

Florida Bioethics

Fall 2000/Winter 2001 Web — <http://www.med.ufl.edu/chfm/ethics/fbn/index.html> Email — ethics@miami.edu

End-of-Life Partnership Coalitions Expand Community-Based Resources

TALLAHASSEE — Attention to ethical issues continues to increase throughout Florida, in no small part because of the Florida Partnership for End-of-Life Care and its Community Coalitions.

The Partnership — whose mission is to help ensure all Floridians have the ability to access high-quality, community-based end-of-life education and information — is partially funded by a three-year Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grant as part of the foundation's Community/State Partnerships in End-of-Life

Care. The Florida Partnership has six focus areas:

1. Develop/operate the Community Coalitions
2. Initiate regulatory efforts and support (for instance, improving state legislation governing advance directives)
3. Initiate palliative care and pain-management projects



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FBN Adds Meeting Venues, Broadens Collaborations

JACKSONVILLE — The Florida Bioethics Network has embarked on a significant expansion of education program locations and collaborations.

Beginning with its annual fall conference in October 2000 in Jacksonville ("Law and Ethics at the End of Life"), the FBN commenced an initiative to hold education programs in new cities and regions. The Jacksonville conference was attended by some 150 people, who heard Florida Secretary of Health Bob Brooks deliver a well-received key-



**Health Secretary
Dr. Bob Brooks**

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Florida Bioethics Network

The Florida Bioethics Network is a program of

- Program in Bioethics, Law, and Medical Professionalism, University of Florida College of Medicine
- Bioethics Program, University of Miami
- Division of Medical Ethics and Humanities, University of South Florida School of Medicine
- Nova Southeastern University

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Florida Bioethics

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The Web site is hosted by the University of Florida Program in Bioethics, Law, and Medical Professionalism: fbn@chfm.health.ufl.edu

FBN Broadens Collaborations

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note address.

Presentations included talks on issues in pediatrics and use of the World Wide Web in bioethics.

Then, in December, the FBN teamed up with the Palm Beach County Area Agency on Aging for a special program in West Palm Beach.

Susan Acker, the state Agency for Health Care Administration's Nursing Services Director, served on a panel addressing the role and utility of ethics committees in nursing homes. Dr. Acker said nursing homes and, indeed, all extended care facilities, needed to do a better job providing bioethics services to clients and staff.

In March, the FBN's spring conference in Dania, near Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood, was heavily subscribed, with more than 300 attendees, many of whom received continuing education credits in nursing, medicine, law, social work, guardianship and psychology.

Perhaps most noteworthy was the conference's plenary panel on issues in nursing ethics and the strong collaborative support from the Florida Medical Association, the Florida Nurses Association, the Florida Hospital Association and the Florida Bar.

FBN planners have scheduled another special education program for August 24 in Port Charlotte in Southwest Florida. This will be another FBN regional first in its effort to reach out to new communities. All FBN programs feature content on end-of-life care, in part by virtue of the organization's link to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation-sponsored Community Partnerships program, specifically the Florida Partnership for End-of-Life Care.

Additionally, planning is proceeding for the 2001 fall course, set for November in Daytona Beach.

In 2000 and 2001, the FBN will have met in Jacksonville, West Palm Beach, Dania (Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood), Port Charlotte and Daytona Beach.

Bar Association, Others, Team for 'Health Decisions'

JANE E. HENDRICKS, J.D.

MIAMI— The American Bar Association has sponsored an initiative for local bar associations to educate the public on advance directives and organ donation.

The first annual National Health Care Decisions Week ran October 22 - 28, 2000. The Dade County Bar Association with the participation of 9 other co-sponsors staged a series of seven sessions, of which six were open to the public and one was a private session with third year nursing students at Florida International University.

In addition to Baptist Health Systems of South Florida, we had the assistance of the University of Miami Transplant Programs as medical provider partners in this endeavor. We are also grateful for the co-sponsorship of the Dade County Bar Association; Florida Partnership for End of Life Care; University of Miami Ethics Programs; St. Thomas University School of Law; Alliance for Aging; Florida International University Southeast Center on Aging; Health Council of South Florida and Barry University. Miami-Dade County and the

Miami-Dade County Public Libraries were very supportive, as well.

