

Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner Care

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Official Newsletter of ARNPs United

April, 1999

ARNP Care Free No More

by Bob Smithing

For the past 10 years *ARNP Care* has been a publication sent to all ARNPs in Washington State as a means of enhancing communications among all ARNPs across specialty lines and organizational boundaries. *ARNP Care* was initially published as a forum to assist in our objective of completing prescriptive authority in this state. While we have not yet achieved this goal it has served as a forum for this and many other issues over the years.

Primarily its editors Bob Smithing and Maddy Wiley under the guise of Nurse Practitioner Support Services have funded this publication. Each month approximately 2500 copies of *ARNP Care* are mailed out to ARNPs. (In 10 years of publication over 200,000 issues have been mailed out.) Unfortunately, due to increasing costs and the resultant fiscal strain, it is no longer possible to provide *ARNP Care* as a free publication. While we are deeply saddened by this turn of events we find that there is no other choice in this matter.

The only chance for the survival of *ARNP Care* is to turn it into a subscription-based newsletter and to have enough subscribers to support it. This will become effective with the June 1999 issue.

Subscriptions will be \$20.00 per year for anyone who wishes to subscribe. ARNPs United members will continue to receive the newsletter as part of their membership benefits. Electronic subscriptions will also be free. You can subscribe electronically at www.nurse.net/lists.shtml. Organizations who would like to their members to continue to receive *ARNP Care* should contact us at 253.852.9042 or care@nurse.net.

Checks should be sent to *ARNP Care*, 212 Railroad Ave N, Kent, WA 98032. It would help to include your mailing label with the check.

Prescriptive Authority

by Larry Kerschner

As of this writing there is still a very slim chance that the prescriptive authority bill may pass. The bill for those who haven't heard was a compromise that no one liked but ARNPs United, AAPPN and WSMA agreed that it was the best that could be done at this time. It will allow prescription of Class II-IV medications in collaboration with a physician. The rules as to how this will occur will be written by consensus by the Nursing Commission, the Medical Commission and the Osteopathic Commission. We will not lose any autonomy that we currently have and no ARNP will have to apply for this. This bill went through the Senate Committees and passed the Senate floor with only one negative vote. When it then got to the House Health Care Committee

it met the rock wall of Rep. Linda Evans Parlette (R-12) who is co-chair. She had apparently made up her mind early on and refused to hear the bill. With the House tied 49-49 all committees have 2 chairs and if both don't agree no hearing will be held. She has promised us a hearing next year. Since then Sen. Thibadeaux (D) and Sen. Deccio (R) have attached our bill to a bill that WSNA wants on nurse delegation. There is a slim chance this will be passed but very unlikely. Assuming it doesn't pass we must begin organizing for next January. This means we need more volunteers from each legislative district to be willing to talk to their legislators. We have had some support from ARNPs around the State but it has been very spotty. I was disappointed by the turnout for ARNP Lobby Day in Olympia. We had 23 ARNPs and one NP student (out of the well over 2000 who are licensed in this State) show up in Olympia on March 1. This sort of support will not get the job done. The Legislative Committee is also recommending to the AU Board that a Political Action Committee be started. Remember that if there was just one more Democrat in the House we would have passed our bill this year (possibly even a non-compromise bill). A PAC could start raising money now to effect the election in 2001 if we need to. If you have ideas for raising money contact your AU Board members. We made gains this year and we can reasonably hope to pass the prescriptive authority bill next year but we need your help. The School Medications Bill and the Death Certificate Bill have not passed yet but both are likely to pass unless they get caught up in the arguments in the House over the supplemental budget.

Explosions & Fires in Aluminum Oxygen Regulators

FDA & NIOSH Public Health Advisory

The Problem: Over the past 5 years, FDA has received 16 reports of aluminum regulators used with oxygen cylinders burning or exploding. These incidents caused severe burns to 11 health care workers and patients. Many of the incidents occurred during emergency medical use or during routine equipment check-out. FDA and The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) believe that the aluminum in these regulators was a major factor in both the ignition and severity of the fires, although there are likely other contributing factors. Most of the reports received by FDA were for the Model L270 series of aluminum regulators manufactured by Life Support Products Inc. and Allied Healthcare Products Inc. (Earlier models were known as "270" regulators.)

Allied Healthcare Products currently has 60% of the market share of oxygen regulators for emergency use. The manufacturer has plans to cease the distribution of all regulators containing aluminum and solely manu-

facture brass regulators. In an effort to avoid potential product shortages, Allied is instituting an interim measure wherein they will replace internal high-pressure aluminum components with brass components in all models manufactured.

