PPT script

1.

North Carolina has a long and proud history of public health nursing. For over a hundred years, nurses armed with the latest scientific knowledge, caring hearts, a desire to help others and a sense of adventure have become public health nurses. African American, white and Native American public health nurses have worked across the state from urban to very remote rural settings to relieve suffering and make life better for people in their communities.

2.

Professional nursing began in NC, as it did across the United States in the late 1800s. Lessons learned by Florence Nightingale and her nurses in the Crimea

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supplemented by the American experiences of nursing during the Civil War paved the way for the establishment of the field of professional nursing.

4

Some of theses new nurses, led by Lillian Wald of the Henry Street Settlement in New York City, took the nursing expertise they acquired at the hospital bedside out into the community. Linda roStruthers of the HSS became the first school nurse in the US in 1902. In the early years of the 20th century, some nurses in NC began working in

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neighborhoods,

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Child care settings

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Schools

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and in faith communities. This presentation will highlight some of their stories.

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Let’s take a step back and add some context …. (READ SLIDE)

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Much of rural NC did not get electricity until the late 1940s so surgery and dental work were often performed outside for better visualization and air circulation

11.

Infectious diseases including Pneumonia, influenza, TB, gastroenteritis and diptheria accounted for almost half of all deaths in 1900

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Childbirth was a leading cause of death for women and infant mortality was alarmingly high

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READ SLIDE  
14

In 1903, NC became the first state in the country to pass a law regarding nurse registration

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The next year, 1904, Amelia Lawrason of Wilmington became the first public health nurse to practice in NC. She was hired by the Episcopal Chapel of the Good Shepherd and the Ministering Circle of the King’s Daughters, an interfaith women’s Christian organization, to provide home care to the sick poor of Wilmington. In the first decade of the twentieth century (1900-1910) most PHNs in NC were hired by church and civic organizations.

16

In 1911, The Wayside Workers of the Home Moravian Church hired Registered Nurse Percy Powers to work among the people of Salem (now part of Winston-Salem). She provided home health and maternity services. Nurse Powers started a school health program of physical inspection and follow up and health education. She was the first school nurse in NC.

17

In that same year, 1911, the Greensboro Chapter of the Tuberculosis Association, using funds acquired from the sale of Christmas Seals, hired Greensboro’s first public health nurse, Clara Peck, to help people with tuberculosis and their families in Guilford County. Peck soon began the school nursing program in Guilford County and later was the first nursing director of its health department. Today Greensboro has both a public elementary school and family violence shelter named in her honor.

18

The Associated Charities of Raleigh also employed a visiting nurse in 1911. Around the same time the Young Men’s Benevolent Society of the Second Presbyterian Church of Charlotte paid the salary of a visiting nurse for their city.

19

Many Charlotte area civic clubs including the Charlotte Women’s Club, the Goodfellows Club, the Civitan Club and the Kiwanas were all supporting public health nurses and clinics for infants, children and pregnant women.

20 These early public health nurses, employed by voluntary health organizations and religious groups, were joined in the decade of the 19- teens by public health nurses employed by local governments.

21

In 1910, the City of Asheville hired Jane Brown, RN, a graduate of the Watts School of Nursing in Durham, to provide bedside nursing for patients recently discharged from area hospitals She provided nursing services for the people of Buncombe County for 35 years.

22

In 1915, Ms. Julia Latta was the first African American nurse and Mrs. Emily Pickard was the first white nurse hired by the Durham City School Board.

23

In Wilmington, on May 1, 1915 the New Hanover Board of Health hired the first nurse to perform school nursing and infant welfare work in the county. By 1918, the City of Wilmington employed 4 public health nurses and 1 nursing supervisor.

24

Reflecting the racial and religious prejudice of that time, I n 1921, the Jewish Women’s Federated Charities of Wilmington raised enough money to sponsor an additional public health nurse. In 1923 enough money was raised by African American civic organizations to hire a school nurse for the segregated African American school which apparently had not been receiving adequate (if any) services from the white school nurses employed by the county. The next year, 1924, the county used public funds to help pay the salary of 2 African American public health nurses.

