News and Notes

CANCERS ATTRIBUTABLE TO FALLOUT FROM NUCLEAR TESTING

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI) have released a report on the health consequences of fallout from nuclear weapons testing. The report estimates that 80,000 people who lived in or were born in the U.S. from 1951 to 2000 will develop cancer due to exposure to fallout from nuclear weapons testing. Estimates of radiation dosing from the Nevada Test Site and from sites outside of the continental U.S. are highlighted in the report. A fact sheet and official fallout maps are scheduled to appear on the CDC website.

The full report, *Progress Report to Congress: A Feasibility Study of the Health Consequences to the American Population of Nuclear Weapons Tests Conducted by the United States and Other Nations*, is available on-line at URL: http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/radiation/fallout/report.pdf

JOURNAL ACCESS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Medical journals are inaccessible to many health and research institutions in poor countries due to the high cost of subscriptions. Journal subscriptions are typically priced uniformly for institutions, regardless of geographic location.

The Access to Research initiative is a three-year project that allows accredited universities, medical schools, research centers, and other public institutions in developing countries to gain access to information contained in more than 1,000 biomedical journals.

Launched by the Secretary General of the United Nations in September 2000 and led by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Health InterNetwork was created to bridge the "digital divide" in health, ensuring that relevant information—and the technologies to deliver it—are widely available and effectively used by professionals, researchers and scientists, and policy makers.

The first stage of the initiative makes the content of more than 1,000 journals available on-line, free of charge or at significantly reduced cost to institutions in impoverished countries. A second stage will involve similar access at significantly reduced prices for institutions in other countries.

The WHO's partners in this project are six major biomedical publishers: Blackwell, Elsevier Science, the Harcourt Worldwide STM Group, Wolters Kluwer International Health & Science, Springer Verlag, and John Wiley.

For more information on the Access to Research initiative, visit the Health InterNetwork website at URL: http://www.healthinternetwork.net

ORAL HEALTH REPORT CARD

Oral Health America (OHA), an advocacy group, has released an annual report card on oral health in the U.S. The nation received a grade of C for 2001, with the lowest marks in areas involving prevention and access to care, indicating that basic oral health is not a priority for policy makers. This grade is a slight increase from the C– earned in 2000.

In its report, the OHA highlights evidence of lack of prevention, in that many states still fail to provide fluoridated public drinking water for at least half of their residents. Access to insurance is noted as a particular problem for the elderly. In addition, income is shown to have a significant effect on services received. Regardless of income, however, more than one-third of people in most states had failed to see a dentist in the previous year.

OHA reports progress in oral health awareness. Several states had hired dental directors and others had increased the position to full-time. This contributed to the national average score of B+ in the oral health leadership category. OHA attributed this advance to awareness created by U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher's report on oral health, issued in 2000.

The full OHA report is available at URL: http://www.oralhealthamerica.org.

Oral Health in America: A Report of the Surgeon General can be found at URL: http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/oralhealth/.

WHO, UNICEF, UNAIDS, WORLD BANK, UNESCO, AND UNFPA REPORT ON RESPONSE TO INFECTIOUS DISEASES

The World Health Organization (WHO), UNICEF, UNAIDS, the World Bank, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

have released a report titled *Scaling Up the Response to Infectious Diseases: A Way out of Poverty*. The report calls for an organized and targeted effort to take proven strategies and increase their availability.

The report highlights two main strategies. The first is to expand the use of known and cost-effective interventions in order to reduce TB and malaria deaths by half and new HIV infections in young people by 25% in a decade. The report urges applying more investment into existing tools, including drugs to treat TB and HIV/AIDS, mosquito nets to prevent infection with malaria, and condoms to prevent infections with HIV. The report outlines the treatment strategies available and the health systems through which they can be delivered.

The second strategy is to use new resources more efficiently in combination with novel marketing and communications approaches to encourage healthy behavior. The report's suggestion to create partnerships with the private sector is endorsed by a series of statements from private- and public-sector organizations.

The full report, *Scaling Up the Response to Infectious Diseases: A Way out of Poverty* is available at URL: http://www.who.int/infectious-disease-report/2002/index.html.

DHHS SURVEY SHOWS SHORTAGE OF NURSES

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has released a survey that highlights the growing shortage of nurses. The report provides information on the number of registered nurses, their educational background and specialty areas, their employment status, their geographic distribution, and demographics including gender, racial/ethnic background, age, and family status.

The 2000 survey suggests that not enough young people are choosing careers in nursing and that the average age of registered nurses has increased substantially since 1980. In 1980, 52.9% of RNs were younger than age 40, but by 2000, only 31.7% were younger than 40. In 1980, 26% of RNs were younger than 30, but by 2000, fewer than 10% were younger than 30.

The *Seventh National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses* is available at URL: http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/healthworkforce/rnsurvey/.

CENSUS BUREAU PROFILES FOREIGN-BORN AND FIRST-GENERATION U.S. RESIDENTS

The number of foreign-born and "first-generation" U.S. residents has reached the highest level in U.S. history—56 million, or one in five residents—according to a report by the Census Bureau.

Of the younger-than-age-25 population, 21% were either foreign-born or first-generation in 2000, compared with 7% in 1970.

Births to foreign-born women now account for one in five births, which is up from about one in 20 three decades ago, according to the report, *Profile of the Foreign-Born Population in the United States: 2000*.

The report, prepared with major funding from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, presents the first-ever analysis by the Census Bureau of the characteristics of children who live with foreign-born parents. This analysis found that of these 11.5 million children, about 80% were born in the United States. More than 30% of foreign-born people in the U.S. lived in the Los Angeles and New York metropolitan areas.

The report includes information on household income, duration of residence in the United States, household size, high school completion rates, and home ownership, among other variables. Included are more than 400 pages of tables that show data by place of birth and place of residence.

These findings are based on data collected in the March 2000 Current Population Survey and do not reflect the results of Census 2000.

The full text of the report can be found at URL: http://www.census.gov/prod/2002pubs/p23-206.pdf.