



Quick Reads

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Budget update

Following Governor Culver's decision to institute a 10 percent across-the-board cut to the state budget, I worked with the directors of each division within IDPH and submitted a [plan](#) that would have the smallest possible negative impact on our local public health partners and minimize layoffs within the department. This was not easy; our plan included some painful cuts. After reviewing IDPH's plan last week, I am pleased that the governor has [restored funding](#) to some critical public health services. Of the original reduction of \$6.05 million, \$4.38 million was restored. While this is certainly good news, we are also reminded that public health will have to do more with less for the remainder of fiscal year 2010.

I would like to recognize the great personal sacrifice IDPH employees will be expected to make because of these budget cuts. It is not known whether the backfilling of funds will prevent layoffs. We do know, however, that all non-contract employees, many of whom are supervisors, will have to take seven days furlough to help reduce operating costs. Also, Governor Culver's request of the three employee unions to re-open bargaining agreements may affect the bottom line of many IDPH staff members as well.

To view the original plan submitted by IDPH, visit www.governor.iowa.gov/index.php/static/budget. To find out which areas of the budget will be backfilled, visit www.governor.iowa.gov/files/backfill_needs.pdf.

Nutrition component added to Live Healthy Iowa Kids

[Live Healthy Iowa Kids](#) has teamed up with the [Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Nutrition](#) to bring an innovative nutrition component to this year's 100 Day Challenge. Using a newly developed wall chart for teams to track nutrition along with

physical activity, adult team facilitators will focus on fruit consumption for the first four weeks of the challenge, while the second set of four weeks will concentrate on eating more vegetables. Weeks 9 and 10 will encourage choosing water over soda and other beverages, followed by two weeks emphasizing low-fat milk. For the final three weeks, teams will use the tracking sheet to report screen time. The less time team members spend watching TV, playing video games or using a computer for recreation, the higher their collective score. To register a team or request materials, visit www.iowasportsfoundation.org. Live Healthy Iowa Kids starts January 19, 2010.

Iowa medical home efforts recognized

Iowa was recently chosen as one of eight states for the [National Academy for State Health Policy](#) (NASHP) Consortium to Advance Medical Homes for Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Participants. NASHP is supported through a grant from [The Commonwealth Fund](#) to develop and implement policies that increase Medicaid and CHIP program participants' access to high performing medical homes. Each state will receive a one-year program of technical assistance to support their efforts. The technical assistance program will provide opportunities for consortium members to exchange insights and experience with national experts and their peers.

U of I event to focus on accreditation

On Nov. 19, I will have the honor of joining Kaye Bender, president and CEO of the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), in an educational opportunity through the University of Iowa. The 2009 Fall Colloquium will focus on the national trend toward performance and quality improvement in public health, key public health elements in health reform discussions, and the role that public health accreditation has in health reform. Of particular interest to public health practitioners, board of health members, health care providers, and public health students, this event will provide practical and useful information for those considering or seeking voluntary national accreditation in public health. It will describe the goal of voluntary accreditation and discuss the required components of the application process. This event is free and will be held at the Kinnick Stadium Indoor Club from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. To register to attend, please contact Carman Walsh at 319-335-8855 or carman-walsh@uiowa.edu by Nov. 5.

IDSS now fully implemented

I'd like to give a pat on the back to the team and all the partners who have seen the [Iowa Disease Surveillance System](#) (IDSS) through its various stages of development over the last five years. The IDSS allows local public health partners, labs, and hospitals to accurately report diseases in real time—including H1N1 hospitalizations and deaths—on a secure IDPH Web site. I am happy to say that the IDSS has now been fully implemented in all local public health agencies and hospitals in Iowa.

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

— Tom