

HEALTH POLICY HIGHLIGHTS

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GW SPHHS
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH POLICY

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To submit items of interest, e-mail Rick Mauery at rmauery@gwu.edu before the end of the month.

Thank you to MPH student Arista Salimi Maher, DHP Professor Rick Mauery, and DHP Public Affairs Liaison Lee Repasch for their assistance in producing this newsletter.

"RICHARD AND JANET SOUTHBY LECTURESHIP IN COMPARATIVE HEALTH POLICY" ESTABLISHED IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH POLICY



Richard and Janet Southby have made a generous gift to the Department of Health Policy to establish an annual Lectureship in Comparative Health Policy. Each

year, beginning in 2008, the "Richard and Janet Southby Lectureship in Comparative Health Policy" will focus on a critical issue in US health policy and assess the experiences of other nations with such issues and the lessons that can be learned from these experiences. The lecture will be held in April and will be open to faculty, staff and students of the SPHHS, as well as the general public. The gift is intended to commemorate Dr. Southby's work in health policy at GW, as well as his leadership role in founding the Department of Health Policy in 2002.

Dean Southby, PhD, FCHSE, is currently a GW Distinguished Professor Emeritus in the Department of Global Health. Dean Southby's career, with its accomplishments in the areas of global health, social and preventive medicine, and public health, is closely linked to the development and growth of the School of Public Health and Health Services.

He served for 16 years as chair of GW's Department of Health Services Management and Policy, which became part of SPHHS when it was founded in 1997. At that time, Dean Southby was appointed Associate Dean for Health Services, and then Interim Dean at the School, until being appointed to his current position as Executive Dean at the Medical Center. He also holds the title of The Royal Society of Medicine Sub-Dean at GW. As well, he is adjunct professor of preventive medicine and biometrics at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, and an honorary professor at Monash University in Australia.

All of us in the DHP are grateful for Dr. and Mrs. Southby's gift that further enhances our commitment to academic excellence.

A MESSAGE FROM DHP CHAIR, SARA ROSENBAUM, JD



Happy Spring semester everyone! In addition to wonderful courses, We have terrific activities planned: Sharon Baskerville for a special Life in Health Policy focusing on health policy in Washington D.C. (Jan 31st at 6 pm); Phil Lee, one of the leading figures in health policy over the past 50 years, delivering the George Silver Lecture as part of the Pfizer Grand Rounds series (February 19th, Hospital Auditorium at noon); and Life in Health Policy with Diane Rowland, Executive Director of the Kaiser Family Foundation (March 6th at 6 pm). I hope to see you at one or more of these events, and please feel free to come for a visit!

Dept. of Health Policy Professional Mentoring Program

All current SPHHS Health Policy Students and SPPPA students with a concentration in Health Policy are invited to join our Professional Mentoring Program. This program is intended to match health policy students with professionals in the field to provide career advice, networking opportunities, research ideas, and more.

Program Goals

- To provide an opportunity for students to learn from "professional advisors" who are currently working in the health policy field;
- To create a relationship with a mentor who can assist you in making choices about research projects, pro bono opportunities, career paths, future schooling, etc. during and after your time at GW;
- To establish a network of mentors who may be available for formal roles as special projects preceptors and thesis or dissertation advisors;
- To strengthen the ties between students, mentors, and the Health Policy program.

If you are interested in learning more about the program, please review the Mentor and Student guidelines available at:

<http://www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/healthpolicy/>

Welcome New DHP Students in Spring 2008!



The DHP is pleased to welcome several new students who are beginning their studies in Spring of 2008! Orientation was held on January 10th. We have always been proud of the high caliber of students admitted to our program, and this group is no exception. We wish them all the best in their studies.

Editor's Note



Where, you may be asking, was the December 2007 issue of *Health Policy Highlights*? Truth be told, your erstwhile scribe and publisher was felled by a nasty rhinovirus during production week. All is better and he has learned *Public Health 101* when it comes to colds and flu season:

Wash Your Hands!!



