



# *Quick Reads*

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## **Public Health's role in ACOs - expanded**

In last month's edition of [Quick Reads](#), I highlighted Webster County's efforts regarding [Accountable Care Organizations](#). A reader asked if I could expand upon how I believe the Iowa Department of Public Health should be involved in framing public health's role in ACOs. I appreciate the question and would be happy to share my thoughts on this issue.

I and the department are working diligently to bring our local public health partners to the table for both the [State Innovation Model](#) discussions with Medicaid, and the [Aging & Disability Resource Centers](#) discussions with the Department on Aging. We are also involved with the [Iowa Healthcare Collaborative](#) to ensure public health will be at the table with the provider community in the [Hospital Engagement Network](#) and have encouraged administrators to get on the mailing list for the Iowa Medicaid Enterprise [newsletter](#).

At a recent Medicaid State Innovation Model (SIM) meeting in Baltimore, Iowa was the only state in which the Medicaid director had presented to the entire local public health agency community. This interaction puts us ahead of many states on this issue. IDPH [Behavioral Health Division](#) Director Kathy Stone is a member of the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Iowa SIM workgroup and I have submitted the names of local administrators who are interested in involvement with the SIM workgroups and they have been appointed.

While a decisive, statewide roadmap for Public Health's role in ACOs is desirable, each county in Iowa is different, and each offers different programs that may be incorporated into and contracted by an ACO. Because of this variability and the need for local control, each local public health agency should approach and engage with their

unique provider community. The process of engagement is clearly, and logically should be, at the local level.

### **Iowa Board of Health welcomes new members**

Governor Branstad has appointed one new member to the [Iowa State Board of Health](#) and re-appointed three others. I am pleased to welcome Norman Pawlewski of Des Moines to the Board. I am equally pleased the Governor has reappointed Ron Abrons, MD of Coralville, Maggie Tinsman of Bettendorf, and Michael Wolnerman, RPh, CCIM of Des Moines to another term. A special thank you to outgoing Board Chairperson Justine Morton of West Des Moines, who served on the board for 11 years.

### **Healthy Iowans Plan update**

I encourage you to review the recently completed [2013 Progress Report](#) for the [Health Iowans: Iowa's Health Improvement Plan 2012-2016](#). Thanks to the input from nearly 70 Iowa organizations and advisory groups, the nine topic areas that serve as the plan's framework (access to quality health services and support; acute disease; addictive behaviors; chronic disease; environmental health; healthy living; injury and violence; mental health and mental disorders; and preparedness and response) were reviewed. Partners report completing or making progress toward completion in 70 percent of the 143 objectives and strategies outlined; in 16 percent of the objectives, some progress was reported, but work was behind schedule; and no progress was reported in 15 percent of the objectives.

### **Congrats and kudos**

The IDPH [Community Transformation Grants](#) are re-shaping Iowa's culture of wellness community-by-community. The [Lee County Health Department](#) utilized the CTG they received to conduct a nutritional survey of the Donnellson Ballpark concession stand using the [Nutritional Environment Measure Survey](#) (NEMS). More than 50 percent of the items offered fell in the 'red' or 'unhealthy' category. The ballpark hit a home run when the county worked with the concession stand's operator to include healthier options. New items include string cheese, baked chips, trail mix, and fruit cups.

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

— Dr. Miller-Meeks