25

Greensboro City Health Department nursing department was well staffed and a model for the state/

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A notable exception to the pattern of nurses being hired by benevolent associations and local governments was the work of Lydia Holman of Mitchell County. *A Spanish American Was veteran, she came to Mitchell County NC as a private duty nurse. In December, 1900, when Holman arrived in the town of Ledger there were no paved roads, no electricity, no running water, no hospital, and no trained nurses. As her patient’s health improved, Holman was increasingly called on by local residents to attend to their illnesses. Mary Wyche, Founder of the NCNA described her work this way:*

*“Miss Holman made a study of the living conditions of the people and found them lacking in many respects. She became attached to the mountain folk and felt that she could be of use to them in combating disease and in teaching hygiene and dietetics … For many years she not only did her housework and cooking, but cared for her horse as well. At any hour of the day or night she answered the calls of the people, riding alone for miles to attend a person in need. Her arduous duties have been attended by danger and discomforts…”*

*27*

*Despite her rural location, Holman was active in many nursing organizations. She was elected to the first Board of Directors of the National Association of Public health Nurses in 1912. In 1907 she spoke at an ANA Convention describing her work. Without the backing of a government agency or a church or civic organization, Holman spent a good deal of time appealing for money, supplies and staff to help with her work. Articles about Holman and her work were published in numerous magazines including the American Journal of Nursing, Public Health Nurse, Outlook and the World’s Work. Dr. William Welsh, a pathologist at John’s Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland took an interest in Holman’s work Together they formed the Holman Association for the Promotion of Rural Nursing, Hygiene and Social Service. Chapters of the Holman Association formed in Baltimore, Pittsburgh, New York, Washington, Boston and Philadelphia. Chapter members raised money and sent funds and supplies to her. They also recruited volunteers, including medical and nursing students from John’s Hopkins University, to spend varying amounts of time in Ledger helping with the work*

28

As the years went by progress came to western North Carolina, including Mitchell County. A few physicians were upset by the breadth of Holman’s work and had her arrested for practicing medicine without a license. Holman commented: “It was nicely done. He [the arresting officer] read his warrant and said “Now, Miss Holman, don’t let it worry you … It will cost you every cent of fifty dollars, and I would not do it. There ain;’t no reason why you should pay anything”. I took the man’s advice and spent the whole day waiting for the people in the courthouse to decide what was to become of me. The Solicitor read a very nice little piece of scripture and dismissed the case … After court, twenty mountain men or more took credit for having the case thrown out.

29

Deposits of kaolin, mica and other minerals were discovered in Mitchell County in the early 1900s. Companies were formed to extract and export these minerals. The Holston Corporation built a railroad to transport the minerals to markets. Building and maintaining a railroad in the treacherous, mountainous terrain caused many casualties. Holman convinced the officials of the Holston Corporation of the benefits of having a local hospital to treat injured workers and their families. The Holston Corporation donated 15 acres of land and the Holman Association chapters supplied the money to build and equip the twenty four bed hospital. A delivery suite and operating room were incorporated into the building (Pollitt, 1991). The Holman Committee in Boston reported the hospital recorded 1,800 visits during its first year of service

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In addition to intelligence and care, Holman also demonstrated ingenuity. By 1930 there were sufficient paved roads in the county to make traveling by car faster and easier than horseback. Holman had no extra funds with which to purchase a car so she wrote President Herbert Hoover saying if she had a nice car she would be able to drive voters to the polls to vote for him in the upcoming presidential election. Soon, a brand new 1931 model A Ford was delivered to Holman from the White House. In 1936, at age 68, Holman was elected to the Mitchell County Board of Health, becoming the first female elected official in the county.