Twenty-nine attorneys volunteered time to this project. Some attorneys assisted at two or more sessions. On-site pro-bono attorney time was about 45 hours.

We had 32 attendees ranging in age from teenager to 60+. Of those attendees, 11 signed living wills, 9 signed health care surrogate designations and 11 signed organ donor cards.

We relied heavily on the co-sponsors to get the word out via mailed flyers, faxes and e-mail. Through these media, we reached an estimated 18,900 people. In addition, the public was made aware of the project through 18" x 24" placards posted in high-traffic areas of four local universities, one community college, all eight branches of the civil and family courts, the main branch of the library and the county offices. The placard was an enlarged version of the flyer.

The Dade Bar will continue this project on a quarterly basis utilizing library branches.

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Broad array of sponsors, partners for spring conference

FORT LAUDERDALE — A record number of institutions and professional groups joined forces with the FBN for the spring conference co-sponsored by the University of Miami.

Conference sponsors receive a number of valuable benefits, including varying numbers of admissions, on-site displays, and extensive public acknowledgment. The March 2 conference saw financial support from the following institutions: Jackson Memorial Hospital and Jackson Children's Hospital, South Florida VA Foundation for Research and Education and the Research Service of the Miami VA Medical Center, Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center / UM Hospital and Clinics, Baptist Health Systems of South Florida (Baptist Hospital of Miami, South Miami Hospital, Homestead Hospital, Mariners Hospital), Miami Jewish Home and Hospital for the Aged at Douglas Gardens, VITAS Healthcare Corporation, Miami Children's Hospital, North Broward Hospital District, Hospice Care of Broward County, Inc., Northwest Medical

Center, Hospice and HomeCare by the Sea, Catholic Hospice, Hospice of the Florida Suncoast, Hospice of Martin & St. Lucie, HIP Health Plan of Florida.

Foundations: The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Community Partnerships for End-of-Life Care, Foundation for End of Life Care and TENET Healthsystems

Professional organizations: The Florida Bar (Elder Law and Health Law Sections), Florida Hospital Association, Florida Medical Association and the Florida Nurses Association.

Community organizations: Health Council of South Florida, Miami-Dade Area Health Education Center.

Special academic partners: The Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters of Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Miami-Dade Community College and the support of the U.S. Fund for the Improvement of Secondary Education (FIPSE) and the Miami-DadeHealth Education Center (AHEC)

Resources

Advance Directive Kits

Bundles of 50 advance directive brochures describing the types of advance directives and answering other questions about end-of-life care are available for shipping and handling costs of \$15 payable to

Jane Hendricks, J.D.
8306 Mills Drive
PMB 177
Miami, FL 33183

A package of 3 Living Will forms and 1 Health Care Surrogate Designation form is available for \$90.00. Same payee and address as above.

Elders Institute Video

A 70-minute videotape of a March 2000 Elders Institute panel on advance directives is available for \$29.90 (including tax, postage and handling). Remit check or money order to

Ann Molliver Ruben, Ph.D.
4280 Galt Ocean Drive
Plaza South, Apt. 11J
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33308

Ethics Conference Book, Video

Course syllabi containing comprehensive abstracts and readings for all presentations at the FBN's 2001 Spring Conference are available for \$25. Additionally, a 3-and-a-half-hour videotape of the morning plenary session at the FBN's spring 2000 conference in Fort Lauderdale features a talk on health and gender, a debate on Florida's advance directive law and an inspirational presentation by a Doctors Without Borders Physician. The videos are \$50. Call 305-243-5723 for more information or remit check or money orders to

University of Miami Ethics Programs
P.O. Box 016960 (M-825)
Miami, FL 33101

Florida Ethics Calendar

Please e-mail submissions to ethics@miami.edu

May 17-18, 2001, Gainesville — Compassionate Care at the End of Life — Legal and Ethical Issues, University of Florida Fredric G. Levin College of Law, Project GRACE (Guidelines for Resuscitation and Care at the End of Life) and the Holland & Knight Institute.

