



# FutureThink News

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## Reaching for the Future

More than 50 high school students along with parents, siblings and guests attended the Medical Explorers Program at Southern Ohio Regional Medical Center to learn about the surgical side of the medical field. To give students a glimpse of a career in health care, students saw a simulation of a laparoscopic surgery conducted by a surgeon and experimented with the surgical equipment, toured the surgical suites, sterile processing and an operating room and spoke with representatives of Muskingum College and Ohio University's College of Osteopathic Medicine to learn about pursuing medical courses and degrees. Medical Explorers is a program chartered by the medical center and the Boy Scouts of America for area high school students, and participants meet at the hospital during the school year to learn about medical careers.

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## Nursing One of the Largest, Highest Paid Occupations

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that nursing is one of the largest and best paying occupations in the nation. Nearly six in 10 registered nurses worked in general medical and surgical hospitals, where their wages averaged \$29.31 per hour or \$60,970 per year. Registered nurses represented the largest share of hospital employees 2006 at 28.1 percent, and nursing aides, orderlies and attendants ranked second at 7.8 percent.

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## Faculty Shortages Threaten Education of Health Care Professionals

Growing faculty shortages are forcing academic health centers to limit enrollment in programs that prepare nurses and other health professionals, according to a report by the Association of Academic Health Centers. Nine of 10 CEOs at academic health centers surveyed by the association thought faculty shortages were a problem in at least one health professions school at their institutions. The report cited several factors as causes for the widespread shortages, including low level of interest in academic careers among those entering health professions; heavy faculty workloads; and sharp disparities in salaries between academics and practice. Shortages in nursing faculty were rated most severe. (AHA NewsNow 7/9/2007)

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## Principles Strengthen Relationships Among Nurses and Support Services

The American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE) and ARAMARK Healthcare released guiding principles to support hospital nurse executives in building stronger relationships with those in support functions, such as housekeeping, facilities, food and clinical technology services. Under the guidance of the two organizations, 50 nurse executives from across the U.S., Canada and Ireland gathered to provide input on what a collaborative partnership between nursing and support services will look in the hospital of the future. The resulting *Guiding Principles for Relationships among Nursing and Support Services in the Clinical Setting* complements several other AONE guiding principles and provides an additional definition of patient care delivery and hospital work environment needs of the future. The principles can be viewed at <http://www.aone.org/aone/pdf/PrinciplesandElementsHealthfulWorkPractice.pdf> (AONE eNews Update 4/13/2007)

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## **Bill Supports Nurses for Rural Areas**

U.S. Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) and Gordon Smith (R-OR) introduced legislation in June that would provide grants and programs to help train, recruit and retain nurses in rural areas. The Nursing Education and Quality of Health Care Act also would create demonstration projects that integrate patient safety practices into nursing education programs. Sen. Clinton said “that one of the greatest needs for nurses will be in rural areas where the pool of nurses is small and the loss of just one nurse from the workforce can have a profound impact on the health of the community.” The American Organization of Nurse Executives endorsed the bill in a letter. This act is in alignment with FutureThink’s Strategic objective about developing a core curriculum for educating health care workers for the future. (Information provided in part by AHA NewsNow 6/13/2007)

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## **VA to Establish Nursing Academy**

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will partner with 12 nursing schools over the next three years to establish a nursing academy to address a shortage of nurses in the VA system and nation. The \$40 million pilot project will expand teaching faculty, improve recruitment and retention, and create new educational and research opportunities. The academy was recommended by the VA’s CARES Commission. The VA’s CARES Commission examines ways to better allocate agency resources to meet future demand for veteran’s health care services. (AHA News Now 6/4/2007)

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## **Wal-Mart to Open 400 Health Clinics**

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. plans to open health clinics in as many as 400 U.S. stores in the next three years by leasing space to local hospitals or other medical providers. The numbers could reach as high as 2,000 in five to seven years. The stores started testing clinics in September 2005 and currently operate 76 in 12 states. The clinics will be staffed by nurse practitioners or doctors and offer preventive and routine care such as allergy treatments and physicals, typically costing \$40 to \$65. Drugstore chains CVS Corp. and Walgreen Co. also have opened clinics to attract customers who don’t want to make a doctor’s appointment or who don’t have medical insurance. Although not well accepted by the medical community, these quick care clinics offer another opportunity for access to care and maximizing the contributions of different caregivers.