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Holman spent her retirement years in her beloved Mitchell County, dying in 1962 in the VA hospital in nearby Asheville. She is buried in a plain grave in the Spruce Pine cemetery close to where she spent her life in unselfish service to her fellow citizens.

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In 1914, the American Red Cross Town and Country Nursing Service was established to provide skilled nursing care and health instruction in remote rural regions across the United States. The Red Cross piloted this program in a few communities across the US. Old Fort, in McDowell County was selected as one of the first towns to benefit from a Red Cross nurse.

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Over 50 nurses paid in whole or in part by the American Red Cross provided early public health services to rural communities in NC

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The American Red Cross was one of the first health care organizations to integrate its workforce. Nurse Frances Davis of Shelby, NC was the first African American nurse employed by the American Red Cross in 1919.

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The Rockefeller Foundation was another national organization that hired public health personnel to help residents of North Carolina. In the 19 teens the Rockefeller Foundation hired doctors and nurses to carry out massive hookworm eradication campaigns in the eastern part of our state.

36

Two major world wide events occurred in 1918-1919 that had a huge impact on public health nursing in NC. The first was the world wide flu pandemic. The “Spanish Flu” flu killed millions of people worldwide and over 13,000 in NC. On Oct 24, 1918, the entire city of Charlotte was quarantined. Hundreds of nurses volunteered to work with federal, state and county health officials to fight this disease. The flu epidemic highlighted the need for more public health infrastructure and personnel

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The second was the return on thousands of WWI vets with injuries and respiratory complications from chemical warfare. 3,655 NC soldiers were physically wounded in WWI (1918-1919), others suffered respiratory illnesses and PTSD

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From the NC Health Bulletin 1919 report. Following the lead of city and county governments, the state government of NC began its involvement in public health nursing in 1919. The state partnered with the American Red Cross to establish the Bureau of Public Health Nursing and Infant Hygiene. Nurse Rose Ehrenfeld became its first director. There were two primary focuses of state public health work in the earliest days: school health and midwife supervision.

39

After years of struggle, including arrests (4 nurses went to jail) women’s right to vote became the las on August 20, 1920

40 – READ SLIDE

41 - READ SLIDE

42

A 1928 report in the Health Bulletin shows that state public health nurses, many funded by the Shepherd Towner Act, delivered midwife classes in 30 counties in the state.

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Maternal and infant death rates start to decline in the late 1920s and 1930s at least partially due to the midwife classes.

44

READ SLIDE (Shpherd Towner Act defunded

45

In 1919, in addition to Rose Ehrenfeld, six school nurses, often referred to as “Dr, Cooper’s Nurses” were hired by the NC State Department of Public Health to assess school children across the state for growth, dental status, infections, particularly of the tonsils and adenoids.

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These nurses traveled across North Carolina inspecting every school child once every 3 years. They followed up on problems they found by setting up clinics for immunizations, dental care, removal of tonsils and adenoids

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They also provided hundreds of health lectures to parent groups and teachers about a wide variety of topics. Many years later, NC Nurse Historian, Mary Lewis Wyche (1938) wrote about these nurses this way:

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“they have traveled on foot, horseback, on rafts, by boat, tram cars, ox-carts –any way to reach the ‘forgotten” child.”

In 1930, Amy Louise Fisher was hired by the Watauga Lutheran Mission in Boone NC to work as a parish nurse. When New Deal funding became available in 1935, Fisher became the first public health nurse in Watauga County. In a 1936 article for the journal **Public Health Nurse**, Fisher described her new situation this way:

“Last year was the first year the health department has been in existence here and we tried to cover practically the whole county. Over 5,000 people took the typhoid fever vaccine and 1,625 babies and children were given diphtheria toxoid. There are about 50 schools in the county, and we plan our schedule that we may get to the most inaccessible ones before bad weather sets in. … We don’t try to go to Lower Elk after a hard rain because you ford the creek 22 times and some of the fords are pretty deep.