Because aluminum is lighter in weight than steel, it is also used in oxygen cylinders. FDA and NIOSH believe that aluminum cylinders can be used safely with brass regulators, but that the combination of both oxygen regulators and cylinders made from aluminum poses an increased fire hazard. Contamination of the oxygen supply with particulate matter can also increase the risk of fire.

Background: Most oxygen regulators are made of brass or aluminum. Aluminum and its alloys are more likely to ignite than brass. In standard tests, aluminum can burn vigorously at pressures as low as 25 pounds per square inch (psi), while brass does not burn at pressures below 10,000 psi. Although there are rare instances of fires in brass oxygen regulators, they have a long history of safe use and are believed to be safer than aluminum oxygen regulators for use with high pressure compressed oxygen. FDA has no reports of fire or explosion with aluminum oxygen regulators used in low pressure systems (e.g., piped distribution to wall mounted supply taps at <50 psi).

Recommendations: FDA is pursuing plans to work with manufacturers to improve the safety of oxygen regulators and restrict the use of aluminum exposed to high-pressure oxygen in regulators. In the meantime, FDA and NIOSH advise that the following precautions be taken to avoid explosions and fires from oxygen regulators containing aluminum:

If you are presently using high pressure oxygen regulators which contain any aluminum exposed to high-pressure oxygen, replace them with regulators made of brass. Consult the manufacturer if you don't know what material is used in your regulators.

If non-aluminum oxygen regulators are not available, it is recommended that you follow the precautions as described in the addendum to this advisory to minimize the risk of fires until brass replacement regulators become available.

More Information: Send questions about this Public Health Advisory to the Issues Management Staff, Office of Surveillance and Biometrics, HFZ-510, 1350 Piccard Drive, Rockville, Maryland, 20850, FAX (301) 594-2968, or e-mail ssm@cdrh.fda.gov or aag@cdrh.fda.gov. You may photocopy or print this notice from the CDRH homepage at www.fda.gov/cdrh/safety.html.

Future FDA Public Health Advisories, Safety Alerts, and other FDA postmarket safety notifications can be obtained by list server subscription via e-mail. To subscribe, send an e-mail request to fdalists@www.fda.gov. In the text of the message, type: `subscribe dev-alert`.

President's Corner

by Hazel Fleck

As I write this on April 1st, I still do not know the final outcome of our bill. I remain hopeful. Whatever happens, we have progressed much farther this year than ever before and now we know it can and will happen. We must keep working and move forward.

New Labeling For Natural Rubber Latex

by Vesna J. Tomazic-Jezic, Ph.D.

Surgical and examination natural rubber latex (NRL) gloves that contain reduced levels of residual chemical additives have been on the market for several years. These gloves, labeled "hypoallergenic," are less likely to cause contact dermatitis in frequent users. However, because of the high prevalence of allergy to NRL proteins (not just chemical additives), this label became misleading and frequently misinterpreted. Because the label "hypoallergenic" pertained only to the glove's chemical content, gloves with this label are capable of causing serious reactions in individuals allergic to NRL proteins. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA), therefore, issued a regulation prohibiting the label "hypoallergenic." The regulation was issued in September of 1997 and went into effect on September 30, 1998 (21 Code of Federal Regulations 801.437).

To assure that glove users would still be protected from chemical sensitization, FDA developed new guidance for manufacturers. The guidance gives recommendations for labeling gloves containing reduced levels of sensitizing chemicals. It also describes the type of testing and data needed to support the claims. The newly issued guidance, entitled *Premarket Notification [510(k)] Submission for Testing for Skin Sensitization To Chemicals In Natural Rubber Products*, offers two claims that would indicate various levels of safety to glove users. (See below for Internet address.)

The first claim, identified as "Low Dermatitis Potential," is for gloves tested by manufacturers and proved less likely to sensitize users. The guidance contains a detailed description of the testing recommended to manufacturers to support this particular claim.

In the same document, FDA also identifies a second claim for "Low Thiuram, and/or Carbamate, and/or Thiazole." This claim is for gloves tested by manufacturers and proved not to cause skin reaction in users already sensitized to these chemicals. This claim must be supported with additional testing pertaining to each of the specific chemicals. Gloves with this claim are suitable for use by individuals who are already sensitized to the particular chemical(s) specifically identified in the label.

With continued glove use, users with chemical sensitivity usually develop severe and persisting skin lesions. Because of the increased need for proper protection from blood-borne pathogens (such as AIDS and hepatitis), lesions can threaten the user's career. Users

are frequently forced to completely avoid the use of NRL gloves. Availability of gloves with one of these two claims will be of great benefit, both for preventing sensitization of frequent users and for allowing those who are already sensitized to safely continue their professional activities.

