



# El Diario Sin Nombre

## The Newsletter Without a Name

NM Human Services Department  
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### *Video Conference a First for HSD*

Talk about inter-departmental cooperation! The Department of Health can connect its health offices by video allowing real-time video tele-conferences among health experts and staff across the state. This not only saves time and money for exchanges of information, but it could save lives as well during a health emergency.



*Deputy Secretary Tom Romero.*

When Secretary Hyde found out about the Health Department's capability, she asked Health Secretary Pat Montoya if our department could use their technology. The answer was, sure, let's make it happen. And happen it did. On Feb. 19, over 100 employees from Albuquerque, Farmington, Las Cruces, Las Vegas, Roswell, Truth or Consequences, and Santa Fe drove across town to their local health office, instead of across the state, for the department's first-ever video teleconference.

After each office signaled in, they were asked to introduce each participant via video — some were camera shy at first, but most soon caught on. Then Secretary Hyde and each Deputy Secretary spoke to the assembled groups. Following that, there were questions and answers from each office; and when one person spoke from Las Cruces, everyone else could see and hear the person who was speaking. Scheduled for an hour, the conference lasted a little longer than that because of the frank exchanges of information and ideas among the ISD and CSED offices.

"Although there were a limited number of people who could attend the video conference, we did enjoy it," said Emily Ulibarri Chavez of Farmington's child support enforcement office. "We were excited for the opportunity to participate in such a conference and to be able to hear things directly from the Secretary. It was informative too because there was interaction among the different field offices across the state."

## The Department's Philosophy and Leadership Expectations

**Access, Quality & Accountability** are Secretary Pamela Hyde's focus as we build a better Human Services Department for New Mexico. To meet these three goals, her philosophy for managers and employees are listed below:

**One Team, One Voice.** There are several divisions within HSD and several bureaus and sections within each division. This is why it is good to remind ourselves every so often that we are "One Team," with very similar missions. We will do better over the long run when we work together to achieve better Access, Quality & Accountability for and on the part of those we serve.

**Make Each Other Successful.** When you make your colleagues successful, you help make HSD successful. Think of your co-workers as your "internal customers."

**Responsiveness and Customer Service.** This encompasses most of what we do at HSD. It includes working closely with our clients, answering telephones in an inviting and helpful manner, getting back to those wanting information or clarification within 24-hours and just being down right customer friendly overall.

**No Surprises.** When there is a problem, let me know about it first and then there is a good chance something can be done about it. But if I find out about it from someone other than you, it becomes more difficult to help.

**Importance of Staff.** I really care about what staff does every day. Seeing what you do and listening to your ideas are two of my goals.

**Stakeholder Involvement.** We will be committed to meeting with all stakeholders. Although we may not always be able to agree on a course of action, we will listen to stakeholders and

See *Philosophy*, page 2

### *Inside*

CSED's 'In-Hospital' Program.....	2
From HSD to the House.....	3
L-team Action.....	3

From *Philosophy*, page 1

advocates' points of view. Once a decision has been made, we need to explain to stakeholders why the decision was made the way it was.

**Do the Right Thing.** We should follow the right policies and the right practices in everything we do for our clients, for our fellow employees, stakeholders and the public.

**Do Things Right.** Follow the rules, the regulations and the expectations that others have of you.

**Interdepartmental Collaboration.** Working closely with other departments is a huge commitment, and it will make state government better. We are collaborating with our sister departments and stakeholders in important areas like immunizations, hunger, domestic violence, healthcare, behavioral health and childcare accessibility.

**Work Hard and Have Fun.** We all have to have a little bit of fun at work and one way to do this is to find ways to truly appreciate the hard work that so many of you do.

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## CSED's In-Hospital Paternity Program Working

Within the HSD, there are several little-known programs, run by only a few people, that provide important services to our customers or help support the larger programs. The CSED's Voluntary Paternity Unit (VPU) is one such program. The four-



person unit was established nearly ten years ago in response to a federal law that states' child support enforcement agencies establish an In-Hospital Paternity program. This mandate was in response to the growing number of births by unwed mothers nationally. New Mexico is no exception, and according to the department of Health's Vital Records Bureau, 47.3 percent of all births in New Mexico are to unwed mothers.