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The first North Carolina Eastern Band Cherokee Registered Nurse, Mrs. Lula Owl Gloyne, was employed as a public health nurse on the Qualla Boundary for 5 decades

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She was the first of ten children born to Daniel Lloyd Owl a Cherokee blacksmith and Nettie Harris Owl, a Catawba Indian and traditional basket maker and potter. Lloyd did not speak Catawba and Nettie did not speak Cherokee, but both parents shared a basic knowledge of English which became the primary language in the household. Owl attended a Quaker mission school on the Qualla Boundary and then went to Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia and graduate with a teaching degree

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After spending a year teaching Catawba children in Rock Hill, SC she followed her hearts desire to become a nurse. She graduated from the Chestnut Hill Hospital in Philadelphia in 1916 and soon joined the US ARMY Nurse Corps in WWI. She wanted to go overseas but failed her seasickness test. Instead she served at a Camp in Washington State. When the War was over she soon returned to the Qualla Boundary and began nursing people in her tribe.

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She described her work this way: “There was no hospital in Cherokee then, just a clinic at the Quaker grade school and a doctor who worked there part time. When I came home they asked me to help out and at first I worked without pay. I did all the outside work (meaning outside the hospital or public health nursing). I got called to homes all around here. I didn’t have a horse or a wagon back then, though some people had ox driven carts and a few had wagons, so I had to make my calls on foot. I got caught in places (too far from the doctor) where I’d just have to do what had to be done. Men got cut up and I’d have to sew them up. Women would call on me to deliver their babies. Today it would be illegal to do a lot of that, but back then there was no one else.”

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Nurse Gloyne inspired several other Cherokee women to become nurses. One of these was Ernestine Walkingstick, shown here in the 1972 Health Bulletin going on a home visit.

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The stock market crash of 1929 led to the Great Depression of the 1930s. The focus of public health nurses was often on the basics of food and sanitation. Poverty, hunger and disease were rampant in NC during the Great Depression

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In response to the Great Depression. President Roosevelt initiated many New Deal Programs including the Social Security Act which expanded the scope and breadth of public health nursing activities throughout the country

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These New Deal programs had significant impacts on the health of many North Carolinians. A common activity for public health nurses in the 1930s was preventing disease through immunization programs.

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People who had little or no access to nurses and doctors were receiving care for the first time, including those living on the outer banks of North Carolina.

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In the 1930s public health nurses started adding family planning and venereal disease clinics to their already busy agendas. In 1937 North Carolina became the first state to sponsor a family planning clinic. Using a grant from the Proctor and Gamble Corporation, the Cumberland Co HD hired nurse Frances Roberta Pratt, RN to coordinate the first public family planning clinic in US.

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In 1938, the Social Security administration nurses began working on sexually transmitted disease prevention and education programs.

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In 1940 in Chapel Hill, the new UNC School of Public Health opened with increased educational opportunities for the state’s public health nurses. Ruth Warwick Hay, a national leader in public health nursing education, was hired as the first head of the department of Public Health Nursing. Hundreds of Diploma prepared NC nurses earned college degrees and new skills through this program

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**In 1945 a** Joint public health nursing training program between established with North Carolina Central University and the UNC School of Public health

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Nurse Mary Mills was employed by NCCU in 1946 to oversee the program there

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Mills’s story is one of the more amazing stories in NC Public Health nursing history. Born in 1912 and raised near Waltha in Pender County, she was one of eleven children and the granddaughter of slaves. In her career, Mills brought health and hope to people around the world.

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After WWII, Mills was one of the first NC nurses to undertake global health nursing. For nearly three decades Captain Mills labored in poor countries including Liberia, Lebanon, Chad, Viet Nam and Cambodia, organizing maternity wards, child health clinics and nursing schools

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She received her early learning in a one teacher schoolhouse in the days when segregation ruled and educational opportunities for rural, African American children in North Carolina were deplorable. Mills was an exceptional student and completed as much schooling as was available to her in Pender County.

