the steps you can take if you see discrimination in your workplace. Contact the ADPH-ERO at (334) 206-9494 or visit the ADPH Internal Human Resources website and click-on “Anonymous Complaints” for more information.**



### **Motivational Moments, continued from page 5**

solving and emotional intelligence. ADPH directors, supervisors and employees with high CQs are resilient, take ownership over customer issues, and respond well to criticism. They also have the ability to bounce back from an emotionally charged experience.

CQ can be developed, but it is also enabled by the work environment set by the organization and individual

supervisor. In a high-CQ company, employees are engaged, happy, and they feel support for their health and well-being. They are also empowered to exercise their own judgment and they feel trusted. As a result, they deliver desired service experience for each and every customer. And they never forget to smile.

By SHARLEEN Smith, Director of Professional Development, Troy University Continuing Education

## Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Recognizes Dianne Lollar as Fellow

The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals, recently recognized Area 1 Nutrition Director Dianne Lollar as a fellow. This designation recognizes Ms. Lollar's commitment to the field of dietetics and celebrates her professional accomplishments and pursuit of life-long learning. A fellow signifies that a member supports the values of customer focus, acts ethically, with accountability for life-long learning, embraces change with creativity and strategic thinking, and makes decisions with consideration for inclusivity, as well as environmental, economic and social implications.

A registered/licensed dietitian, Lollar is a graduate of the University of Alabama and received her master's degree in public health from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. She has served in numerous leadership roles in professional organizations including president of the Alabama Dietetic Association, president of the Hunger and Environmental Nutrition Practice Group of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Southeast Local Agency Representative to the board of the National

WIC (Women, Infants, Children) Association, and Public Policy Chair, Alabama Breastfeeding Committee.

Serving as a preceptor to dietetic students and interns, Lollar has worked with students from Iowa State University, the University of Alabama, Samford University, and Utah State University to complete their community/public health rotations.

Lollar has been the recipient of the Jack Davis Professional Achievement Award, University of Alabama; Frederick S. Wolf Award, Alabama Public Health Association; 2015 Leadership Award, National WIC Association; and Alabama's Outstanding Public Health Nutritionist Award, Alabama Dietetic Association.



**Dianne Lollar**

## Mark Sestak Presented Eugene H. Holeman Award

The Association of Food and Drug Officials of the Southern States presented Mark Sestak, deputy director of the Food, Milk and Lodging Division, Bureau of Environmental Services, the Eugene H. Holeman Meritorious Service Award.

This award was established in 1977 and is presented to a member who has demonstrated that he/she has served the association and made a valuable contribution to food, drug, cosmetic and consumer products in administration and enforcement of food safety laws. Members of the association are state, federal and industry program directors who meet to promote a unified system of food safety.

In addition to federal and state regulators, the association values participation by those in the food sector to promote public health and prevent fraud and deception in the manufacture, distribution, and sale of foods. "We want external partners to have ownership in the program," he said, "because a lot of times they're ahead of the curve in the industry."

Sestak began his public health career 27 years ago as a public health environmentalist with the Coffee County Health Department. He became a Retail Specialist with the Bureau of Environmental Services in 1996 and Retail Food Branch Director in 2006.



**In recognition of his valuable contributions, Mark Sestak received the Eugene H. Holeman Meritorious Service Award from the Association of Food and Drug Officials of the Southern States September 12.**

## Commendations

If you would like to praise employees for their accomplishments, send letters of commendation to the State Health Officer or the employee's supervisor and a copy by e-mail to [Arrol.Sheehan@adph.state.al.us](mailto:Arrol.Sheehan@adph.state.al.us) for inclusion in this list. Four items are needed: the employee's name, work unit, name of the person making the commendation, and his or her city and state.

**Kathie Cleckler**  
Center for Health Statistics  
from Janet M. Gates  
Troy, Ala.  
Brenda Pierce  
Mobile, Ala.

**Betty File**  
Center for Health Statistics  
from James Sturlock  
Dothan, Ala.

**Sandra Gray**  
Center for Health Statistics  
from Debra and  
Terry Arnold  
Meridian, Miss.

**Tim Hatch**  
Center for Emergency  
Preparedness  
from Vince Stephens  
Donna Thompson  
Townsville, Queensland,  
Australia  
Jody Houston  
Donna Thompson  
Penrith, New South Wales,  
Australia

**William Kennedy**  
Office of Clinical  
Management and Practice  
from Renae Carpenter,  
LICSW, PIP  
Montgomery, Ala.

**Dorene Mitchell**  
**Delano Williams**  
Center for Health Statistics  
from James R. Chapman  
Fredericksburg, Texas

## Retirees

The following departmental employees have retired recently.

