

# WASHINGTON STATE NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2009 FALL EDITION

**SSWLHC ADVOCACY,  
PRIORITIES, ISSUES &  
ACTIVITIES**

- **THURSDAY, OCT. 15, 2009**  
8:00 AM TO NOON  
SSWLHC—WA CHAPTER  
"UNDERSTANDING SSDI AND SSI &  
MEDICAID UPDATE" , 3 CEUS  
QUALIS HEALTH, WHIDBEY ROOM  
10700 MERIDIAN AVE. NO., SEATTLE
  
- **FRIDAY/SATURDAY, OCT. 30-31**  
NASW WA CHAPTER  
"ADVANCED CLINICAL SUPERVISION  
WORKSHOP"  
SWEDISH MEDICAL CENTER,  
GLASER AUDITORIUM, SEATTLE
  
- **TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1**  
SSWLHC, WA CHAPTER, 3 CEUS  
8:00 AM TO NOON  
"HEALTH DISPARITIES WORKSHOP"  
WINONA HOLLINS-HAUGE, LICSW,  
COMMISSIONER ON AFRICAN - AMERI-  
CAN AFFAIRS AND  
REP. TINA ORWELL, MSW,  
D-33RD DISTRICT,  
WA STATE LEGISLATURE  
SEATTLE LOCATION TBA

## THE WASHINGTON CHAPTER VOTES TO FORMALLY AFFILIATE WITH NATIONAL SSWLHC

By a vote of 25 to 16, 41 of our 93 current members voted in August to affiliate with the National SSWLHC organization. President Sandi Johnson has informed National of our intentions. What does this mean for you as a member? Starting in 2010, all members of SSWLHC will be members of both National SSWLHC and a local chapter.

### Current Members of both National and Washington State Chapter:

If you are already a member of both the National and the Washington State groups, paying two sets of dues annually, you will change to only paying the National dues, which will confer upon you membership in the local chapter.

**Continued on Page 2, Column 1**

## SSWLHC ENDORSES REFERENDUM 71

At the monthly SSWLHC Board meeting on September 10, 2009, the Board voted to endorse Referendum 71.

This Bill would expand the rights, responsibilities, and obligations accorded state registered same-sex and senior domestic partners to be equivalent to those of married spouses, except that a domestic partnership is not a marriage.

The WA State Legislature passed Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill 5688 concerning rights and responsibilities of state-registered domestic partners. This bill would have become law however a sufficient number of voters have filed a referendum petition on this bill, requiring a state-wide vote for approval.

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## LOCAL MEMBERS VOTE TO AFFILIATE WITH NATIONAL

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Starting in 2010, your membership in National SSWLHC will grant you membership in the local chapter nearest you. If you prefer to be a member of a different chapter, notify National: that can be arranged.

**Current Members only of Washington State Chapter:** In 2010, your local membership fee will confer upon you national membership. In 2011, you will have to pay National rates to maintain your membership.

**What if I decide not to continue my membership?** You will still be welcome to participate in SSWLHC educational events, both local and national. Non-member rates will apply.

**I'm not sure I'll join National, but I'd like to keep receiving the local newsletter.** We are considering establishing a subscription service for people who wish to maintain contact with the organization, but find the new fee structure cost-prohibitive. Subscribers may receive discounts on workshop fees.

**What are the perks of being a National SSWLHC member?**

**\*Networking** with Health Care Social Work Practitioners/Leaders

**\*Discussion Forum-** log-on to the website to post questions for member response(s) on a variety of health care and social work topics

**\*E-Blasts-** weekly communication from the Board with members on upcoming events, SSWLHC and member accomplishments, news of interest and much more

**\*E-Resource List-** weekly email with questions/answers posted by members on various health care and social work topics (Note: The Board proposes re-establishing this benefit)

**\*Leadership Development-** including the Leadership Institute conducted during the annual conference and other venues TBD

**\*Mentoring/Mentorship-** formal and informal mentoring opportunities available

**\*Reduced Rates for Education/CE programs:** National, Regional, and Local Conferences, Webinars, Leadership Training

**\*Publications** (including topics on leadership, supervision, aging, cultural competency and more

Quarterly Issue of the "Social Work in Healthcare"

Professional Journal Quarterly Issue of "The Leader" Member Newsletter

**Other changes associated with affiliation:** Our bylaws, last revised in 2005, may be revised to conform to National bylaws (I don't believe this will require a vote of the membership, as the vote we just took requires this change).

Our fiscal year will change from Jan 1 – Dec 31 to July 1 – June 30. That will affect when dues are due.