888-688-8500

May 19, 2001, Fort Lauderdale — Academy of Florida Elder Law Attorneys' Elder Concert.

www.afela.org

June 4-7, 2001, St. Pete Beach — Ethics In Research: An Intensive Training Course Focusing on Behavioral Health Sciences, University of South Florida and National Institutes of Health.

www.fmhi.usf.edu/mhlp/ethics/ethics.html

August 2-4, 2001, Tampa — Florida State Guardianship Association.

850-656-8848

August 24, 2001, Port Charlotte — **Florida Bioethics Network** special Southwest Florida program.

www.med.ufl.edu/chfm/ethics/fbn/index.html

September 12-14, 2001, Orlando — Florida Hospice and Palliative Care annual conference.

850-878-2632

October 19-20, 2001, Miami — Extreme Ethics: Especially Difficult Challenges in Epidemiology and Human Subjects Research, University of Miami Ethics Programs and the National

State Commission Urges Increase in Certain Rights

TALLAHASSEE — A state commission on health care urged in a report that patients get more rights in disputes with doctors and pharmacists who may have made mistakes.

To reduce health care errors and compile complete data on such errors, the report urged the state to create a Center for Patient Safety and Excellence in Health Care.

The full report is available on the Internet at <http://www.floridahealthstat.com> (under the Reports and Guides section).

Sarasota Seniors Discuss End-of-Life Options

CATHERINE EMMETT, ARNP, CS
Hospice of Southwest Florida

SARASOTA — As part of the Florida Partnership for End of Life Care, the Sarasota Consortium hosted a Town Hall Meeting at Senior Friendship Centers, Inc. in Sarasota. The purpose of the Town Hall Meeting was to discuss changes in Florida's advance directive law, as well as to allow the participants to discuss their reactions to several different scenarios in which treatment decisions to pursue aggressive treatment vs. comfort care were offered.

The attendees ranged in age from 40 to 100+, with the majority being in their late 80's.

The intent of the organizers of the event was to see if treatment decisions would vary based on the setting in which the patient was living and or would vary if it were the patient themselves being considered or if it was a significant other for whom the decision was being made.

What was surprising to us, was the unanimous decision of everyone, no matter what the scenario, no matter what the care setting, no matter if it was themselves or a loved one—they all opted for comfort care over any aggressive treatment.

Some of the reasons cited included fear of pain and decreased quality of life; being a burden on one's family; not wanted loved ones to remember them in pain or suffering; depleting a loved one's resources to provide "futile" care.

As one participant summed up his feelings, "I've lived almost 100 years. While I don't want to die, and would not consider suicide, if I don't wake up tomorrow, that will be OK. I've lived a long and full life."

Many of the participants agreed with his assessment.

Many recounted personal stories of situa-

I've lived almost 100 years. While I don't want to die, and would not consider suicide, if I don't wake up tomorrow, that will be OK. I've lived a long and full life.'

tions they had been involved in that involved "horrible" deaths, loved ones lingering for months or years with what they felt was little to no quality of life.

The phrase, "I don't want to end up like that myself" was heard repeatedly. Also discussed were special problems they had seen, or themselves experienced with second and/or third marriages, with children and step-children being at odds with decision making.

While this group may not represent the average senior living in the community, it was interesting how united all present were in their belief that comfort care should be the focus of all interventions, and that any "invasive" procedures needed to be justified only if they could be assured they would maintain and/or increase the current quality of life.

It certainly reinforced the fact that communication between health care practitioners and patients and/or their surrogates needs to contain detailed information of risks and benefits, and what is the "most likely" outcome, with best and worst case scenarios presented so that individuals and their surrogates can truly make informed decisions.

End-of-Life Partnership Coalitions Expand Community-Based Resources

(Continued from page 1)

4. Expand culturally sensitive end-of-life efforts
5. Develop of educational materials for the lay people and professionals
6. Professional education and training.

