



Quick Reads

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Public health shows its strength during flood response

Mother nature has dealt our state several hard blows this spring, and has reminded us what a tremendous effect the environment has on personal and community health. We are also reminded of the collective strength of the public health system and the thousands of public health workers and partners that form the backbone of that system. I'm afraid, however, our battle is far from over. As you continue serving others in the coming weeks, I want you to also commit to taking care of yourself. Remember to:

- Maintain contact and connection with primary social supports, including each other.
- Avoid over-identification with survivors'/victims' grief and trauma, which may interfere with discussing painful material.
- Balance your lifestyle. Get physical exercise, eat nutritiously, and get adequate amounts of sleep and rest.
- Watch for emotional exhaustion or strain. Signs may include general anxiety, difficulty communicating thoughts or feelings, and becoming easily frustrated or irritable.
- Manage your workload. Set priority levels for tasks with a realistic work plan, and delegate where appropriate.
- Recognize when a personal disaster experience or loss interferes with your own effectiveness.
- Use time off for exercise, reading, listening to music, taking a bath, talking to family, or getting a special meal to recharge batteries.

Remember, no amount of physical resources IDPH can provide comes even close to the human resources your community has in you. Take care of yourself.

Cancer consortium partners in High Ground for Cancer Patients

In response to the devastating floods and tornadoes that have swept through Iowa, five organizations dedicated to fighting cancer have established High Ground for Cancer Patients—a special initiative to help cancer patients and their loved ones living in any officially declared federal disaster county in Iowa. The [Iowa Consortium for Comprehensive Cancer Control](#) is working with the American Cancer Society, the Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center, the Iowa Department of Public Health and the Lance Armstrong Foundation to provide housing, transportation and medical assistance to cancer patients currently receiving treatment. Assistance of up to \$1,000 is available and is intended to ease the burden of increased transportation, lodging, or other unexpected expenses due to severe storms and flooding. For more information or to learn more about the support available through this effort, call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345 or visit www.cancer.org.

Smokefree Air Act Web site provides valuable resources

IDPH recently launched a Web site to help business owners and the public understand the [Smokefree Air Act](#). The new site, www.iowaSmokefreeAir.gov, provides a number of resources, including business-specific fact sheets, a frequently asked questions document, the draft Administrative Rules, sample "no smoking" signs, a form for commenting on the draft rules, and a schedule of training opportunities. For more information, or to make suggestions regarding the site, contact Brent Saron at 515-281-7739 or bsaron@idph.state.ia.us.

Vaccine University starts up again

Beginning July 8, the IDPH Immunization Program will be presenting 18 regional [Vaccine University](#) classes. This time, three types of classes are being provided.

- Vaccine 101—a basic course in the immunization schedule, including application of the immunization schedule using real-life scenarios.
- Vaccine Storage & Handling—this class will be a repeat of the class offered in November focusing on how to protect your vaccine supply, ensure proper temperatures, execute proper storage and handling, and utilizing a vaccine emergency response plan.
- IRIS Training—a basic introduction to the IRIS program, including hands-on work within the program to learn about vaccine accountability, vaccine ordering, inventory, and user/preference lists.

There is no fee for the classes and continuing education units will be offered for nurses and certified medical assistants. Space is limited, so sign up early. For additional information on classes, locations, or to register, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/immunization.asp.

Nominate an agricultural safety advocate today

[Iowa's Center for Agricultural Safety and Health](#) (I-CASH) is accepting nominations for its seventh annual Agricultural Safety and Health Hall of Fame Award. The award recognizes Iowans who have made substantial and long-term contributions to the health and safety of the state's agricultural community. All Iowans or organizations in the public or private sector are eligible for the award. The 2008 winner will receive a \$100 cash award at a ceremony during the Iowa State Fair in Des Moines in August.

The nomination deadline is July 15. Nomination forms and additional award information are available at www.public-health.uiowa.edu/icash or through Eileen Fisher at eileen-fisher@uiowa.edu.

DHHS' healthfinder.gov redesigned

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, [Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#) is pleased to announce a complete redesign of their Web site, www.healthfinder.gov. Recently made available in beta form, the new site has a prevention focus and has been redesigned based on usability and health literacy principles. As a result of audience research and user testing, healthfinder.gov now offers a more user friendly interface, simple navigation and information organization, and an easy-to-read format. Other features include:

- The *Quick Guide to Healthy Living*—basic, easy-to-understand information on key prevention topics, including the benefits of taking recommended actions and tips on how to get started;
- *myhealthfinder*—personalized health recommendations based on age and sex from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, supported by the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; and
- Personal Health Tools—menu and activity planners, health calculators, online check-ups, and more.

To try out the new beta site and leave feedback, visit <http://beta.healthfinder.gov>.

We want your best practices

IDPH is committed to telling the citizens of Iowa about the good things public health is doing to make a difference. To do this, we want to highlight your best

practices/success stories. Please send your ideas to Don McCormick at dmccorni@idph.state.ia.us.

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