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## **One Third of Doctors over 50 Would Retire if Possible**

One in three doctors over 50 would retire today if he or she could afford to do so. The older physicians cited increased regulation of medicine as the key factor influencing their retirement plans. Surveys conducted by the Association of American Medical Colleges and American Medical Association found that one in three doctors under 50 would not choose to work longer hours for more money. Seven in 10 young doctors identified family and personal time as important factors in a desirable practice. (AHA NewsNow 5/9/2007)

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## **Federal Bill Supports Employee Wellness Programs**

U.S. Sens. Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Gordon Smith (R-OR) introduced the healthy Workforce Act, AHA-supported legislation that would provide tax incentives to businesses that offer comprehensive wellness programs. Businesses spend billions of dollars on employee health care, yet thousands of employees suffer unnecessarily from common conditions. The legislation joins employers, health providers and employees together to fight chronic diseases and foster healthier lifestyles. Many employers have programs in place that actively promote wellness. Acknowledging the hard work done and encouraging additional employers to join the effort can create a network of support and resources that helps even more working Americans exercise regularly, eat healthier and access preventive test and screening. Providing opportunities for individuals to be informed, motivated and personally accountable to actively participate in maintaining a healthy lifestyle has the potential to change the demand for health care workers. (Information provided in part by AHA NewsNow 7/9/2007)

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## Chicago Nurses Saluted by Oprah

Six nurses from Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago were saluted by The Oprah Winfrey Show. The nurses were nominated for recognition on the "Cheers to You" segment by grateful family members of young cancer patients. The nurses were reunited with the families on the show, and treated to a day at a spa. (AHA News Now 5/9/2007)

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## Top Hazardous Drug Precautions for Nurses

Healthy work environments are essential for attracting and retaining health care workers in the future. Below are brief recommendations to help nurses and others protect themselves from the dangers of hazardous drugs:

- Assume that anything you handle in the work environment is contaminated, including equipment, supplies, linens, and work surfaces.
  - Have pharmacists prime tubing and syringes used with hazardous drugs with non-drug solution.
  - Do not disconnect IV lines containing hazardous drugs. Dispose of IV bags and lines as a unit.
  - Use needless or closed systems.
  - Always wear appropriate PPE when administering hazardous drugs. This includes activities such as opening the outer bag, assembling the delivery system, delivering the drug to the patient and disposing of all equipment used to administer drugs.
  - Wash hands with soap and water after taking off gloves. Disinfectant alone isn't effective against hazardous drugs.
  - Take care when handling oral medication, especially when crushing, as they can be hazardous.
  - Have the proper training and retraining to learn about hazardous drugs and equipment techniques to minimize exposure. (The Nursing Spectrum)
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*The FutureThink Institute is an initiative of the Ohio Hospital Association, working toward creating long-term solutions for Ohio's health care system. The FutureThink Institute takes a multidimensional approach to designing better ways to deliver care and changing the demand for health care professionals in order to achieve better results for our communities. Learn more about the FutureThink Institute and view the FutureThink News archives at [www.futurethink.org](http://www.futurethink.org).*

**Editor's note:** Please share news or comments with Jean Scholz, [jeans@ohanet.org](mailto:jeans@ohanet.org), or call 614.221.7614. To be removed from this mailing list, please reply to this e-mail with "Unsubscribe" in the subject line.

### **FutureThink Vision**

*The state of Ohio recognizes health is more than the absence of illness. All Ohioans have access to care, which assists them in achieving their optimal being. Ohioans are informed, motivated and personally accountable to actively participate in maintaining a health lifestyle, just as health care providers are accountable to Ohioans. The health care workforce is inspired and educated to be part of a care delivery model that promotes collaborations, respects the contributions of different caregivers and utilizes integrative technology. This model attracts bright, diverse and talented individuals to serve our population.*