

# Supporting Vital Programs



## School Nurse **Emergency** Medical Services for Children

Beginning this summer, the UConn School of Nursing will conduct the School Nurse Emergency Medical Services for Children Program. Offered since the mid-1990s by the UConn Center for Continuing Studies, the School of Nursing was only too happy to take over the program when it was offered to them.



Taught by nurses Patricia Vayda and Terry DeVito, the program will be conducted in the Widmer Wing, giving the School of Nursing greater visibility. This first year will be a trial year with the hope of offering the course more than once a year, and to larger groups of nurses, or to add an online course or information beforehand to further the learning experience. The school

will also provide a resource and reference manual to the nurses participating in the program.

Associate Dean Paula McCauley said, “We’ve been talking about programs that we could develop and implement through the School of Nursing, and this seems like a logical initiative for us. It is already developed; now it’s just a question of how big we can make it. It is recognized as one of only two similar programs in the country, so, if we really wanted to go national, we could.”

While this program seeks to help school nurses, Associate Dean McCauley sees the potential for the program to aid the UConn School of Nursing professors and students. She said that the school will apply some of the program’s concepts to its pediatric undergraduate curriculum. “The question would be how much of the content are we already covering? Is there content in here that we should be doing with our undergrads? The concept of whether we could actually implement these three days into our curriculum should be explored,” McCauley said.

The three-day program is open to full- or part-time school nurses or substitute nurses. It aims to reduce morbidity and mortality in children and youths who become injured or ill at school. The program provides school nurses with the skills they need to assess and to implement pre-hospital care and to develop intervention strategies and school emergency plans with their schools. EMS experts will explain the emergency responders’ perspective on how to manage schools’ emergency responses.

While this will be the test year for the School of Nursing to host the School Nurse Emergency Medical Services for Children Program, school nurses may not be the only ones benefitting from school taking the program under its wing. ■