The Community Coalitions have formed and are now located throughout Florida. Indeed, the Florida Partnership has 17 active Community Coalitions involved in educating their respective communities about end-of-life issues to empower the public and health care providers. These Coalitions have already sponsored, and co-sponsored, many local end-of-life care events.

One such event is a collaboration among Miami-Dade, Monroe and Broward Counties featuring the production of a cable television series in conjunction with WLRN (Channel 17 in Miami-Dade). The "In Perspective" series features twelve shows on various aspects of end of life care. Broadcasts began in January 2001.

Following is a list of Florida communities served by Florida Partnership Coalitions. The Coalitions are ordered alphabetically by county name, regional group where selected, or by the first county in the group:

- Big Bend: Gadsen, Liberty, Franklin, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Madison and Taylor counties
- Broward County
- Central Florida: Seminole, Orange and Osceola counties
- Citrus County
- Hillsborough County
- Indian River County
- North Central Florida: Hamilton, Suwannee, Columbia, Baker, Union, Lafayette, Bradford, Gilcrest, Alachua, Dixie, Putnam and Levy counties
- Lake and Sumter counties
- Manatee, Sarasota, DeSoto and Charlotte counties

To learn more about Coalitions in your area, call the Florida Partnership statewide office in Tallahassee at 850-878-2632 or toll free at 877-783-1922.

- Marion County
- Miami-Dade and Monroe counties
- Mid-Florida: Polk, Hardee and Highlands counties
- Northeast Florida: Nassau, Duval, Baker, Clay and St. Johns counties
- Okeechobee, St. Lucie and Martin counties
- Palm Beach County
- Pinellas County
- Southwest Florida: Glades, Hendry, Lee and Collier counties
- Volusia and Flagler counties
- West Panhandle: Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Holmes, Washington, Bay, Jackson, Calhoun and Gulf counties

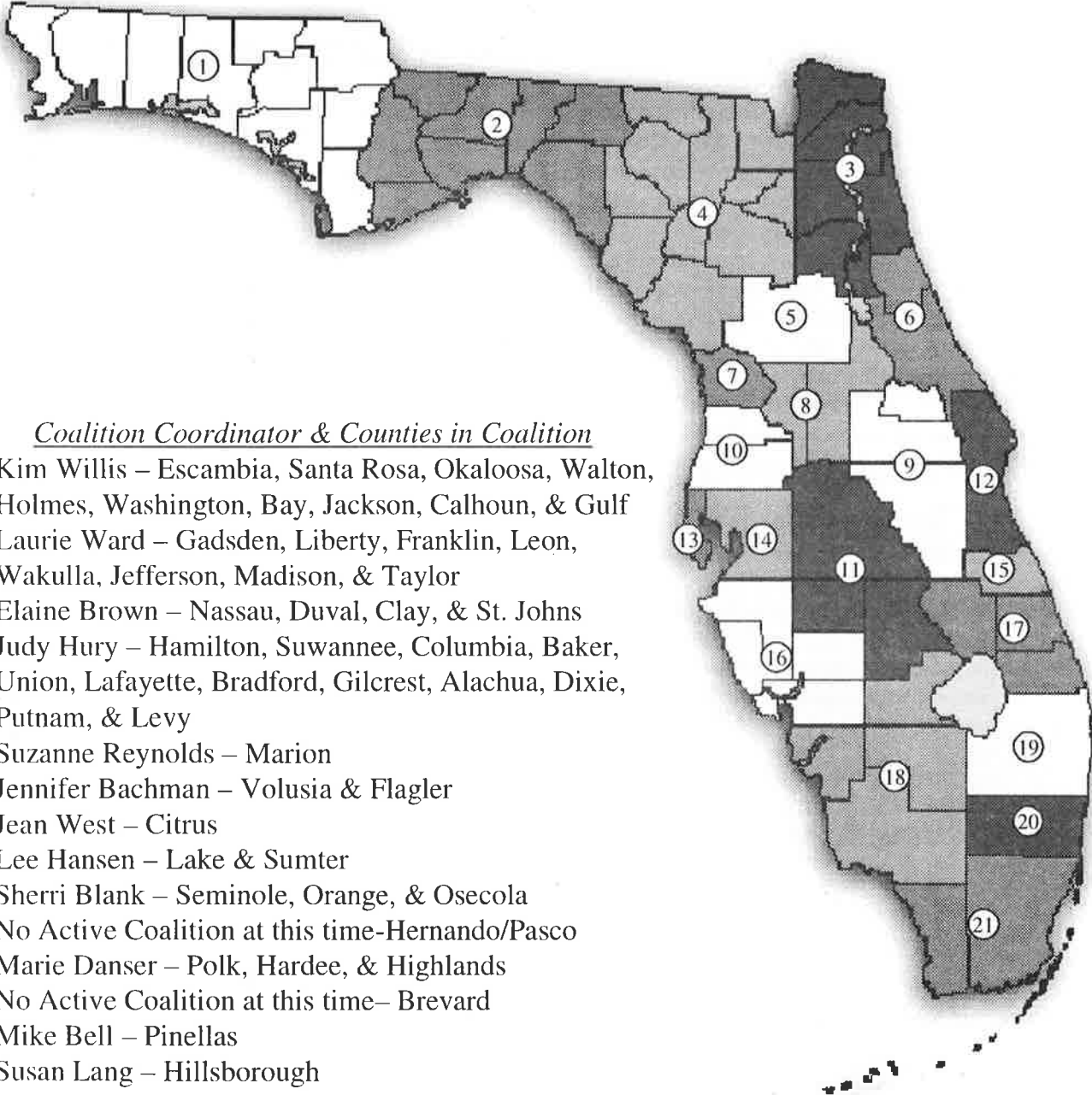
To get involved with Coalition efforts in your area, call the Florida Partnership office at 877-783-1922 or send email to flpartners@nettally.com.

