



Quick Reads

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Redesign work gives rise to legislative language

I'm pleased to announce that the department is moving forward with [legislative language](#) in January that has grown from the work of the [Redesigning Public Health in Iowa Initiative](#). Titled the "Governmental Public Health System Modernization Act," the document has three key objectives.

- It establishes a Public Health Advisory Council.
- It establishes a Public Health Evaluation Committee.
- It allows the formation of a voluntary accreditation system for Iowa's local and state public health agencies.

The Advisory Council will be charged with finding an organization to provide the voluntary accreditation program in the third bullet above. The council will also have responsibility for assuring that the [Iowa Public Health Standards](#) are updated as needed. The Public Health Evaluation Committee will be responsible for the ongoing evaluation of Iowa's public health system and the accreditation process. What is perhaps most exciting, however, is that the bill recognizes the need to have IDPH pilot and at least one county voluntarily pilot the accreditation process by July 1, 2011. Furthermore, the bill also provides for the accrediting organization to accept applications for the formal process beginning Jan. 2, 2012.

To read the Governmental Public Health System Modernization Act and a summary, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/legislative_updates.asp and look under "New Legislation." A link is also provided on the Redesigning Public Health in Iowa page (www.idph.state.ia.us/rphi). The most recent version of the bill will be posted as

changes are recommended. Lynh Patterson, IDPH Legislative Liaison, will be seeking feedback from professional organizations that represent public health in Iowa. I encourage you to connect with your professional organizations and provide comment through them to help create a unified voice for public health in Iowa.

Appointments made to seven advisory committees

I'd like to thank the more than 100 individuals who recently agreed to serve on seven advisory bodies outlined in HF 2539, the [Health Care Reform Act](#). In moving forward, the department will rely heavily on these recent appointees to develop policy recommendations and plans for implementing the initiatives identified in this landmark legislation. The advisory bodies are:

- [Clinicians Advisory Panel](#)
- [Direct Care Worker Advisory Council](#)
- [Electronic Health Information Advisory Council and Executive Committee](#)
- [Health and Long-term Care Access Advisory Council](#)
- [Medical Home System Advisory Council](#)
- [Patient Autonomy in Health Care Decisions Pilot Project Advisory Council](#)
- [Prevention and Chronic Care Management Advisory Council](#)

Click on any of the seven panels, councils, or committees above to learn more or visit www.idph.state.ia.us/hcr_committees. Each page contains a description of the advisory body, a list of current members, and information on required reports.

Smokefree Air Act education efforts working well

Three months after the [Smokefree Air Act](#) went into effect, I am happy to say that the numbers indicate our education efforts are working. Since July 1, IDPH has received more than 6,000 phone calls and e-mails regarding the Smokefree Air Act. About 80 percent of the inquiries have been from people who have questions on how to comply with the law; fewer than 1,200 have been complaints about possible violations. Perhaps more telling, however, is that while 264 businesses have been sent a first letter of potential violation, only 21 businesses have received a second letter and only five have been sent a third letter.

In addition to the hard work of staff in the IDPH [Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control](#), I'd like to recognize the efforts of our community partnerships operating in 96 of Iowa's 99 counties. So far, they have conducted more than 68 site visits at the invitation of business owners to help them understand what they need to do to comply with the Smokefree Air Act. Great work, everyone!

Healthy People 2020 to become more user-friendly

According to recommendations from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary's Advisory Committee on National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, *Healthy People 2020* will be more user-friendly than the 2010 publication. The committee met recently and decided to retain the 28 focus areas in *Healthy People 2010* but recommended that the document should be a web-based, relationship database so that different users can query the database. Also new to the process is a framework that links the objectives to such determinants as equity and social justice and physical environment to outcomes with intervention strategies. This means that everyone will have a clearer idea of what interventions are effective. The objectives also will be organized by public health levels—national, state, and local. An interagency workgroup will start working to fit the focus areas into the framework. For a [slide presentation](#) used at the committee meeting, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/healthy_iowans_2010.asp

Toxicology manual now available

The IDPH toxicology program has created an online [Toxicology Manual](#) for environmental and public health professionals and partners. Based on the format of the IDPH EPI Manual, the new resource is a unique one-stop shop that currently contains fact sheets and other resources on 15 chemicals and potentially toxic substances. Information is provided on the uses of these chemicals, sources of exposure in Iowa, the human health effects of short-term or acute exposure to large amounts of these chemicals, the human health effects of long-term or chronic exposure to small amounts of these chemicals, and methods to protect individuals from exposure. The Toxicology Manual will be updated as fact sheets and other resources are developed for more chemicals and substances. To access the manual, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/eh/toxicology.asp.

IDPH staff elected to national rural recruitment and retention board

Congratulations to Community Health Consultant Michelle Holst, who has been elected to the Board of Directors of the [National Rural Recruitment and Retention Network](#) (aka "3Rnet"). The 3RNet is a group of not-for-profit organizations, one from each state, territory or tribal nation, that help health professionals locate practice sites in rural and underserved areas throughout the country. The 3RNet maintains a Web site (www.3rnet.org) where health facilities can post vacancies and health professionals can post availability and find opportunities. In addition to being the administrator for Iowa's 3RNet membership, Michelle works with health workforce policies and programs in the IDPH [Bureau of Health Care Access](#).

We want your best practices

IDPH is committed to telling the citizens of Iowa about the good things public health is doing to make a difference. To do this, we want to highlight your best practices/success stories. Please send your ideas to Don McCormick at dmccormi@idph.state.ia.us.

To everyone in public health and all our partners—keep up the great work!
Tom