**Attention Banner Web Time Entry Users**

Do you use Banner web to submit a time card? If so, beginning with the pay period of March 26, 2007, you will notice some additions to the type of hours you can enter. Banner web will now provide options for entering bereavement and jury duty pay, and paid parental leave. In the past, these hours were entered as “regular” work time. Creating separate categories for these types of pay will provide managers and staff with a new tool for recording and approving time.

As a reminder, supervisors may approve up to three days of bereavement pay in the event of the death of an immediate family member. Additional time may be taken as CTO or, under certain circumstances, as unpaid time. Jury duty pay will provide pay for full and part time staff who miss work in order to serve on a jury. Paid parental leave provides up to three weeks of paid leave for eligible staff for the birth or adoption of a child. Please consult the College Handbook (http://www.middlebury.edu/about/handbook/) for more policy information or contact Human Resources at x5465.

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**Step Therapy Program – Initial Program Results Exceed Expectations**

On January 1, 2007 a new pharmacy benefit program was added to the College’s medical insurance plan. The new program, called Step Therapy, is designed to reduce overall pharmacy expenses for both employees and the College, while maintaining the health of our members. Step Therapy targets two classes of drugs, proton pump inhibitors and non-sedating antihistamines, for which expensive brand-name drugs are frequently prescribed, even though equally-effective and much less-expensive over-the-counter or generic remedies are readily available. The Step Therapy program was described in detail in the November 2, 2006 issue of *Midd Points*.

The Benefits Advisory Committee (BAC), which recommended the addition of the Step Therapy program on a pilot basis, is monitoring the program closely to ensure both that the implementation goes smoothly from the participants’ perspective and that the anticipated cost savings are realized. The Committee has just received results on the first two months of the program and is quite pleased with the initial cost savings data, which is described below, and the implementation itself.

**Proton Pump Inhibitor Results**

Proton Pump Inhibitors (PPIs) are used to treat acid reflux and related conditions. The prescription costs to Middlebury for a 30 day supply of the brand name drug Nexium, which is often prescribed for this ailment, is $116.12, while a 30 day supply of Prilosec–OTC is only $13.91! This, though both drugs are made by the same company, AstraZeneca, and Nexium is only a slightly modified version of Prilosec-OTC. (For a fascinating article on this drug company and its marketing practices see “High Prices” in *The New Yorker* magazine, www.newyorker.com/archive/2004/10/25/041025crat_atlarge)

In January and February of 2006, RESTAT paid $24,893, and filled 172 prescriptions for proton pump inhibitors. With Step Therapy in place, in January and February of 2007 only 9 prescriptions for PPIs were filled, with total claims for the prescription PPIs at only $1,318 – a reduction of nearly 95% on these products! The great majority of health plan members formerly using PPIs were successfully moved to an over-the-counter alternative. Under the rules of the STEP Therapy program here at the College, those members who move to an OTC alternative are able to purchase the OTC remedy for the same co-pay as they would pay for a generic drug (currently $10). This new OTC benefit cost the plan $2,783 for OTC Prilosec, during the same period. This means that the net savings to the plan for the move equaled $20,792 in the first two months alone, or an 85% reduction in category costs. In addition to the savings to the plan, the 147 employees who were successfully switched to the OTC remedy saved $15 or $30 on co-pays for each prescription!

**Non-Sedating Antihistamine Results**

Non-sedating antihistamines (NSAH) are used to treat a number of allergy-related ailments. The Step Therapy Program is producing good results in this drug family as well. In January

(continued on page 4)
Letter to Faculty and Staff from Health Center Director

Dear Colleagues,

I would like to share with you some important information about Middlebury College’s efforts in updating its Emergency Plan to include widespread illness such as pandemic flu. While I am not aware of any impending pandemic, the avian flu situation in South East Asia has prompted the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Department of Health & Human Services, and the U.S. Secretary of Education to encourage all colleges and universities to prepare for a potential pandemic flu outbreak. In order to address this and several other emergency situations at Middlebury College, an Emergency Planning Steering Committee* has been formed and is now engaged in a planning effort that will continue over the next several months.

A flu pandemic would involve every person, department, and organization affiliated with Middlebury College. As we begin to prepare both as individuals and as a community, it is important that we all understand the potential significance of this threat, and what we can do about it now.