Check Out FBN Online, Send E-mail

The Florida Bioethics Network is on the Web at <http://www.med.ufl.edu/chfm/ethics/fbn/index.html>. Please have a look at the network's Web site and send suggestions about features, content, etc. to fbn@chfm.health.ufl.edu

Also, we're compiling a list of members' e-mail addresses. This will improve efficiency and let us send special news items, Florida ethics updates, the newsletter and other material. So, please send your email address to ethics@miami.edu

Map of Partnership Coalitions by county or region, with coordinators



Coalition Coordinator & Counties in Coalition

- 1) Kim Willis – Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Holmes, Washington, Bay, Jackson, Calhoun, & Gulf
- 2) Laurie Ward – Gadsden, Liberty, Franklin, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Madison, & Taylor
- 3) Elaine Brown – Nassau, Duval, Clay, & St. Johns
- 4) Judy Hury – Hamilton, Suwannee, Columbia, Baker, Union, Lafayette, Bradford, Gilcrest, Alachua, Dixie, Putnam, & Levy
- 5) Suzanne Reynolds – Marion
- 6) Jennifer Bachman – Volusia & Flagler
- 7) Jean West – Citrus
- 8) Lee Hansen – Lake & Sumter
- 9) Sherri Blank – Seminole, Orange, & Osecola
- 10) No Active Coalition at this time-Hernando/Pasco
- 11) Marie Danser – Polk, Hardee, & Highlands
- 12) No Active Coalition at this time- Brevard
- 13) Mike Bell – Pinellas
- 14) Susan Lang – Hillsborough
- 15) Karen Lampert-Riley – Indian River
- 16) Cathy Emmett – Manatee, Sarasota, DeSoto, & Charlotte
- 17) Mary Jayne Kelly – Okeechobee, St. Lucie, & Martin
- 18) Linda Nelson – Glades, Hendry, Lee & Collier
- 19) Sue Deakin – Palm Beach
- 20) Kim Parsley – Broward
- 21) Cyndi Ramal – Monroe & Dade

EOL Workgroup Urges Changes to Advance Directive Law

TALLAHASSEE — The 2000 Florida Legislature created an End-of-Life Care Workgroup to continue the efforts of the previous Panel for the Study of End-of-Life Care. The 18-member workgroup was, according to the transmittal letter by Elder Affairs Secretary Gema G. Hernandez, directed to examine reimbursement methodologies for end-of-life care, identify end-of-life care standards that will enable all health providers along the health-care continuum to participate in an excellent system of delivering end-of-life care, and develop recommendations for incentives for appropriate end-of-life care.