Contributed by Kathleen Fellbaum, LICSW, Past President, SSWLHC. She can be contacted at: [kath@fellbaum.com](mailto:kath@fellbaum.com)



## SSWLHC RECRUITING SOCIAL HEALTH POLICY CHAIR CARRIGAN TO STEP DOWN

After ten years of leading the organization's policy advocacy efforts, Lynn Carrigan will be stepping down from this role in preparation for retirement. We are searching for members interested in continuing our legacy of insuring education and information on current events affecting agencies, clients, and colleagues in health care.

Those interested in this committee should possess an awareness of and interest in policies that drive direct practice, the ability to identify and communicate emerging issues as well as competing values and viewpoints, recommend directions to the organization, and coordinate efforts to mobilize members and others to achieve SSWLHC goals and priorities.

### RESPONSIBILITIES INCLUDE:

- **Identifying and analyzing issues** of importance to social workers in health care;
- **Participating in Board meetings** to determine stances and mechanisms for action;
- **Contributing informational articles** to the Newsletter on professional and political topics;
- **Organizing an annual advocacy forum** to prepare for upcoming legislative sessions;
- **Sending alerts about critical issues** and responses needed through our electronic list serve; and
- **Communicating** with other professional and advocacy organizations to coordinate efforts.

Committee members can learn about emerging issues by consulting with policy directors and advocates in related organizations such as Childrens Health Alliance, WA CAN!, WA Health Foundation, WA State Hospital Association, WA Budget and Policy Center, and by subscribing to or reviewing online advocacy newsletters and local websites related to health.

Time commitments vary depending on the number of committee members willing to share this work, and is minimal during the months before and after the Legislative Session. As bills are drafted and reviewed for action by the State Legislature, the Committee may want to increase communications with members about potential responses. The Annual Advocacy Forum is usually held in December to educate members about issues and initiatives of interest to health care social workers. Preparation consists of arranging speakers and logistics in coordination with this Chapter's Education Committee and promoting the event.

This Committee is a good fit for recent social work graduates with a grounding in civic engagement, empowerment, and social action, and for veteran social workers who understand the importance of influencing policies that affect our work and shape our conditions of practice.

If interested, please contact Lynn Carrigan at 206-221-7459 or [lrc@u.washington.edu](mailto:lrc@u.washington.edu) or any current Board member. We need your voice and leadership.

## IN FOCUS: LEADERSHIP PROFILE

### DAVID WOLFE, LICSW, GMHS



"I have the best social work job in the world! I have my dream job!" Ask David Wolfe about the job he has held for the past three years and you will get this answer. It is not every social worker who continues to feel positive toward a job that can be exhilarating, exhausting, challenging, and sometimes dangerous, as patients face a major crisis in their lives..

David works at Highline Medical Center's Geropsychiatry Unit as a psychiatric social worker, assessing older patients in the acute stages of mental illness. His firm, yet kind voice can break through a patient's delirium and delusions and set an environment where patients begin to feel safe. He is able to set limits with both patients and their families, and is always teaching those around him.

**EDUCATION:** David earned his Bachelors in Social Work from Boise State University in 1995 and married Lisa, whom he met at the University. After a brief break, he entered the MSW program at Walla Walla College in 1996, graduating with his Master's in Social Work, clinical emphasis, in 1997. For a student practicum experience, David was fortunate to be placed in a community mental health/home health agency. This is where he began to work with and understand the aging patient, dementia, mental illness, and the impact of these issues on the family structure that had little outside support available to them.

Following graduation, David and his wife moved to the Seattle area where he spent two years working as a nursing home social worker in the Queen Anne and Shoreline areas. In this environment, he began to appreciate the role of social work in the institutional setting and its role with the aging, sometimes demented, sometimes delirious patient. In 1999, David went to work for Seattle Mental Health where he was a case manager and eventually became responsible for overseeing their nursing home consultation program. David garnered valuable experience and became acquainted with many of the professionals involved in elder care and mental health in King County. These relationships have

continued to be an asset to David as he seeks resources and consultation for his geropsych patients.

David's work with the Highline Geropsychiatric unit involves evaluating the patient's psychosocial history and helping the patient and family plan an appropriate discharge to enhance the patient's strengths and to minimize further disruption in the patient's and family's life. He works with Linda 'Sam' O'Neill and is a practicum instructor for the UW School of Social Work within that setting.