Historical accounts of the “Great Influenza” pandemic of 1918 estimate a human death toll of over 600,000 in the U.S. and 50 million or more worldwide. Current models estimate that if a similar pandemic were to occur now, the human death toll could reach 1.7 million in the United States and 180 million to 360 million worldwide. What is even more concerning is that the deaths would occur over a very short period of time, and like the 1918 pandemic, might primarily involve young, healthy people who have vigorous immune systems such as college-aged students.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Vermont Department of Health have emphasized that a severe pandemic, involving the easy and rapid spread of an aggressive and potentially lethal virus, could have a devastating impact on people who must live and eat in close proximity to one another. Public health officials recommend the strategy of **social distancing** to mitigate the spread of illness. This strategy is designed to prevent large gatherings of people and involves the closure of schools, churches, movie theatres, etc. Needless to say, social distancing is impossible within a residential college where students live in residence halls, eat at dining halls, and have contact with large numbers of their peers in many other settings. In the event of a pandemic, early social distancing will be essential in preventing the spread of disease and allowing for the greatest chance of survival for students.

After assessing the student housing and dining situation at Middlebury, the Emergency Planning Steering Committee has concluded that the safest response during a potential pandemic would be to close the College – ideally before the illness strikes Middlebury. Unlike short term closures that occur during scheduled breaks, a pandemic would warrant a complete closure and all students would be required to vacate the campus until it was deemed safe to return. Current estimates for an avian flu pandemic, for example, suggest that closure could last for one or even two semesters.

To emphasize the importance of this effort, beginning in the Fall 2007 semester, all students will be required to file a personal evacuation plan with the College. While this may seem to be a daunting task for some students, we intend to provide them with online tools and strategies to guide them in their planning efforts.

In addition to creating a need for social distancing, a flu pandemic is currently expected to cause illness in up to 35% (217,000) of Vermon ters. Employee absentee rates are predicted to reach as high as 35% to 45% due to illness, fear, or caring for sick dependents. Such absenteeism may result in temporary food shortages and business closures, as well as interruption of transportation, utilities, law enforcement, and other services.

Clearly these would be challenging times for all of us, and while it is impossible to predict the future, the success of our response to such a threat lies in part to how well we plan now. The Emergency Planning Steering Committee is in the process of looking at how we might function during a campus closure, and what policies might be needed to preserve as much of Middlebury College as possible. The Committee is simultaneously considering other emergency situations, such as a technology infrastructure failure or a power plant disaster, and intends to engage all departments in a Mission Continuity process that will help identify essential department functions and relationships that would apply during a pandemic or other emergency situation.

While Mission Continuity process is being created, you can learn more about the College’s Pandemic Response Plan by visiting http://www.middlebury.edu/campuslife/services/health/fluresponse. The site will be updated as our planning process continues and new information becomes available. I also encourage you to visit the http://www.pandemicflu.gov/plan/pdf/individuals.pdf site and begin considering your own personal or family response plan for pandemic flu. On behalf of Middlebury College and the Emergency Planning Steering Committee, I look forward to working with you on this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Mark Peluso, M.D.
Director, Health Center

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* Emergency Planning Steering Committee Members: Lisa Boudah; Alison Byerly, Co-Chair; Tom Corbin; John Emerson, Co-Chair; Ann Hanson; Michael McKenna; Ron McKinnon; Mark Peluso.
Karen Carpenter and Donna J. Paquette

Karen Carpenter, Payroll Manager, and Donna J. Paquette, Assistant Payroll Manager, are two very busy College employees. Many assume that because the College is on a bi-weekly payroll schedule, every other week has a flurry of activity in the Payroll Office, alternating with periods of relative calm. Karen was quick to point out that “every week is a payroll week.” The weeks College employees are not paid, the office runs payroll for the Monterey Institute of International Studies, and there is a monthly retiree payroll as well. During the summer months, when there are fewer student employees, the number of paychecks that must be issued remains about the same because of the Language Schools and Bread Loaf School of English employees. The number of paychecks issued bi-weekly for the College averages 2,000 and the number for Monterey is about 400.

Always working to meet fixed deadlines, Karen and Donna are constantly reconciling the numbers before, during, and after each pay period. They frequently work with LIS to test the system, because accuracy is a must. As Karen said, “There is zero margin for error.” Can you imagine the scene if the paychecks didn’t come out correctly and on time? People count on that paycheck every two weeks and Karen and Donna take their responsibility to deliver that very seriously. They are constantly checking all the numbers to make sure the checks and direct deposits come out correctly.

The Payroll Office works closely with Human Resources, the Student Employment Office, Facilities Services, Language Schools, and LIS to make sure that everyone gets paid the amount they should, by the day and time they should. Not only must they make sure salary information is correct for every employee, but deductions from checks for taxes, benefits and retirement, rent (for faculty and staff living in College houses), United Way and other gift deductions, ski and golf season passes…all must be calculated correctly to the penny.

