



Quick Reads

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Iowa Health Fact Book

The [University of Iowa College of Public Health](#), in partnership with the Iowa Department of Public Health, has released the 2011 edition of the [Iowa Health Fact Book](#), a broad-ranging report covering the health and health-related behaviors of Iowans. The fact book assembles health data on areas such as prenatal and infant health, infectious diseases, cancer and other chronic diseases, and injury. Health and social behaviors and population totals and age distributions are also presented. Much of the data are tracked longitudinally so as to follow how Iowans' health and behaviors have changed over time. The 2011 edition is the eighth in a series of Iowa Health Fact Book biennial publications.

IDPH Twitter feed

A recent survey of social media activity by state health departments revealed that IDPH was second in the nation in Twitter feed followers. Conducted by researchers at Brigham Young University in February and March of this year, the study found that Iowa had 2,609 Twitter followers, second only to the California health department, which had 3,039. I'm proud to say that our list of followers continues to increase. As of today, we have 2,991. If you're not already following the department, you can find us at [IAPublicHealth](#). Averaging two tweets per day, our Twitter feed is particularly well suited to the needs of health advocates, local public health agencies and other partners.

National HIV/AIDS strategy implementation dialogue

Significant progress has been made in implementing the [National HIV/AIDS Strategy](#) in its first year. One of the most encouraging developments over the last year has been the manner in which the Strategy has served to steer a conversation about HIV in the

direction of the steps that individuals, communities, states, and the nation need to take to achieve the Strategy's goals. To sustain and expand these actions at the state and local levels, the [Office of National AIDS Policy](#) will be convening a series of regional dialogues across the country this fall to focus attention on critical issues related to implementation of the Strategy. These dialogues will serve as a forum for federal and state agency representatives, researchers, clinicians, and the community, as well as leaders from the business, foundation, faith and media sectors to discuss lessons learned, share their diverse expertise, and identify new ways of collaborating. I am pleased that one of the five regional dialogues will be held in Des Moines in early November. The [date, time, and location](#) for the 'Maximizing Impact in Low-Prevalence Jurisdictions' dialogue will be announced soon.

Governor Branstad issues public health proclamations

Governor Branstad will sign a formal proclamation this week declaring September 23, 2011 as [Falls Prevention Awareness Day](#). Falls are the leading cause of non-fatal injury and death in Iowa adults age 65 and older. The cost of hospitalization care in Iowa for falls is \$92 million annually and the total charges for emergency visits in Iowa due to falls are \$35 million per year. Research indicates that fall prevention programs for high-risk older adults have a net-cost savings of almost \$9 in benefits to society for each \$1 invested. IDPH and the [Iowa Department on Aging](#) have created a [Fall Prevention for Iowa webpage](#), with more information and resources regarding falls prevention.

Governor Branstad has also signed a proclamation declaring September as [Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month](#). IDPH, through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's ([SAMHSA](#)) federally funded [Access to Recovery](#) program, is sponsoring a family celebration day at [Adventureland Park](#) in Altoona on September 18. Nearly 1000 Iowans attended last year's celebration.

IDPH inventory of programs

IDPH manages several programs that intersect with the mission and goals of the [Iowa Council on Homelessness](#). While IDPH is unable to offer monetary support to homeless outreach grantees, our programs provide valuable resources that can assist in work with homeless populations. Along with securing safe, decent and affordable housing and creating a sustainable economic environment, obtaining access to comprehensive health care is essential to Iowans who experience homelessness. IDPH is available to provide the tools, information, and resources necessary to bridge this gap for families and individuals, and has created an [inventory of programs](#) to assist in this effort.

Sealant report posted

According to the [2010-2011 School-Based Sealant year-end report](#), the overall preventive efforts of the IDPH [Bureau of Oral and Health Delivery Systems](#), and its

partners, are making a difference. Approximately 5,800 children were screened in 2010/2011, including 2,475 children on Medicaid (42.7 percent). Of the total children screened, 3,858 received dental sealants (66.6 percent), which is an average of 3.6 sealants per child. Over 55 percent of the Medicaid children seen through the program had a history of decay, while 16.8 percent had untreated decay. Overall, the rate of decay is less than it was five years ago in state fiscal year 2006-2007; at that time, 26 percent of participants had untreated decay, compared to 15.2 percent this year.

Congrats and Kudos

Congratulations to Katrina Altenhofen of the IDPH [Bureau of EMS](#), who was honored with the Iowa Injury Prevention Lifetime Achievement Award at the 10th Annual “Keeping Kids Safe” Statewide Injury Prevention Conference in Des Moines. Katrina and former IDPH intern Lisa Roth were given the award for their efforts to get the state [child passenger safety seat program](#) off the ground as a statewide initiative, as well as developing and implementing Iowa’s first and the nation’s only injury prevention license plate, “[Love Our Kids](#),” the funding from which goes to communities to conduct local injury prevention initiatives.

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

— Dr. Miller-Meeks