HEALTH AND MEDICAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

**Social Marketing Intern
Metro TeenAIDS
Washington, DC
1/14/08 to 4/25/08**

Seeking a student to actively partner with the Metro TeenAIDS social marketing campaign, which is designed to provide information and encourage testing for youth in Washington DC. Metro TeenAIDS seeks a commitment of ten hours a week. This is an unpaid position, but the experience and knowledge that you will gain is invaluable. Tasks include:

- ◆ Regularly update news and events sections of Metro TeenAIDS' website.
- ◆ Manage creation and production of youth resource guide
- ◆ Attend community events relevant to blogging and online communications.
- ◆ Coordinate community partner meetings, as needed
- ◆ Manage database and relevant information.

Contact: M'Bwende Anderson;
manderson@metroteenaids.org;
www.metroteenaids.org.

Collect Canned Goods for People In Need of Nutritious Meals Food & Friends Washington, DC

Does your office, school, faith-based organization, or social club (and any other type of gathering) have a desire to help those in need, but the members don't necessarily have the time to commit volunteering? If so, consider collecting canned goods on an ongoing basis to be donated to the Food & Friends grocery pantry. Your canned goods will be turned into the weekly delivery of nutritious groceries that are given to individuals living with HIV/AIDS, cancer and other life-challenging illnesses. When you're battling an illness of this kind, a chore like going to the grocery store to buy the right foods can sometimes be an impossibility. We can provide a list of recommended canned good donations that we prefer to give our clients. No other training is required. Anyone may volunteer for this opportunity. Contact Jennifer Burnett, (202) 269-2277. www.foodandfriends.org.

For a comprehensive listing of a diverse array of volunteer opportunities in the Metro DC area, please visit:
www.volunteermatch.org

HEALTH POLICY IN THE NEWS

U.S. Has Highest Rate of Preventable Deaths Among Industrialized Nations

The U.S. has the highest rate of preventable deaths among 19 industrialized nations, and although the U.S. rate has declined over the past five years, it is doing so at a slower rate than other countries, according to a London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine analysis published on Thursday in the journal *Health Affairs*. The study examined preventable deaths in people younger than age 75 caused by 30 conditions that could have been treated with medical or surgical interventions, including tuberculosis, thyroid disease, appendicitis, tetanus infections, abdominal hernia, colon cancer, measles and epilepsy.

The analysis also included deaths in people younger than age 50 caused by leukemia, cervical cancer and diabetes. The report focused on people whose lives would have been extended with widely available medical treatment. According to the study, if the rate

of preventable deaths in the U.S. improved to the average of the top three countries -- France, Japan and Australia -- 101,000 fewer U.S. residents would die annually. In 1997-1998, the U.S. rate of preventable deaths was 15th of the 19 countries, with 115 preventable deaths per 100,000 people, compared with 110 deaths per 100,000 people five years later, a 4.4% improvement.

The largest improvements were seen in Ireland, the U.K. and Austria, all of which have reduced smoking, improved diets and increased access to care. Ireland also has improved access to some heart disease treatments, such as bypass surgery and anti-clotting drugs, study co-author Ellen Nolte said. The other countries included in the study were Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden. Of the countries examined, the U.S. is the only one without universal health care coverage.

Source: Kaiser Daily Health Report, 01/09/08

There has been an increase in the past couple of years in the number of people in the U.S. who don't have access to insurance coverage. People who don't have insurance tend to forgo, postpone or delay health care when they need it. It also leads to presentation at a later stage when less can be done.

Ellen Nolte, PhD

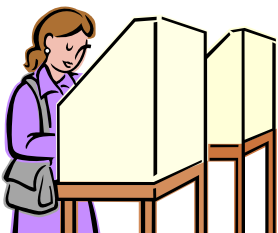
London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

Even if the death rate is overestimated in this study by 50%, our country is still high relative to the amount we spend on health care. Some other countries are homogeneous in ethnic composition and income because they are more socialized in their tax structure and their middle class is bigger than our middle class. The U.S. is a diverse animal, and that plays out in many social dimensions.

