



Quick Reads

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Budget cuts to impact public health

Last week Governor Culver announced a 10 percent across-the-board cut to state General Fund appropriations effective immediately for fiscal year 2010. His action was necessary as state revenues from the first three months of this fiscal year were down significantly. This development will most likely result in layoffs at the department, and will affect the public health services the department funds through our local partners. IDPH's implementation plan for meeting this challenge will be submitted to the Governor's Office and Department of Management by the first of next week. Final approval of the plan should occur before the end of the month. Local partners can expect program-level details from their usual contacts at IDPH.

H1N1 brings challenges and opportunities

By now, local public health partners have begun receiving 2009 H1N1 influenza vaccine. Some county health departments are holding vaccination clinics themselves, while others are using models that rely on local partners such as hospitals, schools, pharmacies, and others. Regardless of how this vaccine is being distributed and administered, I want to recognize the tremendous job everyone is doing at the local and state levels. Remember to keep yourselves healthy, both physically and mentally; we're still in the early stages of this response and need to remain at the top of our game.

Additionally, I'd like to point out that times like this can serve as good reminders that public health is very much a part of people's lives, even if they don't think about it very often. Today we're concentrating on influenza prevention, but we do so much more day-to-day to promote and protect the health of Iowans. As you go about your

important work over the next few months, I urge you to make sure local policy makers, the media, and the public know that this response is just one of the many faces of public health.

IDPH chosen as accreditation beta site

The [Public Health Accreditation Board](#) (PHAB) recently announced that the Iowa Department of Public Health is among [30 public health departments](#) that will participate in a [pilot](#) of the national voluntary public health accreditation program. Eight of these, including IDPH, are state public health agencies. From fall 2009 through the end of 2010, the so-called beta sites will complete the accreditation process and provide valuable feedback that will be used to make improvements to the accreditation system prior to its national launch in 2011. The goal of the public health accreditation program is to improve and protect the health of every community by advancing the quality and performance of public health departments. IDPH's participation is accompanied by a \$27,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation through the [Association of State and Territorial Health Officials](#) to help IDPH prepare for accreditation. Congratulations to the [Public Health Modernization in Iowa](#) partners whose application for this honor was selected from among 145 public health departments nationwide! For a list of the participating health departments, visit www.phaboard.org.

Iowa ranks 2nd on Commonwealth Fund scorecard

Congratulations to everyone whose work recently resulted in [Iowa ranking second](#) overall in a survey of health care performance measures by the Commonwealth Fund. The report, called the [2009 State Scorecard on Health System Performance](#), assesses each state's performance on health care relative to achievable benchmarks for 38 indicators of access, quality, costs, and health outcomes.

While this is certainly good news for our state, the report also reveals that there is still much we can and should do for the health of our state and nation. In particular, the 2009 State Scorecard paints a picture of health care systems under stress, with deteriorating health insurance coverage for adults, and rising health care costs. To view the report and access a clickable map that provides state-by-state summaries, visit www.commonwealthfund.org.

With committees in place, Public Health Modernization moves forward

Last month I was very pleased to welcome the 33 members of two newly formed groups charged with implementing the Public Health Modernization Act passed by the Legislature last year. The first of these, the [Governmental Public Health Advisory Council](#), will set policies and procedures on the implementation and administration of the Iowa Public Health Standards—which form the backbone of Iowa's Modernization efforts—to be applied to public health practice at both the state and local level. The

second, the [Governmental Public Health Evaluation Committee](#), will collect and report baseline information on the public health system, service delivery needs and effectiveness. Both the Advisory Council and the Evaluation Committee include representation from all six public health service regions in Iowa as well as state lawmakers, academia and the University Hygienic Laboratory. To learn more about the Advisory Council, the Evaluation Committee, and Iowa's commitment to a modernized public health system, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/mphi and click on Latest Updates.

Looking for an IDPH newsletter?

You might like to know that we've recently organized all [department newsletters](#) on one page on the IDPH Web site. Visit www.idph.state.ia.us/newsletters.asp for links to 18 regularly produced IDPH online news publications. A link to this page is also listed under Quick Links on the IDPH Home Page.

Early childhood health system policy development event, Nov. 12

Please mark your calendar for the [Off to a Good Start](#) policy event scheduled for Nov. 12. The gathering in Des Moines is designed to build upon the work accomplished since 2005 to integrate Iowa's health system for early childhood. The event will provide participants with an opportunity to identify and prioritize key policy recommendations and strategies for state and national initiatives. [Iowa's Early Childhood Strategic Plan](#), developed by the Early Childhood Iowa [Stakeholders](#) over the course of the past seven years, will serve as the framework for the meeting. In particular, this year's event will focus on addressing health disparities due to socioeconomic status, race, language, culture and geography. For more [information](#), please visit www.iowapha.org and click on Register for IPHA Sponsored Events.

Agricultural safety conference, Nov. 18-19

[Iowa's Center for Agricultural Health and Safety \(I-CASH\)](#) and the [Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health](#) will host the [Midwest Rural and Agricultural Safety and Health Forum](#) Nov. 18-19 at the Stoney Creek Inn in Johnston, Iowa. This year's gathering will feature Dr. S. Leonard Syme, professor emeritus from the University of California-Berkeley and a nationally recognized expert on community-based participatory research. The conference also includes plenary sessions on social marketing and research-to-practice, plus presentations on methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus and 2009 H1N1 influenza. For more information and to register, visit www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash.

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

— Tom