



Quick Reads

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Regional visits highlight partnership

Last week I and other leaders from IDPH completed community visits to Iowa's six public health regions. I was very pleased at the turnout of representatives from local public health and enjoyed the opportunity to reconnect. In addition to getting feedback on some of the department's recent accomplishments and advances, I particularly appreciated the comments about how IDPH might provide more and better support to our local partners. The strength of public health in our state depends heavily on the relationships built between state and local public health; constructive feedback, whether during these visits or at any other time, is essential to our mission of promoting and protecting the health of Iowans. Thank you always for your candor and your support.

Dr. Russell appointed to national committee

Congratulations to Public Health Dental Director Dr. Bob Russell on his appointment to the national [Advisory Committee on Training in Primary Care Medicine and Dentistry](#). Appointed by Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and coordinated by the Health Resources and Services Administration ([HRSA](#)), the committee advises and makes recommendations concerning policy, program development and other matters concerning the HRSA Bureau of Health Professions' family medicine, general internal medicine, general pediatrics, general dentistry, pediatric dentistry and physician assistant programs.

Good news from the family health team

Iowa's [1st Five](#) mental health development initiative was highlighted in an issue brief by the [Commonwealth Fund](#) as one of the five most successful referral programs across the nation for children with potential developmental delays. Titled [Systems of Care](#)

[Coordination for Children: Lessons Learned Across State Models](#), the brief recognizes Iowa's work in promoting partnerships between primary care providers, public health agencies, and families. The initiative does this by building partnerships between physician practices and public service providers to enhance high-quality well-child care. 1st Five promotes the use of validated developmental tools that support healthy mental development for all young children. Providers identify children earlier who are at risk for developmental and behavioral issues that would otherwise play out later. Since 2007 the Iowa 1st Five has connected over 1,200 families with needed services and has impacted almost 4,300 children. To view the report, visit www.commonwealthfund.org/Publications.

Office establishment leads to funding opportunity

Due to its codification in Iowa law in 2006, the IDPH [Office of Multicultural Health](#) was able to apply this year for funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. I'm pleased to announce that the office was recently selected to receive nearly \$400,000 in federal funding over the next three years.

During the first year, the office will help strengthen six regional multicultural coalitions and provide support and training for the coalitions to enhance knowledge and skills in addressing disparity and health equity issues, including developing and implementing policy strategies. Regional in-state training opportunities will be provided to increase knowledge and understanding about health equity and cultural competency. Also in the first year, data will be collected to produce a state minority disease burden report, which will be shared with legislators, communities and local public health partners.

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

— Tom