Following is the Executive Summary of the report, which is being considered by legislators currently contemplating revisions to FS765, the statute that governs advance directives and related matters.

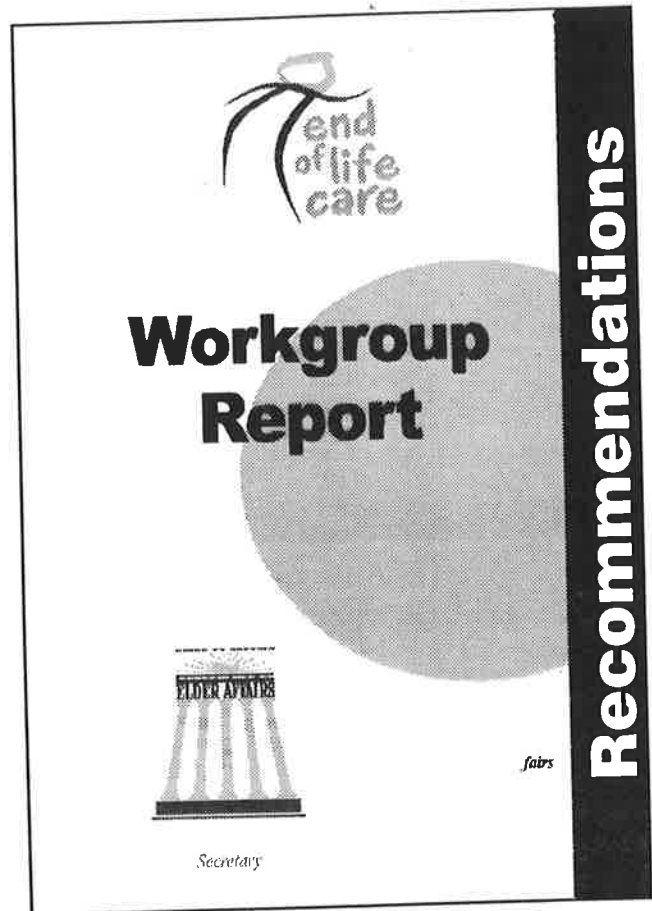
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The workgroup was directed to report their recommendations to the Governor and Legislature by December 31st. Workgroup members were encouraged to raise other relevant issues for discussion. Background information and the rationale for each recommendation are provided in the body of the report.

After much deliberation and based on nationally accepted and consensus based standards, the End-of-Life Care Workgroup developed the following recommendations:

1. To provide the public-at-large education that is culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate on end-of-life care, with specific initiatives for rural and other under served populations as provided in section 765.102 (5), Florida Statutes.
2. To initiate a demonstration project to identify the methods and costs of high quality end-of-life care in all types of Florida health care facilities including complementary or alternative medicine/therapies.
3. To amend section 456.033, Florida Statutes, to include Certified Nursing Assistants.
4. To add best interest to Chapter 765, Florida
5. To delete from Chapter 765, Florida Statutes, the threshold alternative criteria required to be certified in order to withhold or withdraw life-sustaining treatment.

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Statutes as follows:

Substituted judgment must be the preferred standard of decision-making used by health surrogates, durable powers of attorney for health care, and proxy decision-makers, but when there is no indication what the principal would have chosen, proposed or currently in effect, treatments may be withheld or withdrawn by the surrogate, durable powers of attorney for health care, or proxy's decision under a best interest standard.

The report is available on the Web at
<http://www7.myflorida.com/doea/healthfamily/publications/elderservices/doeaeolreport.pdf>

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- If the above criteria is not omitted, "end stage condition" definition should be changed to read as follows:

Section 765.101(4), Florida Statutes, end stage condition means a condition that is caused by injury, disease, or illness which has resulted in progressively severe and permanent deterioration, and for which the patient, resident, or authorized representative would deem life-prolonging treatment to be more of a burden than a benefit.

