Sponge Nursing  
*By Dean Gail Stuart, PhD, APRN, FAAN*

I recently returned from Stafford, England where I conducted a three day Master Class on Implementing the Role of Advanced Practice Nurses in the South Staffordshire Healthcare Trust. I particularly enjoy comparing what we do here in the states with the experiences of nurses from other countries. In fact, we share similar problems and opportunities, although often on a different scale.

One advantage they have is that they are a nationalized system, so changes can roll out in a similar way across the country. We, on the other hand, are bogged down with state variations and the often conflicting interests of insurers, payers, providers and patients. It also was clear to me that the quality of our graduate nursing education in general was much stronger in the states, particularly with regards to nurse prescribing. In addition, the overwhelming majority of their nurses are prepared with diplomas, in sharp contrast to both Ireland and Australia where a degree is needed for practice.

But one of the most interesting ideas I heard was the notion of *sponge nursing*, in which nurses are unable to assert their boundaries of practice. More specifically, *sponge nursing* reflects the fact that nurses “fill in, cover for, and absorb” any deficits of the other health care providers and of the health care system in general. It surely is an interesting and visual representation of why we often feel undervalued and unclear in our nursing roles.

I think that the current nursing shortage is both a crisis and an opportunity. One way we may benefit from it is if it allows us to take a stand, wring out our sponges, and hold other people and other systems accountable for their own responsibilities. Our skills and competencies are impressive. Let’s be clear about what we, as nurses, offer patients, families, and systems of care, and confirm, not dilute, or “sponge up” the boundaries of our practice.
Senators Barbara Mikulski (D-MD) and Susan Collins (R-ME) are circulating a “Dear Colleague” letter seeking the support of their fellow Senators to fund Title VIII - Nursing Workforce Development Programs at a level of $200 million for fiscal year 2008. They need to get as many of their colleagues as possible to sign this letter by noon (EDST), Friday, April 6.

The President’s proposed budget for 2008 reduces overall funding of Title VIII by $44.4 million dollars, a 29.7 percent decrease compared to 2007. This cut is achieved by zeroing out funding for “Advanced Education Nursing” - a shortsighted move that will diminish training and potentially jeopardizes the delivery of health care.

More than three decades ago during another less serious nursing shortage, Congress appropriated $153 million for nurse education programs. In today’s dollars, that amount would be worth more than $615 million - four times the amount the federal government currently is spending on Title VIII programs.

**ACTION REQUIRED**

Email your Senators and urge them to sign onto the Mikulski-Collins letter to support funding for Title VIII - Nursing Workforce Development Programs at a level of $200 million for FY 2008.

To go directly to the ENA Legislative Action Center, click here Fund Title XIII. You will be able to send an Email to your Senator(s) just by completing the online form at the bottom of the Web page. You must act now. The deadline is Friday, April 6 at noon.

The Nursing Technology Center has implemented a new online survey tool for use in collecting data via web forms. The survey tool will provide you the opportunity to take online questionnaires, ballots, or polls. The data collected can be easily exported to SPSS, Excel or any other analytical application. Currently, we are utilizing the tool for Undergraduate and Graduate exit interviews, faculty and staff surveys, as well as elections for Faculty Assembly officers. The survey tool is completely anonymous. If you have questions or would like to build a survey, contact Brian Getsinger at 792-4631 or gettingb@musc.edu.

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**2007 Palmetto Gold Award Winners**

The following College of Nursing faculty members have been chosen to receive the 2007 Palmetto Gold Award for excellence in practice and commitment to the profession (pictured left-right): Sally Stroud, Mary Martin, Gaynell Magwood, Phyllis Bonham, Dianna Inman, and Charlene Pope.

The awards will be presented at the Palmetto Gold Gala on April 21 in Columbia.

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**Nursing is an art: and if it is to be made an art, It requires an exclusive devotion as hard a preparation, as any painter’s or sculptor’s work; for what is the having to do with dead canvas or dead marble, compared with having to do with the living body, the temple of God’s spirit? It is one of the Fine Arts: I had almost said, the finest of Fine Arts.**

- Florence Nightingale
Mark your calendars now! On Wednesday, April 18, Dr. Joan K. Austin, the Distinguished Professor and Sally Reahard Chair of Nursing at Indiana University School of Nursing, will be consulting at the College of Nursing.