A complete text of the guidance document is available from the FDA home page: <http://www.fda.gov/cdrh/ode/944.pdf> or from the CDRH Facts-on-Demand system at 800.899.0381 or 301.837.0111. Specify number 944 when prompted for the document shelf number.

Vesna J. Tomazic-Jezic, Ph.D., is an immunologist in CDRH's Office of Science and Technology. From the "User Facility Reporting" newsletter Fall/Winter 1998, Issue 25.

Classified Ads

Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner

Psychiatric NP for immediate opening at Sammamish Valley Psychological Services, PS, an established multidisciplinary behavioral health clinic with offices in Redmond and Woodinville. Needs broad clinical skills in assessment, medication and psychotherapy. Independent prescribing experience required. Must work well with managed care. Clinic provides referrals, MCO contracts, billing, office staff, furnished office, voice mail/pager. Call Gregg Schimmel, PhD at 425-883-2623 ext 23. Fax vita 425-883-6241.

Neurosurgical Acute Care Nurse Practitioner

University of Washington Department of Neurological Surgery, a leading academic neurosurgical program located in Seattle, offers a unique practice opportunity for an Acute/Critical Care Nurse Practitioner to join our inpatient team managing neurosurgical and neuro-trauma patients at Harborview Medical Center, Washington's only Level I trauma center. Successful candidates should have recent inpatient critical/acute care experience, prefer neurosurgical/neurology background, ACLS certification, ANCC NP certification (new grad considered), exceptional communication and team skills and an ability to function autonomously in a high pressure, busy inpatient environment. For information contact: Michael S Fruin, RN, MN, ARNP at 206-521-1290, mfruin@u.washington.edu. Fax vitae to 206-521-1890.

Nurse Practitioner

Desire full or part time Nurse Practitioner to rent space in small Naturopathic Family Practice. Applicant to provide own client base with some cross-referrals from ND office for OB/Gyn exams and vacation relief prn. Prefer holistic medicine orientation. Further questions, contact Dr Herbert I Schuck, ND, phone: 206-248-0061, fax: 206-248-0164, e-mail: drherb@holisticdoc.com.

Midwifery Clinic Manager

Nestled between the Puget Sound and the mountains, Providence Midwifery Care is seeking a full time manager/midwife to replace departing manager. Position consists of 50% time spent doing full-scope midwifery, the remainder managing a well-established, Medical Center - based practice. Responsibilities include managing budget, updating clinical practice guidelines, guiding CQI process, acting as liaison with physicians, serving on various Medical Center committees. The Medical Center is beginning a major remodel/expansion to Level III (completion 1/2002) and this manager will be involved in the planning process. Qualifications include Bachelor degree in Nursing with advanced degree in nurse-midwifery or related health care field preferred, and progressively responsible management experience in all aspects of obstetrics services. Successful candidate must be WA licensed RN, CNM, ARNP with prescriptive authority and Neonatal Resuscitation. We are a highly respected Regional Medical Center offering the world-renowned Saunders Regional Heart Center, the states' second-largest Birthing and Level III Trauma Centers, and highly advanced cancer, surgical, orthopedic, sub-acute care and outpatient services. Recent recipient of the 1998 Washington's Outstanding Emergency Department award and the winner of the prestigious Mercury award as a

Top-Ranked Hospital in the greater Seattle area. We offer competitive benefits and wages, fitness center and Wellness Program. PHSE chooses to hire non-tobacco users only. You may apply in person or contact: Providence Health System, Everett, 1321 Colby Avenue, Everett WA 98206, phone: 206-261-4460 or 800-932-5627, E-mail: nwsajobs@providence.org. Equal Opportunity Employer.

Continuing Education

Clinical Pharmacology Series 1999

April 14, 1999 Geriatric Drug Therapy

May 4, 1999 Adult Drug Therapy

May 18, 1999 Women's Health Drug Therapy

June 11, 1999 Neuropsychotropic Drug Therapy

Location: Shoreline Conference Center, Seattle, Washington. This series of one-day courses (8 contact hours each session) is designed as a pharmacology update for nurse practitioners working in a variety of specialties. Sessions focus on current recommendations and controversies regarding drug therapy for common problems and include appropriate pharmacotherapeutic principles and recommendations for patient education. Sponsored by: University of Washington School of Nursing. Contact: Continuing Nursing Education, University of Washington, Box 357260, Seattle, WA 98195-7260, phone: 206-543-1047, www.son.washington.edu/~cne/.