Catherine Hoffman

Kaiser Family Foundation

ELECTION 2008—HOW WILL HEALTH POLICY FARE?



Now that the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary are behind us, the presidential election is in full swing. Republican and Democratic Party candidates

have all issued policy statements and endorsed ideas aimed at improving the U.S. health care system. To help sort out the differences and similarities in the candidates' positions, the Kaiser Family Foundation provides a website with up-to-date polling, analyses, facts, news, video, and interviews from Kaiser and a broad range of sources.

HEALTH08.ORG, A HUB FOR INFORMATION ABOUT HEALTH CARE AND THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

The new health08.org website is free of charge and does not include advertising. It serves as a hub of information about health and the election, including original content produced by Kaiser and easy access to health-related resources from the campaigns, other organizations, and news outlets. Elements of the site include:

- ◆ Analysis of health policy issues, summaries of health reform proposals, and basic facts

and information about the health system from Kaiser's research staff.

- ◆ Regular Kaiser tracking surveys examining the public's views on health issues and perceptions of the presidential candidates on health care, as well as links to the latest polls by other organizations.
- ◆ Syntheses of news coverage about health and the campaign, updated frequently.
- ◆ Video and podcasts from the campaign trail, including candidate speeches, and health-related highlights from forums and debates.
- ◆ Interviews with candidates and other key players in the health reform debate.
- ◆ Dedicated pages for the candidates, with easy-to-access links to their health positions and other resources.
- ◆ A calendar of events taking place around the country and links to studies and resources from other organizations.
- ◆ A weekly email roundup of developments related to health and the election and free syndication of content available to other websites.

Visit www.health08.org/news.cfm for more details.

Your Student

Representatives on the DHP Student Affairs Committee

Do you have an idea for a DHP event? Suggestions you would like to offer the DHP to improve your experience as a student in the Department?

Please contact the following individuals who serve on the DHP Student Affairs Committee:

MPH: Arista Salimi Maher
asalimi@gwu.edu

DrPH: Saqi Maleque
saqi@gwu.edu

PhD: Emily Jones
emilybjones@gmail.com

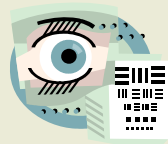
DHP JANUARY CALENDAR

January 2008

Events are at DHP, 2021 K Street, Suite 800 unless otherwise indicated

- ◆ Thurs., 1/10 - **New Student Orientation Meeting**
Time: 1:15– 3:00 pm
- ◆ Tues., 1/22 – **Presentation by Sarah Scholle, DrPH, NCQA, “Gender, Race and the Quality of Cardiovascular Care”**
Time: 12:00 noon – 1:30 pm
- ◆ Thurs. 1/31 – **Life in Health Policy with Sharon Baskerville, DC Primary Care Association**
Time: 6:00 – 7:30 pm

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 New Student Orientation	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22 Sarah Scholle, NCQA	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 LHP, Sharon Baskerville		



Watch your e-mail for late-breaking events and any changes to our calendar!

February 2008

DHP FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Events are at DHP, 2021 K Street, Suite 800 unless otherwise indicated

- ◆ Fri., 2/1—**Reminder:** Graduation applications for those planning n participating in the May commencement ceremony are due to the Dean by February 1. Visit: www.gvu.edu/~regweb
- ◆ Tues., 2/19 – **SPHHS Grand Rounds, George Silver Lecture with Phil Lee, MD**
Time: 12:15—2:30 pm
Location: GW Hospital Auditorium
- ◆ Thurs., 2/21 – **Institute of Medicine Session with Robert Giffin**
Time: 12:00 noon – 2:00 pm

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1 May Graduation Applications Due	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19 Silver Lecture—Phil Lee	20	21 IOM—Robert Giffin	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	

Looking Ahead: Thurs., 3/6 – Life in Health Policy with Diane Rowland, Kaiser Family Foundation 6:00 – 7:30 pm; Sat., 3/15 – Geiger Gibson Symposium, 10:30 am – 12:00 noon

New Year Resolutions—from our Canadian Neighbors

"Resolutions tend to be taken with a grain of salt, a bit like making a promise to ourselves that we know we probably won't keep. When it comes to our health, though, and that of our families and communities, it's always a good idea to put in that extra effort to make some positive changes.

