



Quick Reads

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Recent visits help Iowa prepare for H1N1

Thank to you everyone who attended the recent regional meetings with staff from the IDPH Division of Acute Disease Prevention and Emergency Response (ADPER). Held in all six Iowa emergency preparedness regions, approximately 80 people attended each gathering, representing local public health agencies, local hospitals and other emergency planners. Presentations focused on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's [National Response Framework](#). The framework establishes a novel influenza A (H1N1) strategy, including timelines for H1N1 preparedness and response based on four pillars: surveillance, mitigation, vaccination, and communications and education.

Many attendees to the regional visits used the opportunity to ask IDPH representatives some important and thought-provoking questions related to Iowa's upcoming response to seasonal and H1N1 influenza. In addition to answering those questions during the forums, ADPER staff have created a comprehensive Q&A document for health care workers. The department will update this document frequently and post the most recent version to the "News" section of the Iowa Health Alert Network Web page.

I-SERV can help with local influenza response efforts

As Iowa gears up for a busy influenza season, I'd like to remind our local partners to stay in close contact with IDPH about their needs in handling cases in their area. As always, our job is to support you. One way in which we can do this is by providing human resources through the Iowa Statewide Emergency Registry of Volunteers ([I-SERV](#)). Sponsored and administered by the department, I-SERV is a statewide secure database of credentialed health care professionals who are interested in volunteering in

the event of a public health emergency. We do not yet know the depth or breadth of services that may be required during a possible influenza response this year. Nevertheless, it isn't difficult to imagine that certain locations may require additional health professionals to help administer vaccinations or address other staffing needs. I-SERV can help. To learn more, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/ems/iserv.asp. I also encourage you to take 10 minutes to [register](#) to become a part of this important group of volunteers.

Disease report released

If you haven't done so already, please check out the recently released [2008 Iowa Surveillance of Notifiable and Other Diseases Report](#). Organized by disease type, the report provides data through a variety of tables and in several maps. Highlights from the report include a significant increase in the number of hepatitis A cases and two multi-state clusters/outbreaks of salmonella. The report is a reminder of how much we rely on our local partners who completed many of the disease investigations that took place last year. To access the publication, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/cade.asp and look under "Reports."

Louisa County shares preparedness activities

Alana Poage at [Louisa County Public Health](#) recently provided me with an update of her department's influenza preparedness efforts. I think you'll agree that these activities are great examples of preparations happening in communities across Iowa. It's also noteworthy that despite the relatively small size of Alana's agency, she and her staff are pouring a lot of resources into influenza preparedness.

In addition to meeting with all health care providers in the county to organize vaccination strategies for H1N1 response, the department has provided hand washing and flu prevention education to all Columbus Junction students in grades 1 to 6 using "[Henry the Hand](#)" training materials updated to address H1N1 influenza prevention. Public health staff members have also made educational presentations and held discussion groups with Stork's Nest families in Columbus Junction and Wapello with follow-up immunization information related to both routine and influenza vaccinations. In addition, the department has distributed educational posters and informational flyers on flu prevention to all libraries and clinics in the county with contact information for additional materials and presentation resources. Posters and flyers have also been placed in all grocery stores, coin laundry facilities, and retail businesses in the county. Way to go, Alana and team!

Conference to focus on energy issues facing the Midwest

The [Center for Global and Regional Environmental Research](#) at the University of Iowa, in collaboration with UI President Sally Mason and the UI [Center for Public Policy](#), is

organizing a [conference](#) called "Energy and Climate Change in the Midwest: Creating Opportunities in the New Economy." The event will follow up on a report on national energy policy and Midwest regional competitiveness recently completed by the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, of which President Mason is the co-chair. During the Oct. 16-17 conference in Iowa City, discussion will focus on the preparedness of the Midwest economy and labor force to face climate change and move toward a green economy. I encourage you to attend this conference, especially if you are an energy or consumer advocate, state or local policy maker or official, or if you are interested in economic and utilities development. For more information, visit www.ppc.uiowa.edu/midwestenergy.

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

— Tom