For ARNPs: How to Get Paid, Not Get Sued and Maintain Quality

May 14, 1999, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm. Location: Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, Washington. Join Carolyn Buppert, Nurse Practitioner and Attorney, for her workshop focusing on payment and quality issues for health care. Topics will include CPT coding for a follow-up office visit; documentation tips to help get paid and avoid fraud charges; avoiding malpractice litigation; use of outcome studies to improve quality; HEDIS overview including measures applicable to primary care providers and how auditors measure performance; and incorporating quality measures in to your employment contract. For information contact PLU CNE 253-535-7683 or visit our web site <http://www.plu.edu/~ccnl/courses/forarnps.html>.

Hot Topics in Primary Care:

New Approaches to Allergic Rhinitis, Asthma, Diabetes and Hepatitis B & C

May 16-18, 1999. Location: Eldorado Hotel, Santa Fe, New Mexico. This three day course sponsored by the University of Washington School of Medicine and School of Pharmacy, will cover current topics in the recognition, treatment and outcomes of allergic rhinitis, asthma, diabetes and hepatitis B & C. Experts will present on evidence-based approaches to the treatment of common clinical problems encountered in primary care practice. Fee: \$125. For further information, contact Penny Evans at 206-616-4587 or e-mail: pennye@u.washington.edu.

Pacific Northwest 22nd Annual Conference for Primary Care Practitioners

September 22-25, 1999. Location: Washington State Convention and Trade Center, Seattle, Washington. Sponsors include University of Washington School of Nursing, Planned Parenthood of Western Washington and Western Washington Area Health Education Center. Endorsed by ARNPs United and Washington Academy of Physician Assistants. CE hours: 7.2 to 23.2 contact hours (maximum of 12.0 contact hours in Pharmacology). Application has been made for Category I CEC for Pas. For more information, contact: Continuing Nursing Education, University of Washington, Box 357260, Seattle, WA 98195-7260, phone: 206-543-1047, web site: www.son.washington.edu/~cne/.

Adolescent Reproductive Health '99

September 22-23, 1999. Location: Hotel Adolphus, Dallas, Texas. The Association of Reproductive Health Professionals' (ARHP) will sponsor its fourth clinical conference focusing specifically on the health care needs of teens, Adolescent Reproductive Health '99, September 22-23, 1999, in Dallas, Texas, at Hotel Adolphus. Sessions will focus on adolescent health care challenges, adolescent sexuality and other critical health care issues affecting teens. ARHP is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to sponsor continuing medical education for physicians. The credit hours earned will be in Category One of the Physician's Recognition Award of the American Medical Association. All sessions are also approved by

ACNM and CNM for accreditation. For more information/registration contact: Amy Swann, Conference Coordinator, ARHP, 2401 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Suite 350, Washington DC, 20037-1718, E-mail: conferences@arhp.org, phone: 202-466-3825, fax: 202-466-3826.

**ARHP's 36th Annual Meeting
Reproductive Health '99**

September 23-25, 1999. Location: Hotel Adolphus, Dallas, Texas. The Association of Reproductive Health Professionals' (ARHP) will host its 36th annual meeting, Reproductive Health '99. This meeting is cosponsored by the National Association of Nurse Practitioners in Reproductive Health (NANPRH). Sessions will focus on contraception, abortion, STDs and other issues related to reproductive health. ARHP is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to sponsor continuing medical education for physicians. The credit hours earned will be in Category One of the Physician's Recognition Award of the American Medical Association. All sessions are also approved by ACNM and CNM for accreditation. For more information/registration contact: Amy Swann, Conference Coordinator, ARHP, 2401 Pennsylvania Ave NW, Suite 350, Washington DC, 20037-1718, E-mail: conferences@arhp.org, phone: 202-466-3825, fax: 202-466-3826.

Meeting Announcements

Puget Sound Nurse Practitioners will meet on Wednesday, April 21st at Umberto's Ristorante, 100 S King St, Seattle, WA. Molly Linton, N.D. will speak on Complementary Medicine. Hors d'oeuvres at 6 PM, dinner at 7, speaker to follow. To attend, please RSVP to Suzanne Green at 206.284.3802.

ARNP Care

212 Railroad Ave N, Kent, WA 98032
253.852.9042 Fax 253.480.0002
Email: care@nurse.net
http://www.nurse.org/wa/arnpcare

Editors:

Robert T. Smithing, MSN, ARNP
Madeline D. Wiley, MSN, ARNP

Contributing Editor:

Hazel Fleck, ARNP

Production Staff:

Kelly Libby, Debby Morrow & Donna Mullin

Publisher:

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