Dr. Austin holds adjunct appointments in the Departments of Neurology and Psychiatry in the School of Medicine and in the Department of Psychology, in the Purdue University School of Science. Additionally, Dr. Austin directs the Center for Enhancing Quality of Life in Chronic Illness (CEQL) and an NINR-funded training program in health behavior research for predoctoral and postdoctoral nurses.

She will attend a meeting of our Center from 10 - 11:30 a.m. and will meet with individual faculty in the afternoon. A presentation to the entire university is planned from 4 - 5 p.m. in the Basic Science Building (Room 202). Please plan to attend.

Pregnancy as a Predictor of Maternal Weight Gain and Neonatal Birth Weight. This pilot work will lay the foundation for significant future work.

The Health Sciences South Carolina (HSSC) has received money from the Duke Endowment to fund studies up to $120,000 that will benefit citizens of the state. The following four College of Nursing faculty members submitted proposals for funding and we wish them all the best in their reviews.

**Dr. Teresa Kelechi** (PI) to the South Carolina Nutrition Consortium – Cryotherapy and Physical Activity Intervention for Reducing Complications and Cost of Cellulitis Care in Obese and Non-Obese Patients.

**Dr. Lynne Nemeth** (PI) for the HSSC Nursing Research Consortium – Pressure Ulcers in the Acute Hospital Setting: Improving Prevention and Patient Management.

**Dr. Carolyn Jenkins** (Co-I) to the Center for Clinical Effectiveness and Patient Safety – Project on Implementing Insulin Protocols in the South Carolina Healthcare Systems.

REMINDER: The Center for Community Health Partnerships (CCHP) is seeking RFAs for research pilot studies. Funding information for a senior and junior-level faculty team for up to $30,000 for one-year can be found at the following site: http://jonathan.con.musc.edu/amellaej in the folder “CON Center info” with the link either to the Word file or PDF named “RFA 030707.” This proposal is due May 31 to Cheryl Brown. For more information, call Cheryl at 792-4620.

Congratulations to **Dr. Sheila Smith** who received funding as a Co-Investigator with Dr. William Goodnight from the GCRC for their study, Resting Metabolic Rate during

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**Office of RESEARCH & EVALUATION**

**Dr. Gail Stuart** (PI) for the HSSC Nursing Research Consortium – Using Technology for Educational Innovation.
The revised 2007 summer course listing is now posted on the Web reflecting classroom assignments.

Please note that due to current construction and repairs on the third floor of the Basic Science building, course NURSU 387 (Duffy) has been assigned to a different classroom on June 15. Also, for courses NURSU 341 (DeToma) and 417 (Smith), the first day of class has been assigned to a different classroom.

If you need any help, please contact Erika Jenkins at 792-3815 or jenkinse@musc.edu.

The College of Nursing Convocation is a special occasion for nursing students completing their BSN, MSN, and PhD degrees. BSN students will receive a pin, while MSN and PhD students will be hooded.

CONVOCATION

Rehearsal for Convocation will be Wednesday, May 16 at 3:30 p.m. at St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church, located at 405 King St. Typically, rehearsal is one hour.

Convocation will be Thursday, May 17 at 3 p.m. at St. Matthew’s Lutheran Church. The ceremony will run about 1 ½ hours. Each student is allowed to invite four guests. No tickets are required. Students should wear their gown and hood – no caps for Convocation.

GRADUATION

Graduation will be held Friday, May 18 at 9 a.m. at the MUSC Horseshoe. College of Nursing students should plan to arrive at the Institute of Psychiatry Auditorium lobby by 7:30 a.m. to line-up for the procession. The ceremony is usually 2 ½ hours long. There is no limit on the number of guests and no tickets are required. Students should wear their gown, hood, and cap.

For information regarding Graduation announcement distribution, diploma distribution, special information for candidates’ guests, and seating, please go to www.musc.edu/academics/grad/index.html.
Moms Morning Out Update
Throughout the month of February, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner students (Meredith O’Atkinson, Rebecca E. Cummings, Meredith D’Agostino, Laurie Hipwell, and Erin Wilson) taught health promotion topics related to safety, oral health, nutrition, sleep, speech and language development to the Moms Morning Out Program at Midland Park.

In addition, the children’s development in the Mom’s Morning Out Program was assessed using the Brigance Developmental Screen, Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test and Expressive Vocabulary Test.