Jackie Baca manages the department's In-Hospital Paternity program. "Our program is one of the better programs in the country, and the numbers prove it," said Baca. She has an annual budget of \$65,000 to pay for contracts with hospitals. New Mexico's success comes from ensuring that all of the state's 32 birthing facilities participate. "Just because we get a hospital to agree to participate doesn't mean it's a done deal," said Baca. "Hospital employees come and go; and since our

program is such a small part of the overall maternity ward administration, keeping staff trained in voluntary paternity acknowledgement can be overlooked."

### Good Will with Hospitals

Over the years, Baca and her assistant, Bernie Ortiz, have built good will with the state's hospitals. "We try to stay on top of things," said Baca. "To do this, we have a hospital-of-the-month award and each holiday season we send greeting cards thanking those who administer our program."

### In Hospital Paternity

Before or soon after the birth of the baby, a hospital staff member discreetly explains to both parents the benefits of signing the one-page paternity acknowledgement affidavit. When both parties sign the acknowledgement, the father's name is recorded on the birth certificate. Having his name on the child's birth certificate gives the father the right to custody of the child if something happens to the child's mother. Alternatively, if something happens to the father, the baby could be eligible for social security benefits or inheritance. Also, if the parents later break up, the father would have a legal right to joint custody and/or visitation. There are important medical considerations for the child as well.

With rights, come responsibilities, and that is where the child support enforcement part of the program figures in. If the parents later break up, then it is much easier, quicker, and cheaper for the CSED to establish a child support court order for the payment of child support. It is easier because the burden of proof is now with the non-custodial parent to prove that he is not the father. It is quicker because the sometimes hard to get proof of paternity is already done. It is cheaper because the department pays hospitals \$10 for every paternity affidavit signed, as opposed to the hundreds and even thousands of dollars it can cost the department to find the father and pay for a DNA test.

### Reaching Out

"Eight of ten fathers come to the hospital during or soon after delivery," said Baca. Last year, 8,400 signed paternity

See *In Hospital*, Page 4



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# L-team Operation Changes This Year

During previous legislative sessions, the department's L-team was responsible for ensuring that hundreds of bills received timely coordination, analysis and a recommendation. This year, some of that responsibility has been delegated to others. Yet, the L-team continues to play an important role by assisting with tracking the daily movement of bills affecting the department, ensuring each analysis is in the proper format and raising a red flag if deadlines are not being met.

The department's Legislative Liaison, Barbara Gay, is working with the L-team. She brings experience from the Attorney General's (AG) office, where she helped analyze bills there on a larger scale. Typically, the AG's office scrutinizes many more bills than almost any single agency during a legislative session because of the agency's legal responsibilities. However, she stated that the bill analysis process here is more complex because, generally, more than one person analyzes each bill.

"So far, we have been asked to study over 200 bills, committee substitutes and amendments. Many of them have to do with Medicaid changes," said Gay. Gay added, "that number is about half as many analyzed by the AG's office during the last 60-day session, but I find myself spending as much time at this process as I did there, given the more complex nature of HSD's system."

## The Bill Tracking Process

So what is the department's bill tracking and analysis process? It usually starts when the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC), the governor's office or a legislator wants HSD to analyze a piece of legislation introduced by one or more legislators. When Gay receives the request from the LFC, she forwards it to the L-team and they quickly decide who in HSD gets overall responsibility for analysis. Then, that "lead" division coordinates with other divisions as appropriate, and should complete the analysis within 24 hours. Often this includes coordination with other state agencies – not just divisions within the department. Once this is done, the "lead" division returns the fully analyzed bill to the L-team for final review before it is sent back to Gay for OS review, and then on to the LFC. And, just as the AG's analyses are critical at the state level, the department's Office of General Counsel plays a similarly crucial role as it reviews legal issues associated with each bill the department reviews.



*Barbara Gay (left) and Christina Chavarria.*

## Daily Meetings

Each morning, the L-team meets with HSD's management team to tie up loose ends and help decide who should participate in the day's committee hearings for the bills the

*See L-team, Page 4*

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## From HSD to the House

"It's not like people picture it," State Representative Jim Trujillo said with a smile when asked what it is like being a legislator. "So far, it has been 15-minute lunches and 12-hour days. We aren't wining and dining all day long, like some people think."