Additionally, from December to the end of January, the office must process W2s, which has its own reconciliation process, keeping in mind that the College must comply with IRS regulations that can change from year to year. Last year the payroll office filed 4,057 W2s for Middlebury and 740 for Monterey, for a total of 4,797 filings. Besides the Federal Government, there are nine states that the office has to file with monthly, quarterly and yearly. As if all that weren't enough to do, Karen is constantly trying to improve and streamline the processes. They do a lot of fixing behind the scenes. Karen was recognized by the American Payroll Association by earning her Certified Payroll Professional certification for excellence in her field. Donna is in training to earn her Fundamental Payroll Certification.

How can we, their colleagues, help this very important process run smoothly to all of our benefit? We can always enter and approve time by the deadline, for one. Also, making use of direct deposit is another time-saver for the employee and the payroll office. Direct deposit is free, accurate, timely, and hassle-free, and your paycheck can be deposited directly into one or more checking and/or savings accounts. Your earnings will hit your account(s) even if you are out of town (or things shut down because of a crippling snowstorm like February’s), and there is no possibility of losing your check. For each lost check, the employee has to wait an average of 3-5 days for the new check to be issued, and the college is charged a fee for each check it has to place a stop payment on.

A little more than 50% of College and Monterey Institute employees use direct deposit right now, but the Payroll Office would like to see that number increase because it is a win-win situation for both the employee and the College. To sign up for direct deposit, pick up a form in Human Resources. If you have any questions, call Karen at x2008 or Donna at x5461. Now that you know what Karen and Donna look like and what a crucial role they fill in making sure we receive the money we've earned, give them a thanks if you see them on campus.

- Liz Hammel
and February of 2006 the health plan paid for 92 NSAH prescriptions for a total cost of $6,127.04. During the same period in 2007 only 9 prescriptions were filled, at an expense of only $566.29; a reduction of 91% of cost, with a net savings (after costs for OTC drugs) being 90% in this drug class. The health plan members using these drugs also saw significant cost savings in co-pays – many were able to purchase the OTC remedies for less than the generic co-pay amount.

Appeals

As expected, OTC or generic drugs, while less-costly and as-effective for the great majority of health plan members, are not appropriate in all cases. For this reason, the program has a built-in appeals process that allows members, with documentation from their physicians, to petition to remain on the higher cost brand name drugs. So far, through this process, a total of 15 members have received approval to continue benefits coverage for the brand name drugs.

Conclusion

Overall the transition to the Step Therapy programs seems to have gone remarkably smoothly for the vast majority of affected health plan members, and the initial cost savings have exceeded expectations. The Benefits Advisory Committee is grateful for the extra work done by affected health plan members during the program implementation. We know that many of you contacted your health care provider’s office to confirm that it would be okay to switch to another drug. And there certainly has been additional work and inconvenience for those members in the Step Therapy program who felt that they needed to remain on the brand name version of the medication. Taken as a whole, however, the transition has gone exceptionally well.

The next issue of *Midd Points* will contain frequently asked questions on the Step Therapy Program.

---Benefits Advisory Committee

**What To Do If You Are Injured At Work**

- Alert your supervisor right away, no matter how minor the injury appears to be.
- If you need to seek immediate medical care, please do so. Be sure to let the care facility know that your injury happened while you were working.
- Come to Human Resources and fill out an Incident/Accident report as soon as possible after the incident, but no later than 24 hours afterward (unless you are incapacitated). HR is required by the State of Vermont and our worker’s compensation insurance company to report any accident within 72 hours of its occurrence.
- If you have already been to see a doctor, bring any medical bills and doctor’s notes with you to HR.
- Keep HR informed of your health status in order to coordinate any necessary coverage and account for injury-related absences or restrictions in work capacity.

You are not penalized for filing a Worker’s Compensation claim - the filing of a claim cannot be held against you. If you have any questions about Worker’s Compensation, please contact HR at x5465.

