

In the year 2005 CAPT Keith Varvel will be retiring from the United States Public Health Service (USPHS). It is with great honor for the Therapist Professional Advisory Committee to recognize CAPT Keith Varvel's 30-years of dedicated service.

CAPT Varvel was born and raised in Kansas. He completed his Bachelor's of Science Degree from the Pittsburg State University, Kansas and later pursued a Certificate in Physical Therapy at University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas. After working 6-years in the private sector, CAPT Varvel joined the USPHS and was assigned to an Outpatient Clinic in Miami, Florida as the Chief of Physical Therapy Services. Besides performing his duties as Chief of Physical Therapy Services, He was the physical therapist consultant to the US Coast Guard Seventh Fleet Headquarters in Miami and the first therapist to establish direct access to Physical Therapy in the USPHS. From 1976-1979 CAPT Varvel was assigned to the Gallup Indian Medical Center as the Deputy Chief of Physical Therapy Services. At Gallup, CAPT Varvel established and operated the first musculoskeletal screening clinic and instituted the first manipulative therapy program.

CAPT Varvel will be retiring from his current post as Chief of Physical Therapy Services at Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation. CAPT Varvel has been assigned to Tuba City since 1979. CAPT Varvel has greatly expanded physical services for the Navajo, Paiute, and Hopi people. The Tuba City Physical Therapy Department has gone from a 2-Therapist hospital based outpatient service to a 6-therapist with 3-support staff. The Indian Health Service has greatly benefited from CAPT Varvel leadership and vision. He is credited for collaborative projects such as:

- 1) Developed the only acupuncture service within a physical therapy service in the USPHS.
- 2) Development of a detailed Priority of Care process to guide the application of limited resources in an effective and equitable manner. Through the application of these Priorities of Care repeated Quality Reviews have revealed provision of same day care for all physical therapy patients with acute medical conditions. After intense scrutiny, by the NAIHS Rehabilitation Branch department chiefs, this template was adopted with minor modifications.
- 3) Contributor to the development of the standardized Diabetic Foot Care forms and was author of the instructional guide for these forms. He has also been a reviewer for the Diabetic Foot Care Standards of Care being considered for the IHS. He has also worked extensively with the Northern Arizona University Mobile Technologies Project in the digitalization of that format.
- 4) Created the "Superbill" for capturing physical therapy services rendered, directly on to the Indian Health Service Patient Care Component forms. He established a working policy and procedure, which has been used effectively to maximize collections from insurance companies at the Tuba City Regional Health Care Corporation.

CAPT completed the Indian Health Service fellowship in Injury Prevention and has incorporated principles learned in the continuation of his Athletic Injury and Prevention Program for 18 of his years in Tuba City. In the mid-90's he developed and administered an extensive Ergonomic Intervention Program at the Tuba City Indian Medical Center. He has sponsored and taught Ergonomic workshops for many IHS practitioners. He served for two years as Chair of the IHS Ergonomics Workgroup and represented that body on the Department of Defense Ergonomic Workgroup for over three years and is currently packaging

the Ergonomic Program guidance document for the IHS. CAPT Varvel is especially proud of his involvement with the Department of Veterans Affairs at St. Louis, MO. CAPT Varvel contributed his expertise in ergonomics and assisted in the development of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Guidebook on Ergonomics. This Guidebook is one in a series used within the VHA developed by the Center for Engineering & Occupational Safety in St. Louis. They provide huge benefits and cost avoidance to the system, and are important in improving VHA's reputation as a national leader in safety.

CAPT Varvel has shown exceptional dedication to his profession and the importance of professional development throughout his career. He organized the offering of numerous McKenzie spine care courses. This four-part Certification Course has given over 50 USPHS therapists the opportunity to excel as clinicians. CAPT Varvel completed his Master's in Public Health Service from Loma Linda University while performing his duties as Chief of Physical Therapy Services.

CAPT Varvel is a highly decorated Officer. He has been recognized with the following awards:

- Commendation Medal by the United States Public Health Service (USPHS)
- Achievement Medal by the USPHS
- Citation by the USPHS
- Isolated Hardship by the USPHS
- Unit Commendations by the USPHS
- Bicentennial Unit Commendation by the USPHS
- Regular Corp Ribbon by the USPHS

The Therapist Category would like to extend a sincere thank you to CAPT Keith Varvel for his contributions. Through his work, he has brought recognition and credibility to his profession and the United States Public Health Service.