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And somehow during the height of the Great Depression, she graduated from the Lincoln Hospital School of Nursing in Durham in 1934

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Mills worked as a public health nurse and then in advanced practice as a Nurse-Midwife while she completed her education. She earned several certificate in advanced practice and 2 graduate degrees

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After only a year at NCCU, Mills began her distinguished career in global nursing when she joined the Office of International Health with the United States Public Health Service Mission in Monrovia, Liberia.

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While in Liberia, she created some of the countries first health education campaigns, she initiated a national public health library and she advocated legislation to strengthen nursing as a profession

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After a short period back in the United States for study, rest and family visits, Mills, who had been promoted from the rank of major to that of Lt. Colonel, then Colonel and finally Captain, received a USPHS assignment to Beirut Lebanon in January, 1952.

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In Lebanon, Mills worked hard to establish the country’s first school of nursing and after its successful beginnings was awarded the Order of the Cedars, one of that country’s highest awards for service. A nursing dormitory at the school was named in her honor

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In her twenty year career with the Office of International Health, Mills was an ambassador of good will representing North Carolina and the United States around the globe. She provided health education, nursing care and midwifery services to countless suffering individuals and families in Liberia, Lebanon, South Vietnam, Cambodia and Chad. In those countries, Mills worked on small pox and malaria eradication campaigns, sanitation, hygiene and nutrition health education programs, and the establishment of maternal-child health clinics

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Mills received many awards for her work.

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Mills retired from government service in 1976 to her beloved Pender County. She remained an active volunteer in several local organizations that help others and advance nursing. She died in 2010. Her story is virtually unknown, yet her contributions to our profession are almost beyond words. May her life inspire all of us to reach out to people everywhere and provide care and education to all.

75

Back at home, NC communicable diseases, especially polio, were rampant during the late 1940s and 1950s and public health nurses served gallantly in fighting this scourge. One example is known as “the Miracle of Hickory”. The area around Hickory became the center of one of the worst outbreaks of polio ever recorded in 1944. This polio epidemic quickly filled hospitals in the piedmont section of the state. Local and state public health workers, in conjunction with the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis went into high gear.

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Almost overnight, they turned a local children’s camp into an emergency hospital. From the time the decision was made until equipment, doctors, nurses and patients were in a new facility, took less than 54 hours - a feat that became known as “the miracle of Hickory.”.

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After the initial facilities were operational, seven more buildings were quickly added to accommodate the need. Nurses from surrounding counties came on their days off to help the children. A Red Cross official on the scene praised the project "as the most outstanding example of cooperative effort he has ever seen." After several months and the coming of winter, the polio epidemic abated and the emergency hospital was closed.

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Streptomycin, the first successful treatment for Tuberculosis became available in 1949. Screening for TB continued to be a major public health nurse responsibility through the 1960s.

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Clinics, home visits and school nursing continued to be the backbone of public health nursing in the 1950s.

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A public health nursing first occurred in 1952 when NC Public health nursing leader Louise East became the first nurse to lead the NCPHA. She was served as president of the NC Nurse Association from 1948-1949.

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Polio vaccine became widely available in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Hundreds of thousands of school children and adults were vaccinated for polio. Here is a nurse from the Pitt County health department giving a polio shot before we had the sugar cubes.

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Margaret Baggett Dolan, perhaps the most important public health nursing leader to come from North Carolina, was born on March 17, 1914 in Lillington. She graduated from the Georgetown University School of Nursing in Washington, DC, in 1935. In 1944 she later earned her BS degree in Public Health Nursing from UNC-Chapel Hill School of Public Health and in 1953 she graduated with a Masters Degree from Teachers College, Columbia University. After stints as the nursing supervisor at the Greensboro City Health Department, the Baltimore County Health Department and the US Public Health Service, Dolan came back to Chapel Hill in 1950, as a faculty member in the School of Public Health’s Public Health Nursing program. She stayed at the UNC School of Public Health until her death 23 years later in 1973, working her way up from Associate Professor to Chair of the Public Health Nursing Department.

