



Cotton County Health Department

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## **Cotton County Health Department Celebrates Nurses**

*National Nurses Week is May 6-12.*

The Cotton County Health Department joins the American Nurses Association, Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH), health care professionals, patients and families, during *National Nurses Week, May 6-12*, in recognizing the important roles that nurses have in providing direct personal health care for patients and families and providing leadership in forming public health policies to improve the quality of care and quality of life for Oklahomans of all ages.

The public health nurses in Cotton County help improve the health for entire populations by providing services like child screenings, immunizations, WIC, STD, Communicable Diseases, Tuberculosis and Family Planning.

“We want to thank our very own public health nurses at the Cotton County Health Department,” said Brandie O’Connor, administrative health director. “Their diligence and efforts in providing quality care are greatly appreciated.”

This year’s theme is “Ethical Practice. Quality Care.” The theme is an important part of the American Nurses Association’s 2015 Year of Ethics outreach to promote and advocate for the rights, health and safety of nurses and patients.

The public holds nurses in high regard and trusts them to advocate for patients. For the past 13 years, the public has ranked nursing as the top profession for honesty and ethics in an annual Gallup survey.

There are about 3.1 million registered nurses nationally. Nurses impact all areas of public health from serving as program administrators and consultants to working with individual clients in the clinics of the county health departments.

Nurses practice diverse roles such as clinicians, administrators, researchers, educators, care coordinators, and policymakers. They help patients secure resources, obtain comprehensive care across many service areas, and develop healthy lifestyle practices to prevent sickness and diseases. Increasingly, nurses with advanced degrees, such as nurse practitioners, are providing primary care services, managing chronic illnesses, and experiencing positive outcomes.

The nurses serving the Cotton County Health Department are: Stayce Whisenhunt, County Coordinating Nurse; Brianna Vargas, ARNP-CNP; Keely Barger, Children First Nurse; Amber Smith, Float Nurse; Leah Mays, Public Health LPN; Rene Keys, District Nurse Manager; Amanda Hedrick, Children First Lead Clinician.

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