



Quick Reads

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Public health conference

I hope many of you will have the opportunity to attend the [Iowa Governor's Conference on Public Health](#) this week. Once again, the conference offers a variety of insightful speakers and sessions. More than 40 educational sessions are planned and opening day keynote speaker [Emily Friedman](#), an independent writer, lecturer and health policy and ethics analyst, will share her expertise in the areas of health care reform initiatives and the social ethics of health care. As always, there will be plenty of time for renewing professional friendships and new networking opportunities. For those unable to attend the conference personally, be sure to follow the [#IAGovCPH](#) Twitter hash tag for up-to-the-minute thoughts and insights from each session.

E-health bill signed into law

I was pleased to be in attendance as Governor Branstad signed [Senate File 2318](#) on Thursday, April 12. This law establishing the [Iowa Health Information Network \(IHIN\)](#), or e-Health, was the product of many, many conversations with stakeholders. For patients, the IHIN will enhance care coordination across care settings; increase avoidance of adverse drug events and medical errors; reduce redundant testing and procedures for patients; and encourage patient empowerment through access to personal health records. For providers, the IHIN will increase access to electronic patient information when and where it is needed, and in a format that is most usable; expand care coordination and communication with other providers; improve access to health history details prior to patient diagnosis and treatment; and provide greater access to tools for population health management issues such as immunizations and reportable diseases. Four major health systems in Iowa ([Iowa Health System](#), [Genesis Health System](#), [Mercy Health](#), and [University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics](#)), as well as [Wellmark](#) and the [Iowa Medicaid Enterprise](#) have all agreed to participate and use the

IHIN when it is ready to be implemented. This is an exciting time as we use new technology to improve the health of Iowans.

CPPW success

The creativity and out-of-the-box thinking of our local public health partners is always motivational. Last month, [Ringgold County](#) produced a documentary on the [Communities Putting Prevention to Work](#) (CPPW) tobacco prevention and control grant successes, and the advocates who made it possible. More than 100 people attended the 'premier' at the Princess Theater in Mount Ayr. After the documentary was shown, attendees completed a survey. The results are impressive. 86 percent said they believed CPPW had a significant positive impact; 76 percent learned more about tobacco prevention in Ringgold County; 71 percent learned more people were involved with community efforts than they realized; and 64.5 percent learned more about the role Public Health can serve in their community.

Governor's conference on substance abuse

It was my honor to have had the opportunity to speak and meet many of you at the 35th annual Governor's Conference on Substance Abuse earlier this month. Nearly 500 people attended the two-day conference, which focused on substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery. This conference was yet another example of the importance of public and private collaboration at the state and local levels. The opportunity to share ideas and successful techniques results in the strengthening of our unified commitment to addressing substance abuse issues in Iowa.

Congrats and kudos

Congratulations to Debbi Cooper and Mindy Uhle of the IDPH [Division of Environmental Health](#). They were recognized at the annual [Safe Kids of Greater Des Moines](#) awards luncheon for their work in keeping Iowa's children safe in their homes, schools and communities.

Thank you and congratulations to all the staff, legislators, citizens and children who took part in Laugh Out Loud (LOL) Day at the Capitol April 2. We had a large crowd, with plenty of smiles and laughs. The event with Governor Branstad was meant to demonstrate the positive health effects of laughter and stress reduction. All of us who participated can attest to the fact that laughter really may be the best medicine. Take time today to find something uplifting in your life. You'll not only brighten your day, you'll make those around you feel a little lighter, too.

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

— Dr. Miller-Meeks