**2007 Ski Day – A Powder Day**

More than 50 people participated in the 2007 Employee Ski/Ride day this past Sunday at the Snow Bowl and Rikert Ski Touring Center. There was fresh snow on the ground and employees and their families had a great time. Many enjoyed racing on the downhill course at Snow Bowl. Here are some results from the family racing:

- **Parent/Child Teams:**
  - First: Don and Hayden Kjelleren
  - Second: Matthew and Ryan Biette
  - Third: Jessica and Katie Holmes
  - Fourth: Jessica and Justin Holmes
  - Fifth: Richard and John Gilbert

- **Husband/Wife Teams**
  - First: Chris and Sarah Star

- **Kids:**
  - First: Hayden Kjelleren
  - Second: Ryan Biette
  - Third: John Gilbert
  - Fourth: Katie Holmes
  - Fifth: Justin Holmes
  - Sixth: Grace Usilton

The final race of the faculty/staff/student Ski Bum series was also held.
Yoga and Massage: The Basics & The Benefits

Yoga is a time-honored practice that has become popular in our western culture. Hatha yoga is the most widely practiced form of yoga in America. It is the branch of yoga which concentrates on physical health and mental and spiritual well being. Hatha yoga uses bodily postures (asanas), breathing techniques (pranayama), and meditation (dhyana) with the goal of bringing about a sound, healthy body and a clear, peaceful mind. There are nearly 200 hatha yoga postures, with hundreds of variations, which work to make the spine supple and to promote circulation in all the organs, glands, and tissues. Hatha yoga postures also stretch and align the body, promoting balance and flexibility.

Massage is much more than a way to manage sore muscles after an intense ski or sporting event. Swedish massage treats the entire body to a healthy cleansing and rejuvenation. With long, relaxing strokes, accompanied by kneading and wringing of muscle groups, all body systems are awakened to a new level of energy and calm. Although deep tissue massage is beneficial in certain situations, you can move mountains of stress and pain with the gentlest movement — “to take pressure off, put pressure on.” Toxins are flushed through the lymph system, muscles are encouraged to relax, pain can be managed, the mind quiets, healthy breathing is encouraged, and blood pressure can reach a state of balance — all of this through massage!

- Eileen Fahey

Optimal Health Initiative

Renew and Rejuvenate Springtime Retreat with Gaye Abbott

April 9, 2007
1 to 5 p.m.
Kirk Center

Imagine resting comfortably while being supported and guided to drop into a deep state of relaxation; paying attention to your body; finding yourself breathing fully without any effort at all; moving and stretching as if you didn’t have a care in the world — and having four entire hours to enjoy it! There are still a few spaces left! Gaye Abbott, Registered Yoga Teacher and Certified Yoga Therapist, will once again be facilitating a luxurious four hours to unwind, relax, and restore in a self care time-out. No previous yoga experience required. Contact Eileen Fahey at x5064 to register. Limited to 20 participants so sign up soon!

Heart- Healthy at the Co-Op!

Join members of the OHIC and Middlebury Natural Food Co-op staff for tour of the Co-op focused on heart-healthy shopping and cooking. The tour will be led by one of the Co-op’s cooks, as well as manager Reiner Winkler, and will include some helpful information about making good choices for your heart.

The tour will meet at the Co-op on April 12 at 10 a.m. Please contact Alexa Euler at x5668 to sign up in advance as space is limited.

College Book Store

Open Monday–Friday
8:30–5:00

Stop by and check out our new spring clothing!
Parking is plentiful during Spring Break.

Staff Council invites all staff members to join fellow staff for a Pizza Party!

Wednesday, March 28
4:00–5:00 p.m.
The Grille and Juice Bar

-- OR --

Tuesday, April 3
8:00–9:00 a.m.
Mitchell Green Lounge
(We’ll also have pastries & coffee for those who don’t take their lunch break at 8:00 a.m.)

We hope to encourage a sharing of ideas on staff’s role in the life of the College!

Release time to attend one of these sessions is approved. Please coordinate with your supervisor in advance.
Paul Monod (History) has been awarded a fellowship to spend a month at The Huntington Library in San Marino, CA during his 2007-2008 academic leave when he will be working on a book project titled, King Solomon’s Arts: The Occult in the British Enlightenment 1650–1815. Resources he will be consulting at The Huntington include astrological almanacs and tracts on alchemy.

Kirsten Hoving (History of Art & Architecture) has received a fellowship from the Marion & Jasper Whiting Foundation in support of a project titled, The Art of Place: In the Footsteps of Georgia O’Keeffe and Ansel Adams. The grant provides support for trips to New Mexico and the Yosemite Valley this summer to learn about the locales made famous by these artists and to attend workshops and gather materials that will enhance her course, Four American Modernists.

Kevin Moss (Russian) has been awarded a fellowship from the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) in support of his 2007-2008 leave for a project titled Three Gay Films from Former Yugoslavia. The grant provides funding for travel in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, and Croatia to research the critical and popular response to these films in order to demonstrate the intersection of nationality/ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.

Where on Campus?
Thirteen readers responded correctly — the sculpture is at the south entrance to Munroe Hall.

Patrick V. Farrow, Castleton, VT.