So as Canada's Chief Public Health Officer, I want to offer some practical and achievable tips that can be part of making 2008 a little healthier, and hopefully, a little more personally fulfilling -- not just from my own perspective, but also in keeping with how we approach public health here at the Public Health Agency of Canada.

We know that how we live, where we live, our work, education, economics, income, the environment and other factors, all influence our ability to be healthy. These factors are essential challenges we must face as a society if we hope to improve and sustain health. There are also some personal choices to influence our own health, and they may not be too difficult.

If we take even some of them to heart, they really can improve our odds for a happy and healthy year:

◆ **Eat well and be active.** This one might be obvious, but sometimes it's the obvious things we overlook. Obesity is an increasingly serious public health issue in Canada, but small changes in lifestyle can add up and have a positive effect. Just cutting out one sweet soft drink a day could reduce your weight by ten to fifteen pounds a year. And think about opportunities to keep active, even if it's just a few minutes of extra activity each day: stretching, a short jaunt with the dog, parking a few blocks from work, or better yet, cycling to work. It all helps.

◆ **Flu Season.** 'Tis the season for colds and flu. Get your flu shot, cover up your coughs, sneeze into your sleeve, and wash your hands often. These are good ways to reduce your odds of catching and spreading the flu and other infections. And, if you're sick, stay home. This not only helps you get some much needed rest while you recover, it spares your co-workers from catching your infection. *[Editor's Note: So true!!]*

◆ **Keep a Healthy Kitchen.** Treat your own kitchen as you would expect in a four-star restaurant. Wash your hands (again!), keep food preparation surfaces clean, cook meats to the proper temperature before serving, and keep things cold that are meant to be kept cold. Bacteria that cause food poisoning thrive at room temperature.

◆ **Be Safe.** Winter means icy steps and slippery sidewalks, so please be careful and be aware of the dangers of falling. Indoors, you

can take some simple steps to keep your surroundings a bit safer by, for instance, reducing clutter, installing handrails on stairs, childproofing the family room, upgrading fuse boxes, and installing and checking the batteries on smoke detectors. It's best never to smoke, but if you do, go outside or somewhere where non-smokers don't have to breathe it with you. Outside of your home, please buckle up your seatbelt, wear your helmet, and avoid unnecessary risks.

◆ **Travel Smart.** Vaccinations are not just for fighting the flu. Smart travellers think ahead, consult their family physician or travel clinic, and receive the appropriate immunization and get good travel advice before they leave home.

◆ **Be an active part of the community.** It may not be obvious, but being active and engaged in society makes a big difference in terms of both your individual health and that of your community. Volunteer, vote, join, reach out to people, help your neighbour. There are connections between physical health, mental health, and the social networks and connections you keep. And be green, because building and being a part of a healthy community also means trying to reduce your environmental footprint, for your own health, everyone else's, and for the future.

◆ **Chill out.** Modern life is full of stresses and seeming contradictions, from miracle fixes to magic pills and conflicting advice about what and what not to eat. But if I've learned anything over the years, and if history has taught us anything, it's the importance of taking "everything in moderation, including moderation." That means take life seriously, but not so seriously that it becomes a barrier to good mental and physical health. What's more, whatever your circumstances, make the best of them and enjoy life. Be passionate about something, and if you make a mistake don't beat yourself up about it -- find a way to make it better or get someone to help you to do so. We are not on this journey alone.