His interest in social work and mental health began when he was a teenager. His family and friends would comment on his listening skills and desire to help others. David is an inquisitive fellow, and finds tremendous satisfaction in learning about mental disorders and their treatment.

In addition to his hospital duties, David has a clinical supervision practice for social workers seeking licensure as well as for their ongoing consultation needs. He is also available as a public speaker on the subjects of personality disorders, dementia, depression, aging, and 'sandwich generation' topics. He has had specialized education and training in Axis II disorders and treatment.

David was born in Heerlen, The Netherlands, to an American Air Force family. As a young child, the family moved to many locations around the world, and criss-crossed the United States several times finally ending up in Idaho, where he completed high school. In his travels, David learned to speak German, enough to converse with others and read the German Newspapers.

David has a deep interest in Military History and Aviation, beginning with the family's experience while in the service. Daily, his computer desktop wallpaper sprouts a new type of airplane. He has a great deal of knowledge about the types of planes used in World War II, and the fighter jets in use today. Many of the patients that enter his unit are veterans or Boeing retirees, and David is able to utilize these special interests to build rapport with them. Additional interests are politics, city planning and urban infrastructure. If he should decide to enter local politics, he will find his social work skills extremely useful.

David is married to Lisa who is a CPA for the Federal Government. They have one daughter, Jazmyn, who arrived via China when she was 2 years old. Her sister Hannah, 14- months-old, will join her family in about three weeks. The three Wolfes are preparing for a trip to China in October where they will meet their new daughter in the city of Harbin in Northeastern China. David has been studying Mandarin for over a year in order to help his daughters appreciate their birth culture. The family will be leaving two members at home while they travel: Abby, a miniature schnauzer and Biscuit, an Australian shepherd.

## UNDERSTANDING SSDI AND SSI & MEDICAID OVERVIEW/UPDATE

**SSWLHC WA Chapter is presenting a workshop on SSDI, SSI and Medicaid on Thursday, October 15, 2009, from 8:00—Noon. This workshop comes with 3 Social Work CEUs.**

The impetus for this workshop comes out of comments that we have received from previous workshops. In order to provide our membership with up to date information and to answer the questions that arise from practice, Karen Hercules-Doerr, MBA, of Allsup, a firm that provides Social Security Disability representation will present material on SSDI. John Deagen, MA, from Senior Services of Seattle King Co. will discuss SSI and Medicaid.

**Karen Hercules-Doerr**, national sales director of Consumer Sales & Marketing at Allsup, is a seasoned healthcare executive who started her career as a Respiratory Therapist. That experience was the foundation for management and business development positions in nonprofit and for-profit healthcare organizations offering rehabilitation, long-term care, case management, ancillary post acute services and acute hospital care. .

She now leads Allsup's nationwide effort to increase education and awareness about the Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) program and the benefits of representation.

**John Deagen** has been an educator and a social service provider since earning his Bachelors Degree from Pomona College in 1986. He later earned an MA Degree from the U. of Oregon in 1991. John has taught at the junior high, high school and university level with stints in Wheeling, West Virginia and Eugene, Oregon. He has also worked with abused and abandoned youth at group homes and therapeutic foster homes in Placerville, California and Seattle, WA.

## REFERENDUM 71 VOTE YES!!

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The Washington Chapter has submitted a letter to 'Washington Families Standing Together' indicating in part: "The Washington Chapter of the Society for Social Work Leadership in Health Care officially endorses "Washington Families Standing Together" the campaign to retain our state's Domestic Partnership law. We believe that domestic partners should be able to keep the legal protections already afforded married couples under state law and support SB5688, which has recently passed the WA State Legislature and signed by the Governor."

We stand together with more than 183 organizations who are lending their financial and marketing support, including such agencies as: NASW—WA Chapter, League of Women Voters, WA State Nurses Association, Seattle Police Officers Guild, Gay and Lesbian organizations, and many more.

For a complete and continually growing list of endorsements of Referendum 71, see:  
<http://approverreferendum71.org>

### VOTE 'YES' IN NOVEMBER

President: Sandra J. Johnson, MSW

President Elect: Selena Bolotin, MSW

Past President : Kathleen Fellbaum, MSW

Secretary: Carole O'Brien, MSW

Treasurer: Erica Taylor, MSW

Communications Coordinator, Jacqueline Durgin, MSW

Members at Large:  
Stacey Jones, MSW  
Rena Merithew, BSW  
Tricia Matteson, Student

Education Chair: Selena Bolotin MSW

Membership Chair: Kathleen Fellbaum, MSW

Newsletter Editor: Jacqueline Durgin, MSW

Scholarship Committee: Stacey Jones, MSW

Social Health Policy Chair: Lynn Carrigan, MSW

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# THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Sandi Johnson, LICSW

The debate on health care reform has had a wild ride this summer ending with President Obama's health reform speech earlier in the month.