- 6. To add the following definition of palliative care, which was adopted by Palliative Care Task Force of Last Acts Organization in December 1997, to Chapter 765, Florida Statutes:

"Palliative care refers to the comprehensive management of the physical, psychological, social, spiritual, and existential needs of patients. It is especially suited to the care of people with incurable, progressive illness."

Source: Task Force on Palliative Care. "Precepts of Palliative Care." Last Acts. (December 1997).

- 7. To increase access to end-of-life and palliative care, add the following proposed language to Chapter 765, Florida Statutes:

State health and long term care organizations and individual health and long term care entities should evaluate:

- (a) The adequacy of their end-of-life and palliative care services including cultural appropriateness;
- (b) The relevant reimbursement policies which ensure availability of end-of-life and palliative care; and
- (c) Applicable administrative and regulatory barriers to end-of-life and palliative care.

- 8. To add the following standards to Chapter 765, Florida Statutes.

Palliative care must include an:

- 1) Opportunity to discuss and plan for end of life care.
- 2) Assurance that physical and mental suffer-

ing will be carefully attended to.

- 3) Assurance that preferences for withholding and withdrawing life-sustaining interventions will be honored.
- 4) Assurance that the personal goals of the dying person will be addressed.
- 5) Assurance that the dignity of the dying person will be a priority.
- 6) Assurance that health care providers will not abandon the dying person.
- 7) Assurance that the burden to family and others will be addressed.
- 8) Assurance that advance directives for care will be respected regardless of the location of care.
- 9) Assurance that organizational mechanisms are in place to evaluate the availability and quality of end-of-life and palliative care services.
- 10) Assurance that necessary health care services will be provided.
- 11) Assurance that the above will be done in culturally appropriate manner.

- 9. To initiate Assurance that a demonstration project that would:

- (a) Identify current research relevant to end-of-life and palliative care in Florida communities attention to be given to research dealing with culturally distinct populations;
- (b) Enhance quality and access to end-of-life and palliative care services especially in rural, uninsured, and minority communities;
- (c) Develop collaborative research and demonstration partnerships; and
- (d) Disseminate the results of current research using culturally appropriate mechanisms.

- 10. To promote public and professional education in end-of-life care standards, add to Chapter 765, Florida Statutes.

A. Public

- 1) The appropriate state agency will identify and coordinate existing training programs and materials on pal-

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EOL Workgroup Urges Changes to Advance Directive Law

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liative care that would be available in all communities and collaborate with programs such as Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJ) Partnership for End-of-Life Care Grant to promote community awareness and skills of surrogate and proxy decision makers. Determine the need for and establish new programs on training of surrogate and proxy decision makers that includes cultural values, beliefs and practices to ensure ongoing programs meet community needs. The program components should include:

- a) Consumer choices and responsibilities,
- b) Culturally appropriateness and linguistically diversified,
- c) Expectation for access to effective pain management and palliative care in all health care settings,
- d) Advance Directives and Surrogate/Proxy decision makers, and
- e) Targeting elders, their children, and caregivers in a public relations effort to improve their decision-making.

B. Professional

- 1) Encourage educational institutions to establish or enhance curricula to rapidly improve training in palliative care for physicians, nurses, counselors, social workers, pharmacists, or any other end-of-life care provider.
- 2) Encourage the use of established end-of-life

care professional curricula in Continuing Medical Education (CME) and Continuing Education Unit (CEU).

- 3) Encourage the development of a palliative medicine fellowship programs in the four medical schools in the state.
- 4) Encourage the inclusion of culturally appropriate materials.

Other Issues Identified by the Workgroup

- Case managers from Elder Services reported that law enforcement officers and fire fighters have not been honoring Do No Resuscitate Orders (DNROs) because they may not have protection from liability.
- Military physicians are excluded from writing DNROs because they are not licensed by the State of Florida.
- DNROs use the term "may" instead of the word "must". The use of the term "may" in the DNROs was raised this serious question. The general legislative intent expressed in Chapter 765, Florida Statutes, is extremely clear and strong on the point of assuring people that their decisions to refuse treatment will be followed. The use of the term "may" creates confusion and provides reluctant facilities or providers a plausible argument that they are not legally obligated to follow a patient's DNRO.

