



Quick Reads

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Infrastructure funding opportunity update

In the last Quick Reads I asked for feedback about building infrastructure at the local public health level. Thanks to the 63 responses we received, I think the department was able to submit a very well-informed application for the [Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure for Improved Health Outcomes](#) cooperative agreement from CDC. (Visit www.idph.state.ia.us/mphi to view our applications.) In particular the many suggestions we received regarding resources needed to support [Public Health Modernization](#) and [quality improvement](#) provided an essential direction for our application. We also received suggestions related to building local information technology infrastructure and others for funding direct services. Unfortunately, IDPH was unable to propose activities in these areas due to restrictions in the grant guidance.

IDPH was eligible to apply for two components of funding. [Component One](#) was non-competitive and will be awarded based on population to all states, territories, and some large cities. Iowa will receive \$200,000 yearly for five years to build public health infrastructure with a focus on performance management capacity. To this end, the department will form an office that will be responsible for training and implementing a system of performance management across IDPH programs, paying particular attention to the areas of evaluation and quality improvement.

[Component Two](#) funding is competitive with an estimated 10 to 27 awards nationally. With component II funding, the department has proposed to provide more than \$5 million over five years to local public health for quality improvement, accreditation-preparation, and improving cross-jurisdictional relationships. In addition, the department has proposed to:

- develop a statewide performance improvement network to share best practices, tools, and materials; provide opportunities for peer-to-peer learning; and offer training in performance management.
- continue work on the data warehouse; and
- establish an integrated public health laboratory system to improve disease surveillance, reporting, and investigation;

Awards are scheduled to be made by the end of September. Keep an eye on [Quick Reads](#) for updates on this exciting opportunity.

Local public health welcomes federal partners... twice!

Last week our local partners in Scott County welcomed [CDC Director Thomas Frieden](#) to Iowa. This being Director Frieden's first trip to our state, [Scott County Health Department](#) Director Larry Barker and I used the occasion to highlight some of our state's successes and challenges. During our discussion, Director Frieden commented on Iowa's recent success in curbing tobacco use, but emphasized that there is still much to do. In particular, he encouraged continued support for Iowa's youth-led tobacco prevention campaign [JEL](#) (Just Eliminate Lies) to "keep the pressure on" tobacco companies, which spend an estimated \$174 million per year marketing their products in Iowa. Turning to the topic of influenza vaccinations, Director Frieden called our vaccination rate among health-care workers "extraordinary." Last year, more than 90 percent of these important public health partners received an influenza vaccination. When we spoke about the obesity epidemic in Iowa and the nation, Director Frieden commented on the importance of programs such as lady Michelle Obama's [Let's Move](#) campaign, calling physical activity and fitness as a "wonder drug" to fend off illness and promote longer lives.

On July 30, I participated in RAGBRAI with Shellie Pfohl, Executive Director for the [President's Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition](#). Also joining us was [U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services Region VII](#) Administrator Jose Belardo and U. S. Paralympian Susan Katz. It was a rainy, cold ride for most of the day, but we did receive a very warm welcome during our stop in Quasqueton. We took a break there to announce a new obesity prevention partnership between IDPH and the President's Council. What impressed me was the number of Buchanan public health partners who turned out to welcome us. We had representatives there from wellness, environmental health, EMS and tobacco. Thanks, Buchanan County, for your hospitality!

Media partners help educate parents about K2

This week Governor Chet Culver announced the kick off an IDPH public service media campaign to help parents understand the dangers of a new type of synthetic marijuana known as K2 or Spice. Although the Iowa Board of Pharmacy recently moved to classify the synthetic cannabinoids used in K2 as an Imitation Controlled Substance, this is still a very important campaign. We know that K2 may still be available through

other means. We also know that parents, when well informed about this and other substances, can make a tremendous difference. If you haven't come across the TV, radio or print ads yet, please contact stations or newspapers in your area and encourage them to help us get the word out. All ads are available at www.iowa.gov/odcp/drug_information/spice.html.

I'd like to take a moment to thank all of the partners who graciously volunteered their time in the production of this campaign. They are: the Rozga Family of Indianola, whose son died after smoking K2; the Iowa Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy; KCWI-TV and its general manager, Ted Stephens; ZLR-Ignition; KTIV-TV; Steve Van Oort of E-Voice Productions; the Partnership for a Drug-Free Iowa; the Iowa Broadcasters Association, the Iowa Cable and Telecommunications Association and the Iowa Newspaper Association.

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

— Tom