Any or all of these resolutions will help keep you and your family safe and healthy, and will even contribute to the overall health of your community. This is what public health is all about, and what the Public Health Agency strives for: healthier Canadians and communities in a healthier world. It sounds like an impossible task, but together I think we have a very good chance of succeeding."

Dr. David Butler-Jones
Chief Public Health Officer of Canada
www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/media/cpho-acsp/resolutions2007-eng.php

The Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy

is a special initiative of The George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services. This program was established in 2004 to honor Drs. H. Jack Geiger and Count Gibson, pioneers in community health practice and tireless advocates for civil and human rights.

<http://www.gwumc.edu/spbhs/healthpolicy/ggprogram/>

Online Jobs Lists

GW and the SPHHS maintain online job lists as a way to connect students with job opportunities throughout the world of Health Policy (and elsewhere). You may search by key words and view the jobs by job category, as well as all at once:

- Full-Time jobs
- Part-Time jobs
- Internships
- Fellowships

For more information, visit:

<http://gwired.gwu.edu/career/>

and

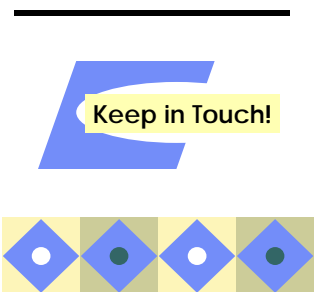
<http://www.gwumc.edu/spbhs/studentres/careers/jobs/>

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We're in touch, so you be in touch!

Please keep the DHP informed of your most current contact information.

If your mailing address, telephone, or e-mail address changes, please send an e-mail to:

Professor
Taylor Burke
taylorb@gwu.edu

The Department of Health Policy is the home for health policy studies and research at The George Washington University and its School of Public Health and Health Services. The Department focuses on virtually all phases of U.S. health policy -- both public health and health services -- and emphasizes preparing students to understand and analyze health policy matters in a broad, cross-cutting, and real-world context. Among Schools of Public Health, the SPHHS Department of Health Policy is unique; it has been created to take maximum advantage of our location in Washington D.C., the nation's health policy-making epicenter. The Department offers lectures and symposia on emerging issues in health policy throughout the academic year for students, graduates, and DC's health policy community. The Department's courses are taught by both core faculty, as well as faculty drawn from Washington D.C.'s health policy leadership. The curriculum is structured to train students in the methods and tools of health policy analysis, including qualitative and quantitative analysis techniques, legal analysis, economic analysis, and the preparation and presentation of research results and policy options to health policy makers.

Suggestions?
Do you have a suggestion for a DHP activity or for newsletter content?
We'd love to hear from you!
Please send an e-mail to Rick Mauery rmauery@gwu.edu.

Valuable Calendar Resources for Health Policy Events

The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation's **Kaisernetwork.org** provides a searchable list of events in health policy, HIV/AIDS, women's health policy, global health and health disparities. It also offers complete listings for HealthCasts -- live and archived online video coverage of key meetings, conferences and other health policy events in Washington, D.C. and across the globe. Users can choose to view all events or select from various topics such as:

- HIV/AIDS
- Women's Health Policy
- Health Policy
- HealthCast
- Global Health
- Health Disparities

Calendars can be viewed for specific days, weeks, or months.

This is a particularly rich resource for those looking for opportunities to fulfill professional enhancement requirements for a degree, or for obtaining an insider's view on a topic that you are writing about.

Visit:
<http://www.kaisernetwork.org/calendar/calendar.cfm>

Hearings on the Hill

The schedules of House and Senate hearings and committee meetings is maintained at <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/schedules.html>. Here you can view congressional floor schedules:

- House Floor This Week
- House Committee Hearing Schedule
- Senate Committee Hearing Schedule
- Senate Floor Schedule
- Senate Majority Schedule
- Senate Minority Schedule
- Days-in-Session Calendars
- Senate Executive Calendar
- Current and Previous House and Senate Calendars
- Current and Previous Senate Calendars