

Quick Reads

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IDPH COVID-19 response

I want to recognize the significant investment local and state public health staff are making in all aspects of the state's coordinated COVID-19 response. Many IDPH staff continue to dedicate long days to this response – conducting contact tracing with Iowans affected by the virus, interacting directly with the media and the public, and coordinating with other state and local partners.

It is also important to note that while the department's primary focus, naturally, is responding to the pandemic, the other work of the department continues as well.

The majority of IDPH staff are working remotely per social distancing guidelines. Some of our staff, necessary to keep our work going, remain in state offices.

I'm extremely proud of our staff and the work taking place in all divisions, bureaus and programs of the department. Though COVID-19 has rightfully been in the public health spotlight for months, the daily work of the department to protect and improve the health of Iowans has continued without interruption.

HIP highlights

In 2019, local public health agencies submitted progress reports on their health improvement plan (HIP) objectives and strategies. Each month, Quick Reads will highlight one county's work.

Benton County: Immunization rates for 2-year-olds increased from 69% in 2014 to 75% by 2017. For more information, see the complete plans and reports on the IDPH [website](#).

SDHD gets residents moving

Siouxland District Health Department in Sioux City has been selected by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as one of eight pilot communities in the U.S. to implement the [Move Your WaySM Campaign](#). A community launch event was held in February to kick-start the physical activity initiative, with nearly 600 attendees. Free tubing, snowshoeing and other outdoor activities were available. SDHD will host a variety of other events and partner with community agencies to promote the Move Your WaySM Campaign materials over the next several months.



Share your success

Contribute a news item or smart practice by [email](#). Get IDPH news and information by subscription through [Granicus](#). For IDPH topics, scroll to "Public Health, Iowa Department of."

Congrats and kudos

IDPH Health Statistics Bureau Chief Melissa Bird has been elected treasurer of the National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems ([NAPHSIS](#)) Board of Directors.

A recent issue of the National Network of Public Health Institutes newsletter featured [Harrison County Public Health's](#) COVID-19 response. The article highlighted the work of home health services, which are especially important in rural communities.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recognized the [Quad Cities Food Rescue Partnership](#) with a [2019 Food Recovery Challenge Regional Award](#). As part of the challenge, organizations pledge to improve their sustainable food management practices and report their results.

HIV diagnoses reduction

The 2019 Iowa End-of-Year HIV Surveillance Report shows a 30% reduction in HIV diagnoses over the last three years – this is the first sustained reduction in HIV diagnoses since HIV reporting began in 1998.

The populations most impacted by HIV also saw the largest decreases in diagnoses over the last three years. This includes males (32% reduction), white Iowans (35% reduction), black/African American Iowans (33% reduction) and men who have sex with men (43% reduction).



Quick Reads – June 15, 2020

IDPH spotlight: Physical Activity

Obesity is Iowa's top health priority identified by Iowa counties through their community health needs assessment. Iowa has the seventh highest adult self-reported obesity rate in the nation, with over one-third of adults considered obese and another one-third considered overweight.

Physical activity is one of the most important actions all Iowans can take to improve their health; however, only half of Iowa adults are meeting the physical activity recommendations of 30 minutes five days a week and 2% report no activity at all in the past month.

Creating environments to make it easier for people to walk or bike is a strategy that not only helps to increase physical activity, but can also make communities better places to live. People who live in neighborhoods with sidewalks are 50% more likely to meet physical activity guidelines.

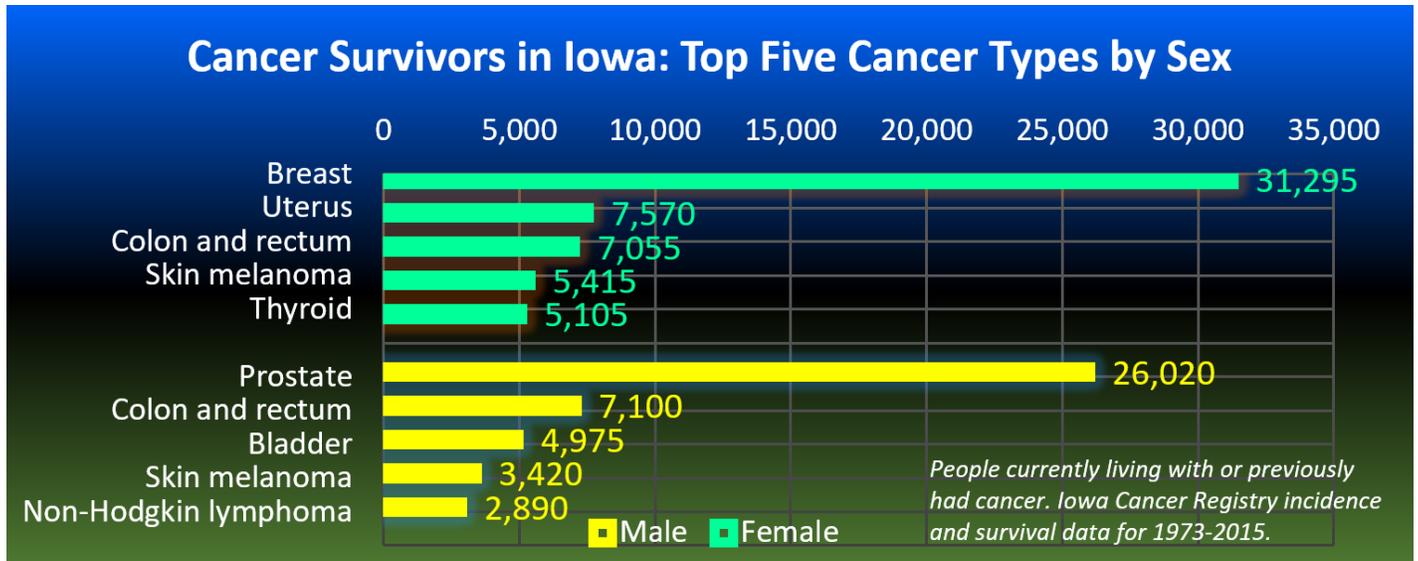
IDPH partners with Iowa's Healthiest State Initiative to provide resources, funding and support for [5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count!](#) and the [Iowa Walking College](#) – a 6 month educational opportunity to increase participants knowledge of an advocacy for making communities more walkable.

IDPH encourages all communities to make it easier for residents of all ages and abilities to walk by passing a [complete streets policy](#), and by working with their local school district to make it easier and safer for students to walk and bike to school.

IDPH fast facts

Through the federally funded IDPH Care for Yourself cervical cancer screening program, 688 Pap tests were performed, and seven cases of precancerous cervical lesions and two cases of cervical cancer were detected in FY19.

Data snapshot - June is national cancer survivor month



Data source: [Iowa Cancer Registry's Cancer in Iowa report](#)

An estimated 2 in 5 people will develop cancer at some point in their lifetime. Nearly 150,000 people living in Iowa are cancer survivors. There are many cancer disparities; for example, black women in Iowa have a lower breast cancer incidence rate compared to white women, but the breast cancer mortality rate is higher among black women than white women (Iowa Cancer Registry, 2012-2016). Some types of cancer and treatments can weaken a person's immune system and put them at risk for infection, including COVID-19. Adults and children with serious chronic health conditions, including cancer, are at higher risk of developing more serious complications from illnesses such as COVID-19. More information about cancer and COVID-19 can be found at CDC's [Coronavirus and Cancer](#) and [What to do When You're Immunocompromised](#) web pages, and at [cancer.org](#). Send questions or comments about IDPH data [here](#).



Find more COVID-19 graphics and communication resources [here](#).