A special thanks to Carrie Mylott for her work on the evaluation of the Moms Morning Out program with Deborah Williamson, DHA and Dianna Inman. Mylott is taking a masters research course (NURSUM 786) with Teresa Kelechi, PhD.

Prom Prep
Undergraduate students in the Professional Issues course (NURSU 385) worked with Community in Schools on Prom Prep Saturday that was held for Junior and Senior girls attending Johns Island High School.

The girls had the opportunity to select a free prom dress from over 50 beautiful gowns. In addition to searching for the perfect dress, the girls got a lesson on the dangers of excessive alcohol consumption. Participants were able to experience the effect of drinking too much by wearing special goggles that showed the participants how their vision is impaired when too much alcohol is consumed.

Wound Care Program
The Wound Care course that was held February 17 - March 10 had eight RN participants from Maine, Florida, Maryland, Louisiana, Ohio and South Carolina.

Four additional RNs, from South Carolina and Virginia, participated in the Debridement Workshop that took place on February 24.

Two on-site wound courses have been planned for Fall 2007. One will be held August 11 - September 1 and the other October 13 - November 3.

The accreditation site visit by the Wound Ostomy Continence Nurses (WOCN) Society is scheduled for August 24 for its five-year accreditation review. Work is already underway to prepare the Self-Study course for this site visit.

Spanish Health Initiative
Jason Roberson will be teaching the AHEC “Fundamentals of Medical Interpreting” course April 27 - 28 at Beaufort Memorial Hospital and June 8 - 9 at MUSC.

Christmas toys were received from the U.S. Marines for the Moms Morning Out Program in December 2006.
The Health 1st website has been under construction and is almost finished! There you will find a list of upcoming events, as well as tips and additional resources on leading a healthy lifestyle.

WORKSITE SCREENING - April 19 | 7 a.m. - 12 p.m.
Subscribers of the State Health Plan (Standard and Savings Plans), BlueChoice/Companion, Cigna, and MUSC Options will have the opportunity to receive a preventive health screening for only $15. Employees without insurance can participate for a fee of $38. The screening includes height, weight, blood pressure, and blood draw for blood chemistry profile, hemogram, and blood lipid profile. For more information go to www.musc.edu/medcenter/health1st. To schedule an appointment, call Carol Whelan at 792-2651.

WELLNESS WEDNESDAYS - (held in the Children’s Hospital Lobby)
April 4 - Weight Management Center - Presented by Josh Brown & Tonya Shipman (Weight Management Center)
April 11 - Colon Cancer Awareness - Presented by Peggy Leveen & Lucretia Wilson (Digestive Disease Center)
April 18 - Kilowatt Hours - Presented by Annie Lovering (Health 1st, College of Nursing)
April 25 - Sports Safety - Presented by Annie Cruzan (Harper Wellness Center)

CLASSES
Register for the following classes by visiting www.musc.edu/medcenter/health1st or by contacting Health 1st at health1st@musc.edu or 792-1245.

• Our Way of Life Has Become Hazardous to Our Health - April 26 | 12 - 1 p.m. | Education Ctr./Library Bldg. (Rm. 109)
Resolve to make a positive change in your life and take part in this FREE one-hour workshop. Learn about lifestyle choices to enhance your health by becoming more physically active and losing weight.

• Diabetes - Do you or someone you love have Diabetes? There will be free classes about Diabetes and Diabetes Care. These two (2) four-hour classes will be held on Saturdays once we have received adequate interest.

• Wise Woman - Reach 2010 is collaborating with Health 1st by considering MUSC as one of their “communities” by offering WISEWOMAN classes & counseling sessions to our employees. Women are taught about healthy eating and being more active, two behaviors that will help protect woman from chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes. The first series of eight classes started in March and will continue weekly until May 18th.

THANK YOU
A BIG thank you to Beka Hardin and Atyia Sapp from the College of Health Professions’ MHA program for assisting in the development of the Health 1st website, walking trails brochure, Health 1st brochure, an employee survey, and many other tasks. Also, thanks to Abby Painter, CON graduate student, who has been working with the IRB study of the “Effectiveness of the Health 1st Wellness Teams” in conjunction with her clinical requirements for NURSM 786 (Kelechi), as well as, Rhoda Ascanio, CON MSN student, who contributed to a recent Health 1st grant.
FACULTY NEWS

Kudos to our **Adult Nurse Practitioner, Family Nurse Practitioner** and **Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner program faculty**. Their graduates have achieved a 100 percent pass rate on the ANCC certification exam!

