



Kiowa County Health Department

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## **Kiowa County Health Department Celebrates Nurses**

*National Nurses Week is May 6-12.*

The Kiowa 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 Kiowa 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 Kiowa 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 Kiowa County Health Department are: Kathy Sanford, County Coordinating Nurse; Sherry Downen, Public Health Nurse; Brianna Vargas, ARNP-CNP; Anna Sweger, Children First Nurse; Rene Keys, District Nurse Manager; and Amanda Hedrick Children First Lead Clinician. The nursing staff is supported by Arline Thompson, Nutrition Assistant.

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