### September

**Vernon Adkins**  
Health Promotion and  
Chronic Disease  
**Gail Danford**  
Houston County Health  
Department  
**Charles Langley**  
Information Technology

**Rebecca McCain**  
Talladega County  
Health Department  
**Linda Powell**  
Washington County  
Health Department  
**Ronica Raines**  
Walker County Health  
Department

**Jackie Scott**  
Shelby County Health  
Department

### October

**Sheila Keller**  
Shelby County Health  
Department  
**Yvonne Paul**  
Center for Health  
Statistics

**Melissa Thomason**  
Public Health Area 2  
Immunization

### November

**Debra Hannah**  
Baldwin County  
Health Department  
**Landis Stevenson**  
Public Health Area 4  
**Daniel Thompson**  
Greene County Health  
Department

### December

**Cathryn Bates**  
Calhoun County  
Health Department  
**Jill Brewer**  
Center for Health  
Statistics  
**Mary Cameron**  
Marshall County  
Health Department  
**Janet Hill**  
Public Health Area 5

**Sally Kimbrough-  
McAuley**  
Facilities Management  
**Janice Johnson**  
Clinical Laboratory  
**Anita Lee**  
Morgan County Health  
Department  
**Vanessa Lucas**  
Clinical Laboratory  
**Dr. Jim McVay**  
Health Promotion and  
Chronic Disease  
**Merren Maddox**  
Public Health Area 10  
**Dr. Robert Meador**  
Family Health Services  
**Regina Mitchell**  
Russell County Health  
Department  
**Rachel Parrish**  
Facilities Management  
**Julia Sosa**  
Health Promotion and  
Chronic Disease  
**Doris Voight**  
Marshall County  
Health Department

## 'Scarecrow' Gets Immunization



The Clay County Health Department was among the 28 entities participating in the City of Ashland's fall Scarecrow Competition. Staff pictured, left to right, are Immunization "Scarecrow" Nurse Pam Anderson, Angie Knight, Belinda Catchings, Rachel Brannock, Traci Rowell and Wendy Pritchard.



# Alabama Social Work Hall of Fame Inducts Gayle Lees Sandlin

Alabama's first Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Director Gayle Lees Sandlin was inducted into the Alabama Social Work Hall of Fame Class of 2016 on October 14. Sandlin is the first inductee in the 22-year history of the Hall of Fame who had been employed by the Alabama Department of Public Health. Founded by the Social Work Society at the University of Alabama School of Social Work, the Alabama Social Work Hall of Fame honors the accomplishments of some of the state's most distinguished leaders in the field of social work.

From the time she joined the department in 1988, Sandlin became involved with social services in a variety of settings. She was the second director of social work for the department and led the expansion of an extensive network of licensed social workers throughout the state. She co-chaired a task force responsible for making recommendations to the CHIP

Commission for the creation of Alabama's Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP-ALL Kids). Alabama became the first state in the country to have its CHIP plan approved by the federal government. She later served as director of the program for 10 years until her retirement in 2007.

A letter of support for her nomination stated, "Gayle's leadership of ALL Kids, the first SCHIP program in the nation, was both visionary and practical. Her belief that good public policy and good program design can effectively address a social ill goes against the grain of cynicism about government solutions. Her creativity, competence and dedication led her team to recruit uninsured children by the tens of thousands. Thanks to Gayle's leadership and the contributions of many stakeholders, thousands of children became the first generation in their families to have regular health and dental care."

Alabama developed model strategies to reach one of the lowest rates of uninsured children in the nation. Due to these accomplishments, Sandlin was often invited to speak at national meetings, provided Congressional testimony, and addressed simplification and coordination strategies to the national Medicaid Reform Commission.

The letter of nomination for Sandlin noted that she exemplifies the many ways that social workers can positively affect countless lives. "Blessed with a wonderful sense of humor, she is always able to incorporate her outstanding social work knowledge and skills as she embraces the task at hand. Her outstanding ability to encourage and welcome free discussion when addressing any task is legacy."

Another letter summarizing her impressive 37-year career stated, "Gayle's influence on programs and policies in Alabama continue even though she has been retired eight years, but perhaps the most significant contribution continues through the many social workers who were inspired, mentored, and encouraged by Gayle Lees Sandlin."

Other 2016 Alabama Social Work Hall of Fame inductees were James Dupree Jr., retired executive director of Alabama Department of Youth Services, and the late Charlotte Smitherman Hamner, program supervisor for Social Work in Psychiatry at the Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Tuscaloosa.



**Gayle Sandlin, Alabama's first CHIP director**

**ALL Kids**  
Children's Health Insurance Program

# Dothan Event Provides Diabetes Education to Hundreds

The 14th Annual Diabetes Prevention and Wellness Workshop in Dothan on Thursday, October 20, was a great success, drawing a crowd of between 400 and 500 people. Dothan Leisure Services, the City of Dothan and the Alabama Department of Public Health sponsored the event at the Dothan Civic Center.

The free workshop, which was open to the public, offered diabetes education through speakers, vendors and demonstrations. Special presentations from environmental health staff included messages about lead poisoning prevention and the Zika virus.

Elizabeth Dean, nurse with the Houston County Health Department, gave credit to the city and Dothan Leisure Services for making the community health education event possible. To encourage attendance, Dothan Mayor Mike Schmitz contributes \$1,000 to be

given away as a door prize every year, and this year the participants decided to award 10 \$100 prizes instead of a single prize. The city of Dothan generously donates the use of the Civic Center, and also proclaimed the day of the event “Diabetes Awareness Day” at the City Council meeting.