Senate Measure Seeks to Revise Living Will Statute

TALLAHASSEE — The Florida Legislature is again contemplating changes in the statute that governs living wills and advance directives.

Inspired by the need for widely agreed upon alterations, State Sen. Ron Klein (D-West Palm Beach) has introduced Senate Bill 2156 to provide more flexibility in interpreting FS 765.

The statute now requires three tests before an advance directive can be honored: patients must either in a "terminal" condition, an "end-stage" condition or a persistent vegetative state. These tests are widely seen as burdensome and onerous, although some people view them as protecting patients from inappropriate withholding or withdrawal of life-prolonging treatments.

The proposal would also lay out standards for surrogate decision making, as well as the content and suitability of palliative care.

The Florida statute has been the source of great controversy over the years, with many health professionals and others deriding it as infringing on patients rights and others insisting it provides needed protections. The Florida Medical Association, for instance, has declared its opposition to the "three tests" provisions. The End of Life Care Workgroup also has called for eliminating the "threshold alternative criteria" (see article above).

A complete report on the debate over FS765 will appear after the current legislative session in the next issue of *Florida Bioethics*.

FBN Member to Direct Online Health Law Masters

DAVIE — Legal issues abound in health care. The combination of managed care and increasing regulation has resulted in enormous potential for legal liability on both the provider and the payor side of the health care industry. Health care employees often struggle with attempts to negotiate the system and the law while providing the care they believe necessary. A story in *The Nation* in February, 2000, for example, recounted several anecdotes about health care professionals believing that they needed to break the rules, or even the law, to provide appropriate care. Unfortunately, attempts to do this can invite severe consequences, such as prosecution for Medicare and Medicaid fraud and abuse, which can result in millions of dollars of fines.

To educate non-lawyer health care professionals about health-related legal issues, Nova Southeastern University's Shepard Broad Law Center plans soon to offer a new online master's degree program in health law (M.H.L.). In offering this program, directed by FBN member Kathy Cerminara, the Law Center will become the first ABA-accredited law school in the country to provide master's-degree-level online health law education to non-lawyers.

The Law Center decided to offer the program in response to the dramatic changes, including an incredible expansion of legal regulation, the health care profession has witnessed over the past decade, Cerminara said. She anticipates that the master's degree program in Health Law aimed at non-lawyers in health care will help health care professionals identify legal issues within their employment responsibilities and communicate more effectively with lawyers

The first ABA-accredited law school in the country to provide master's-level online health law education to non-lawyers.

when doing so becomes necessary.

Other schools that have instituted such programs in more traditional, residential, models are Loyola University Chicago School of Law, Seton Hall University School of Law, the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, and Widener University School of Law. NSU's online model, however, will permit full-time health insurance personnel, managed care officers, health care practitioners, or health care administrators to further their education without interrupting their careers. To be accepted into the program, a student must hold a bachelor's degree and work in the area of health care, insurance or managed care.

The two-year, 30-credit program will be taught almost entirely over the Internet, supplemented by short residential sessions, or Institutes, each year. The M.H.L. program is currently seeking acquiescence from the American Bar Association to enroll its first class to begin in summer 2001, and the program's start is subject to receipt of that acquiescence. The program will also comply with all applicable rules of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

<http://www.mhl.nsulaw.edu>

Web site tip:

<http://www.floridahealthstat.com/>

HealthStat provides access to Florida's inpatient and outpatient databases. One can select a custom query or preformatted summary information for various conditions.

According to the Web site, ProviderStat helps users

locate information about health care providers, InsuranceStat provides a variety of information on health insurance, Reports & Guides provides health care consumer guides along with various studies and reports, SeniorStat provides health care information specific to Florida's seniors, KidStat provides health care information for and about Florida's children and RxStat provides pharmaceutical information and formularies.