I am sure all of you are experiencing an increased need for health care financial assistance due to unemployment, patients unable to afford COBRA payments, pre-existing conditions, insurance companies not willing to enroll people due to high risk, and a waiting list for Basic Health insurance. Recently, a colleague of mine worked with a patient to secure insurance through Washington's high risk pool at \$1600 a month; this was after the patient met their insurance plan's \$1 million life time max. The patient could afford the premiums; but as we know the majority of patients we see could not and the burden of costs of treatment lies with the hospitals.

There is a lot of difficult work before Congress. The House's America's Affordable Health Choices Act (H.R. 3200) lists its goals as

1. Reducing health care costs,
2. Protecting and increasing consumers' choices,
3. Guaranteeing access to quality, affordable health care,

4. Expanding clinical social work delivered to Medicare beneficiaries in nursing homes

Will we see the day where everyone has health insurance? Where there are no pre-existing conditions? Where there is no life-time max? Where there is no discrimination for access?

This fall we are called to step out and make our voices heard. Congress and the Obama administration will move forward debating a myriad of ways to proceed with health care.

Social workers have always taken their role as promoters of health care seriously. Let's continue to do so by showing up, letting our voices and experience be heard. I urge you to call your congress person, attend a rally, tell our patient's stories. Let's all be a part in seeing that ALL have health care!

Need assistance in finding your legislators? Go to:

<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder/>

Sandi can be contacted at:

[SandraS.Johnson@swedish.org](mailto:SandraS.Johnson@swedish.org)



## 2009-10 SSWLHC-WA CHAPTER ADVOCACY FORUM: OVERCOMING HEALTH DISPARITIES TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 9:00 TO NOON

Winona Hollins-Hauge, LICSW, Commissioner on African American Affairs and Member of the Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities, and Representative Tina Orwall, MSW, D-33 District, Washington State Legislature, will be our guests at the annual Advocacy Forum presented by the SSWLHC-WA Chapter. Their commonality is their invitation to the National Policy Summit on Reducing Mental Health Disparities."

We invite you to attend and learn how you can educate yourselves and others about inequitable health outcomes and mechanisms being studied to improve care within WA.

The Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities was established by the Washington State Legislature in 2006 when it passed, and the Governor signed, Substitute Senate Bill 6197. This bill mandated a commission to be formed to research and advise the State on health disparities and to create policies for addressing them in order to achieve greater parity in access and outcomes. The Council is composed of representatives from across state agencies and other influential gubernatorial appointees.

Issues that the Council must address include but are not limited to, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, cervical cancer, breast cancer, chronic kidney disease, asthma, infant mortality, SIDS, stroke, smoking cessation, mental health, prostate cancer, oral disease, heart disease, immunization rates, mental health, and women's health issues.

Ms. Hollins-Hauge and Rep. Orwall have been speaking together on these issues

throughout the year, and we are delighted to welcome them to our Annual Advocacy Forum.

Ms. Hollins-Hauge holds a Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Washington, where she has served as a practicum instructor for the UW-SSW. She is a native of Seattle who graduated from Garfield High School in the class of 1971. In addition, she has worked as a US Public Health Service officer, Fred Hutchinson outreach manager, Director of Social Work for Odessa Brown Children's Clinic and she is a member of numerous national and local civic boards and committees. Currently she serves on the ICCNETWORK.ORG with NASW Leader--Betsy Clarke

Vice Chair of the House Human Services Committee, Rep. Orwall obtained her Masters in Social Work Administration in 1991 from the University of Washington. and. was recently elected to the House seat serving DesMoines, Normandy Park, and parts of Kent, Burien, and SeaTac. She previously worked for the City of Seattle, Office of Housing as the Washington State 'Taking Health Care Home' Coordinator. She is also active in the following governmental partnerships, including the Statewide Co-Occurring Disorders Interagency Committee (CODIAC), the Washington State Policy Academy on Co-Occurring Disorders, the King County Veteran's Group Consortium, and the Supportive Housing Alliance for Veterans (SHAVET).

We will provide further details and registration information closer to the event.

For additional information contact:  
[sbolotin@qualis.org](mailto:sbolotin@qualis.org) or [carrigan2006@yahoo.com](mailto:carrigan2006@yahoo.com)