



Quick Reads

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White House Forum on Health Reform set for March 23

Governor Chet Culver will host the [White House Forum on Health Reform](#) on March 23 at the Polk County Convention Complex in Des Moines. The event will bring together Iowans who have a stake in our health care system and the people who have the ability to change it. The forum is a ticketed event for policymakers and health care leaders. A lottery will be held for the public to participate. Call toll-free 1-800-645-8864 by noon Wednesday, March 18. For more information, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/healthreform.

Modernization focus of National Public Health Week in Iowa, April 6-12

I am pleased to announce our theme for [National Public Health Week \(NPHW\) in Iowa](#), "Public Health Modernization as a Foundation for a Healthy Iowa." I urge our partners across the state to join us in raising awareness about how public health promotes and protects the health of Iowans. By educating those in your community about how public health touches their lives every day, you will enable them to participate in the important discussion now taking place regarding the [Public Health Modernization Initiative](#).

To help you prepare for the NPHW April 6-12 observance, the Public Health Modernization Initiative's Increase Knowledge Committee has created a [Web page](#). Among the resources you will find there is the "What is public health?" series of handouts. Designed as fun and informative multiple-choice quizzes, each pertains to one of the five service standards outlined in the [Iowa Public Health Standards](#). Also on the new site are event ideas and tips, a sample media advisory, a news release template, a table tent featuring the top 10 public health advancements of the last century, and more. Visit www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/nphw.asp today and start planning your event!

Governor signs bill to prevent shaken baby syndrome

Governor Culver recently signed legislation to establish a statewide shaken baby prevention program. Shaken baby syndrome (SBS) refers to brain injuries an infant suffers after being shaken or slammed. Between 1995 and 2007, 49 Iowa infants died from SBS. An estimated 36 are injured every year and will endure lifelong disabilities. The program seeks to reduce the number of infants with SBS in the future.

The legislation charges IDPH with establishing a statewide SBS prevention program. Phase one begins with program development. Phase two, the education component, will be carried forth when funds become available. Through the program, parents will be educated about the effects of SBS and effective coping strategies to use when their baby is crying.

Comment on national public health standards by April 30

As Iowa moves forward with its [Public Health Modernization Initiative](#), it is also important to keep our finger on the pulse of public health accreditation efforts taking place at the national level. If you haven't already done so, please make some time to visit the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#) (PHAB) Web site. There you will be able to review and comment on their recently released [draft standards](#) for state, local and territorial health department accreditation.

The release of the initial iteration of the standards is an important milestone for the field of public health and is a noteworthy step toward the goal of having the accreditation program in place by early 2011. The draft standards and measures will be available for public review and comment until April 30, 2009. For more information, visit www.phaboard.org. So that we know what Iowans think of the draft standards, please share your comments with Public Health Modernization Initiative Coordinator Joy Harris at JHarris@idph.state.ia.us.

Federal funds help three more communities address lead hazards in housing

Congratulations to Marshalltown, Sioux City, and Polk County for receiving nearly \$8 million in funding from the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#) (HUD) to remediate lead hazards in housing in their communities. These funds were contained in the Economic Recovery Package that was recently signed into law and were allocated to communities that applied for these funds in 2008. The three communities join Linn County, which received \$2.4 million from HUD in the initial round of funding in October.

Full Adult Tobacco Survey results now available

The full [2008 Adult Tobacco Survey Report](#) has been released. You may recall that the preliminary results of this survey indicated a remarkable 22 percent decrease in adult smoking since 2006. The full report provides a complete picture of adult tobacco use in our state. Highlights include the fact that 32 percent of smokers said they have reduced the amount they smoke since passage of the \$1 cigarette tax increase. The report also points toward a substantial increase in the number of smokers who want to quit and have attempted to quit in the past year. To view the report, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/tobacco and scroll to “Adult Tobacco Surveys.”

Emergency prescription drug distribution bill moves forward

I was very pleased last week with the progress of Senate File 377. Known as the Drug Repository for Disasters and Emergencies, this bill passed the Senate by a vote of 49-0. Now headed for the House, the bill would allow IDPH to accept prescription drugs from the [Iowa Prescription Drug Donation Repository Program](#) in preparation for or during a disaster. The drugs would be provided to Disaster Medical Assistance Teams for distribution to individuals in need. The drugs would only be dispensed by licensed providers.

Funding increases for child-focused EMS

The IDPH [Emergency Medical Services for Children](#) (EMSC) program welcomes the news of an additional \$390,000 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to fund activities over the next three years. The funding represents an increase of \$45,000 more than was awarded for the last funding period. The funding is intended to solidify the integration of a pediatric focus within the state EMS system. The goal of the EMSC program is to reduce child and youth morbidity and mortality resulting from severe illness or injury.

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 dmccormi@idph.state.ia.us.

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