One of the most helpful pieces of information shared is that one pharmacy offers a free medication program that provides a supply of the most commonly prescribed medications by doctors for infections, diabetes and blood pressure. The medications are provided at no charge so long as the patient’s doctor prescribes the medication. Medications such as Amlodipine, Lisinopril, Metformin and Antibiotics (i.e. Amoxicillin and Ampicillin) are included. The anticipated closure of the coverage gap (also called the “donut hole”) in 2020 was also mentioned.

## Environmental Services Q and A

**QUESTION:** I live in a rural area, and I was wondering if there are any laws or regulations concerning the installation of an alternative septic system, such as an incinerating toilet and separate gray water system, rather than having a septic tank. Any information would be appreciated.

**RESPONSE:** The Alabama Department of Public Health authorizes the use of any incinerating or composting toilet that has National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) certification. These devices may be utilized so long as they are NSF certified.

Gray water consists of wastewater from washing machines, kitchen sinks, bathtubs and hot tubs. Gray water systems require permitting through your local county health department and consist of a septic tank and field lines for disposal of the gray water. Discharge of gray water onto ground surface is no longer lawful as it may have been in the distant past.

Low-flow shower heads (with slide valve to turn off water flow) and front-load washing machines (low water use) are also highly recommended in areas where the soil has poor wastewater acceptance rates such as those in some Alabama counties.

## Purple With a Purpose for Domestic Violence Awareness



**Staff members of the Madison County Health Department dressed in purple to create awareness of domestic violence during October, Domestic Violence Awareness Month.**

## Montgomery County Thinks Pink for Breast Cancer Awareness



Wearing pink was the order of the day for Montgomery County Health Department employees on October 28. Office Manager Shawanda Surles organized a breast cancer awareness event that included the distribution of educational materials for women and men, popcorn, pink ribbon candy, temporary sticker tattoos, bracelets and several other items. Staff printed special labels and applied them to water bottles to show their support for breast cancer survivors, patients, and their families. Several health department employees who are breast cancer survivors were presented with special gift bags. Many of the promotional items were donated by Baptist Hospital South, Capital Chevrolet and the Joy to Life Foundation.

## Event Focuses on World Prematurity Awareness



Public health employees joined supporters from the March of Dimes and other organizations in raising public awareness of the problems of prematurity on World Prematurity Awareness Day November 17. This observance is a global movement to address the leading cause of death of children under age 5 worldwide. In Alabama, one in nine babies is born prematurely. Purple was the color for the attire of participants and decorations in the RSA Park and the RSA Tower building itself that night. Among several speakers addressing the gathering was State Health Officer Dr. Tom Miller.

## Turnbull Logs More Miles to Aid Susan G. Komen Walk for Breast Cancer



**Breast cancer survivors signed the shirt Doug Turnbull wore in this year's trek.**

The toes and soles of Doug Turnbull's new walking shoes wear out each year as he trains for the Susan G. Komen 3 Day 60-mile walk in Atlanta, but that doesn't bother him. It's a cause he's passionate about.

For the sixth year, the Houston County Health Department environmental supervisor participated in the three-day walk to raise awareness and promote self exams, mammograms, early detection and treatment for breast cancer.

"We raised \$1.7 million as part of the 150th walk celebration in October," Turnbull said with pride. The red T-shirt Turnbull wore during the walk was signed by the 13 breast cancer survivors for whom he walked.

As a result of his efforts, Turnbull has raised more than \$14,000 for the Komen Foundation.

# Information Technology Employees Go Gold for Childhood Cancer Awareness

September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, a time to honor and remember children and families affected by these rare diseases, and help rally support to give children with cancer better outcomes by supporting groundbreaking research. Employees of the Bureau of Information Technology recently wore gold to show special support for little Raeleigh Jane McCartha, the daughter of their colleague Josh McCartha. Raeleigh Jane has been undergoing cancer treatment at Children's of Alabama.

Co-workers adorned the entrance to the IT suite with a huge gold bow surrounded by photos of Raeleigh Jane. Supporters of the Go Gold campaign noted that each month:

- 25,000 families around the world will get the horrible news that their child or teen has cancer.
- 6,667 families will experience the loss of a child.



## Calendar of Events



### January 9

Scale Back Alabama 2017 Statewide Kickoff, 10-10:30 a.m. CT.

For more information, contact the Distance Learning and Telehealth Division, (334) 206-5618.



### January 19

Advanced Care Planning: Just Do It!, 1-2:30 p.m. CT.

For more information, contact the Distance Learning and Telehealth Division, (334) 206-5618.



### February 2

The Basics of Alzheimer's, noon-1 p.m. CT.

For more information, contact the Distance Learning and Telehealth Division, (334) 206-5618.



### March 15

Public Health Social Work Celebration and Training, 9 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Alabama Activity Center, 201 Dexter Ave., Montgomery.

For more information, contact Renae Carpenter, LICSW, PIP, (334) 206-3383.



### April 5-7

"A Lifetime of Public Health," 61st Alabama Public Health Association Education Conference, Hill Student Center, University of Alabama at Birmingham. For more information, visit [alphassoc.org](http://alphassoc.org).