Many in the HSD were surprised, and rightfully so, when the 62-year-old former school teacher, business owner and nine-year department employee was picked to replace Patsy Trujillo-Knauer as southwest Santa Fe's District 45 State Representative. No one remembers it happening before — moving from a department employee to that of a state lawmaker in one fell swoop.



*Jim Trujillo on the House Floor.*

"It was a whirlwind," said Trujillo who was happily plugging away in the bowels of the department when he got the call, just days before the start of the 2003 Legislative session, to replace Trujillo-Knauer, who left her post to work in the governor's office.

*See Trujillo, Page 4*

*From In Hospital, Page 2*

acknowledgements, which is 76 percent of the unwed births. There are now over 56,240 names in the VPU database that can be accessed by child support offices.

Besides working with hospitals, the VPU provides presentations and distributes education materials to agencies that support pregnant women and to a growing number of fatherhood groups. Last month, for example, Baca and Ortiz gave a presentation to 11 pregnant teens enrolled in the GRADS program at Española High School. Of the 11 participants, only two raised their hands when asked if they were aware of the reasons for having paternity established for their baby. "It is a continuous process of education and reaching out," said Baca.

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*From L-team, Page 3*

department has analyzed. New to the meetings is a handy spreadsheet listing all tracked bills. Other useful information like who sponsored the bill, its committee assignments, which division completed the analysis and what recommendation was given are all on a single page. The type of recommendation the department makes is typically to support, support if fixed, support if there is money, remain neutral, or oppose.

Of critical importance this year is preventing any expansion of Medicaid and forestalling any program cutbacks, and the department is supporting bills introduced on behalf of the Medicaid Reform Committee. Other areas of legislation supported by the department include a prescription drug program for seniors and the requirement that health care coverage be part of child support orders. We are also supporting a bill that would prevent unlawful electronic benefit transfer card use.

### **Practiced L-Team Member Doesn't Mind Changes**

"I like some of the changes that have been made this year," said OIG's Christina Chavarria, a 10-year, L-team member. "The process is a little less stressful for us but we still play an important role in the legislative tracking and analysis process."

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*From Trujillo, Page 3*

"The session has been quite a learning process for me," said Trujillo, who is one of ten freshmen state representatives. "I'm easily getting 50 telephone calls a day, and I talk with three or four people just walking from my office to the House Chambers. It's tougher being a Santa Fe representative because more people know you here, and they want to talk to you."

Trujillo introduced five bills this year. One, House Bill 227, benefits the department's CSED by financing more hearing officers in the courts. If signed into law, it would help to reduce the large backlog of the division's court orders awaiting a hearing. Other bills he introduced have to do with AIDS

research, DWI law and education reform. Additionally, he introduced a House Joint Memorial that will look at the state employees' degree completion reimbursement program. The memorial could make participation easier for state employees. "I'm the new kid on the block, so I haven't introduced a lot of bills," said Trujillo. "Right now, I am mostly concerned with listening and learning."

In 1994, Trujillo started with the ISD as an administrator for the Emergency Assistance (EA) program. It provided cash assistance to juveniles who were trying to get out of a bad environment. Ironically, new MAD Director Carolyn Ingram also started with the department at about the same time and with the same program. When EA was transferred to the Mortgage Finance Authority in 1997, he moved to the Office of Inspector General, where he audited Medicaid provider billings. Three years later, he moved again to the ASD's Grants Management Bureau, where he was plugging along before being called to a higher duty.

The hectic legislative schedule normally allows Trujillo only to grab a fast lunch each day. "But every so often in the evening, I must admit, I do attend a reception or two and they offer some pretty scrumptious food," said Trujillo.



### **Cupid's Arrows Strike Three**

*MAD employees Britt Catron (left), Doyle Smith and Cindee Cordova show their red roses and other Valentine's Day goodies.*

#### ***In April's Issue:***

How did the 2003 Legislative session impact the department?

Food stamp fraud case resolved in Socorro.