Congratulations to **Nancy Duffy** who will represent the College of Nursing as Nurse of the Year for the Charleston Organization of Nurse Leaders. A reception will be held April 24 at the Thomas Bennett House at 6 p.m. to honor local recipients of the RN and LPN of Year Awards.

**GiGi Smith** has been very productive of late...

PUBLICATION:


POSTER PRESENTIONS:


PRESENTATION:


**Gail Stuart** has been appointed to the Advisory Board of *Nursing Spectrum*.

STAFF NEWS

**Cheryl Brown**, a student at Kaplan University and CON staffer, made the Dean’s List for the Fall ’06 semester. Way to go, Cheryl!

ALUMNI NEWS

**Heather Meador**, 2006 graduate of the College in the PNP program, was awarded the Pediatric Nursing Certification Board 2006 Outstanding Performance Award for superior (highest) score on the PNP certification exam.

This award was given to her in March at the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners’ Annual Meeting in Orlando, FL. Meador currently works as a PNP at Summerville Pediatrics with Dr. Mark McCall. Congratulations, Heather!

**Dr. Marian Larisey** and **Dr. Jeanette Hartshorn** were the recipients of the 2007 Outstanding Alumnus Award. The awards were presented by the College of Nursing Alumni Board at the March 3rd Homecoming event.
Quarles Chosen for Earl B. Higgins Diversity Scholarship

The Medical University of South Carolina College of Nursing has selected Kristie Quarles to receive the Earl B. Higgins Diversity Scholarship. This presentation will be made on April 4 at the Wickliffe House.

Quarles is a first semester student enrolled in the College of Nursing Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program. She has a previous degree from the College of Charleston with a major in Biology.

Quarles has worked with Dr. Gilkeson and Dr. Kamen at the MUSC Rheumatology Department studying the prevalence of systematic lupus erythematosus in the Gullah culture of South Carolina. During the summer of 2005, she made a presentation at the South Carolina Alliance for Minority participation on the topic of systematic lupus erythematosus and low birth weight. She also received the outstanding intern award. She wrote in her essay for admission to the College of Nursing, “Working alongside renowned rheumatologists and study coordinators enables me to understand the medical profession, but also the vast racial disparities in our healthcare system. Once I became aware of the vast disparities, I realized I was involved in this research to fulfill a greater purpose: to serve my community as a healthcare professional.”

Quarles has also volunteered at the MUSC Children's Hospital in the pediatric cardiac intensive care unit. Her perceptions of the nursing role and her commitment to provide patient care were developed during this experience. She writes, “The nurses unavoidably became part of the patients’ support system. They were not asked to play this role, but it was a call to duty. Nursing embodies humility and heroism.”

Quarles is highly motivated and persevering. According to Dr. Kamen, “She has a meritorious work ethic and is clearly devoted to a career in health care.

Quarles plans to become a nurse practitioner and perhaps teach.

“Nursing encompasses an art, a humanistic orientation, a feeling for the value of the individual, and an intuitive sense of ethics, and of the appropriateness of action taken.”

- Myrtle Aydelotte, 1992
Joan K. Austin, D.N.S., RN, FAAN, is a Distinguished Professor of Nursing at the Indiana University School of Nursing in Indianapolis. Dr. Austin has been a faculty member in the School of Nursing since 1981 and holds adjunct appointments in the Department of Psychiatry, Indiana University School of Medicine, and in the Department of Psychology, Purdue University School of Science. In addition, Dr. Austin is the principal investigator for the Center for Enhancing Quality of Life in Chronic Illness that is funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research and based in the nursing research center at Indiana University School of Nursing.

She is a member of the Institute of Medicine and a member of the Professional Advisory Board of the Epilepsy Foundation and the Research Commission of the International Bureau for Epilepsy. In 2005, she served as President of the American Epilepsy Society and was the first nurse to serve in this position.

Dr. Austin's program of research focuses on mental health problems in children with chronic illness and their families. She has been funded by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke to study child adaptation to epilepsy since 1986. Her current research focuses on behavioral problems in children with first-recognized seizures. In addition, she is the principal investigator of a study funded by the National Institute of Nursing Research that investigates mental health and academic achievement outcomes in adolescents with chronic epilepsy.

For more information, contact the Office of Research & Evaluation at (843) 792-4620.