84

Dolan was a major figure on the national nursing stage. She has been the only nurse to serve as President of the National Health Council, the American Journal of Nursing Company, the American Nurse Association, and the American Public Health Association. Working with Dean Lucy Conant of the UNC School of Nursing and Dr. Isaac Taylor of the UNC School of Medicine, Dolan was instrumental in developing one of the first nurse practitioner programs in the country at UNC-CH. Throughout the 1950s, 1960s and early 1970s, Dolan frequently testified before the US Congress on issues related to public health, nursing and health care in general.

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Dolan also served as a consultant to the US Department of Defense, the US Surgeon General, and the US Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. She was national treasurer for Sigma Theta Tau, vice president of the American Nurses Foundation, held various offices in the NC and US Tuberculosis Societies, the NC and National League of Nursing and in the American Association of University Professors. Dolan represented the United States at International Council of Nursing meetings in Frankfort, Germany and Melbourne, Australia. She consulted about health matters with the governments of Ghana and Thailand.

Dolan was a sought after speaker, a prolific author and a gifted teacher. She was an advocate for racial minorities, the uninsured and vulnerable people everywhere. Believing health care ought to be a right, she worked tirelessly through education, legislative advocacy and public persuasion to bring changes to law and policy to make high quality health care available to all who needed it. To this end, she was an early proponent of advanced practice for nurses, universal health insurance, and government funding for expanding healthcare facilities and training health care personnel.

86

A new area of practice for public health nurses opened up in 1963 when President Kennedy and Congress passed the Community Mental Health Act. Community mental health centers opened across our state and employed nurses specializing in psychiatric/mental health nursing, Nurse Johnnie Sutton Fields was an early and outstanding community mental health nurse leader in Wilmington

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In 1965 President Johnson signed both Medicare and Medicaid into law giving older and less advantaged people more access to hospital care and public health services than ever before.

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These programs funded home health care, hospice care and maternal/child home visits as well as clinic visits, immunizations, birth control and much more

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The Hot Springs Health Clinic, established by 2 nurses Linda Ocker Mashburn and Rae Ann Gaserowski in Madison County in 1971 to provid some primary care services to folks in a pocket of Appalchia has grown into 4 full service medical clinics with a combined $7 million annual budget and over 130 employees,

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Because of Medicare and Medicaid funds, more people consumed more health services including child health, family planning and primary care, health department nursing staffs expanded rapidly in the late 1960s and 1970s

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The biggest change to come to public health nursing in the 1970s was the beginning of the Nurse Practitioner profession. UNC Chapel Hill was a leader, opening the 3rd program int eh country in 1960-1970. For the first time in NC , advanced practice nurses could diagnose problems and prescribe treatments.

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Nurse Practitioners were joined by Certified Nurse-Midwives when the NC legislature legalized their practice in 1982. Certified Nurse Midwife Vernetta Ferrell of Fayetteville is in the upper right corner

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In addition to Certified nurse midwives, the new career of hospice nursing opened up when the federal government started funding Hospice care in 1982.

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Perhaps the biggest challenge facing public health personnel in the mid 1980s through the 1990s was the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Hundreds of thousands of young men and women died from this virus

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Public health nurses taught classes, held special screening for HIV/AID in the communities and on college campuses and treated the ill and dying in their homes and hospice facilites

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In 1995 the Institute of Medicine issued a report, chaired by Lillian Mood a SC nurse about the impact of environmental degradation on the nations health. Nurse Charlotte Brody, of Charlotte and now California founded Health Care without Harm to look at how hospitals and health care institutions deal with environmental issues and she was also a founder of the Alliance of Nurses for a Healthy Environment

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Bioterrorism preparedness became a new part of public health nursing in the early 2000s after the attacks on September 11th.

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In our current decade, perhaps the most important event was the enactment of the Affordable Care Act. It has reduced the number of uninsured people in our country and has funded many public health initiatives.

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