



National Nurses Week 2020

A Special Message from Deputy Medicaid Director Julie Lovelady



Happy Nurses Week! National Nurses Week is celebrated annually from May 6, also known as National Nurses Day, through May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale. This year celebrates the 200th anniversary of Nightingale's birth on May 12th. This year also is designated as the "Year of the Nurse and Midwife" by the World Health Organization in recognition of the contributions nurses make, and the risks associated with nursing shortages.

Traditionally, National Nurses Week highlights the diverse ways in which registered nurses, who comprise the largest health care profession, are working to improve health care. Nurses are central to addressing a wide range of health challenges. For centuries, nurses have impacted lives in meaningful and important ways. Nurses are leaders, collaborators, innovators, caregivers, and are critical to the success of healthcare teams.

The nursing profession is often defined by role functions, which include hands-on practitioner, educator, researcher, leader, manager, and service provider. The nursing profession is one that experiences constant change and must remain responsive to the health care needs of consumers. Nurses are confronted daily with the changes rapidly occurring in today's health care environment and are poised to impact not only quality client care but also the economic and fiscal consequences of care delivery.

Early this year, everything changed. Nurses and healthcare workers are now even more critical as we experience the impact of the pandemic caused by the new disease called COVID-19. Never before has the knowledge, commitment and sacrifice of healthcare heroes been so evident. Nurses and healthcare teams everywhere are learning more about the new disease every day, testing and tracing patients, collecting data, observing trends, trying to flatten the disease curve, educating the public and most importantly, providing care for our loved ones who are fighting for their lives.

Throughout the rapidly evolving COVID-19 crisis, dedicated and resilient nurses are ensuring everyone has the care they need. No matter the day or circumstance, nurses are there to make a difference. All around the world, nurses are working tirelessly to provide the care and attention people need, whenever and wherever they need it. Due to the health and safety of vulnerable populations all facilities are restricting visitation and the nurses role in supporting our loved ones takes on a new meaning.

The Year of the Nurse is a great opportunity to raise public awareness of nursing and nurses' commitment to those they serve. Please join me in thanking all nurses within the Department of Human Services and nurses everywhere for their ongoing commitment, dedication, expertise, and compassion, when it is needed the most. Today, more than ever, nurses are our heroes!

Be safe. Be well,

Julie Lovelady
Deputy Medicaid Director

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