
what's up doc?



by Dr. Mary Livers

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Hello, Everyone:

I am looking forward to an enjoyable evening out with friends tonight. We are going to a professional bull riders show! That should be very entertaining. You know, I may have gotten a little more cowgirl in me than I knew....although right now I don't know if I identify more with the bull or with the rider. It brings me back to my teen years in Shreveport when I had a beautiful buckskin quarter horse named Tuffie. She was quite a horse. I really loved riding. Better a horse than a bull, though.

Some recreation will be most welcome after the week we have had at central office. There are a number of initiatives we are working on, including the Streamlining Government Commission and Outcome-Based Budgeting. There is a report on the Division of Administration's website that contains all agencies' reports on streamlining, if you want to take a look. Go to http://doa.louisiana.gov/doa/cabinet_reports.htm

We had our regular JJIC meeting yesterday. As you may or may not know, a lot of staff time is dedicated to our making the best presentation that we can to the commission. It was a good meeting. I think it's time to shift the conversation away from the secure facilities and talk more about what can be done statewide to decrease the need for secure beds. We need to work collectively in partnership with our district attorneys, our judges, and public defenders, along with our state partners, DSS and DHH-OMF and the MacArthur Foundation, to find ways to keep youth from entering the system. A major area of concern that we are going to try to address is FINS. (Families in Need of Services, for those not familiar with the program that works with kids and families who need services for such matters as truancy and being ungovernable.)

As you may be aware, the H1N1 (swine flu) situation is not only not going away, but the experts are predicting the flu will come roaring back this fall. We got through the first round easily, but round two could get rough. I hope you will keep yourselves apprised of the latest information about how to take care of yourselves and your families, and you will take the flu shot as soon as it becomes available. The vaccine for H1N1 (swine) flu will come out a little later, and you should consider urging children, teens and young adults to get those shots. They are in the high risk group with no natural immunity from the virus. We will share information with you as it becomes available.

In the meantime, I hope each of you has a well-deserved, relaxing weekend. And a special thanks to those of you whose weekend is during the week! Thanks so much for all you do to meet the mission.

I'm off to see the bulls....and the riders. Ay-eee!

Sincerely,
"Doc"

Dr. Mary Livers

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