



Quick Reads

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Greetings for the New Year

Last year was certainly an eventful one for public health in Iowa. Twelve months ago, we began with what we *thought* was a fairly good idea of what 2009 had in store for us. Topics such as public health modernization and health reform were very much on our collective radar. We could not foresee, however, that we would be dealing with pandemic influenza, nor could anyone predict the impact of revenue shortfalls on state government. Even the pleasant surprises, such as the opportunity to tap into federal economic stimulus funds, meant that we had to exercise a great deal of flexibility. Luckily, this is the sort of thing public health folks do extremely well.

During the New Year, IDPH looks forward to continuing the valuable partnerships we have with local public health agencies, other state departments, private businesses and other partners who are critical to our mission of promoting and protecting the health of Iowans. I am sure that 2010 will hold many challenges and opportunities to once again show off our ability to juggle resources, manage multiple priorities, and cope with unforeseen events. As we move forward this year, I encourage you to take a moment now and then to reflect on the impact your work is having on the health status of your community and the state as a whole.

Update on proposed restoration of funding

In accepting IDPH's plan for a \$6 million budget reduction, Governor Culver has made an amendment which proposes the restoration of a portion of these funds. The most recent information indicates that this may occur through a supplemental budget bill that will have to be approved by the Iowa Legislature. Regardless of how and when a restoration of funds takes place, the department appreciates the opportunity to provide

the critical public health services that may not otherwise be available to Iowans who need them.

Modernization grants announced

Congratulations to the recipients of nine grant awards from IDPH to help local public health modernization efforts. Dallas, Hancock, Johnson, Lee, Scott, and Tama counties will be completing a self-assessment of their ability to meet the [Iowa Public Health Standards](#). The counties will also host a team of site visitors who will review their findings.

Counties funded to partner with one another on quality improvement projects are: Black Hawk and Delaware; Henry and Washington; and Webster, Calhoun and Hamilton. Stay tuned to Quick Reads and the Public Health Modernization [mailing list](#) for more information about these projects as they progress. To sign up for direct updates, send a blank e-mail to join-idphlegupdate@lists.ia.gov.

Live Healthy Iowa starts January 14

Registration is now open for [Live Healthy Iowa](#). Since 2002, this 100-day health challenge has helped over 150,000 participants lose 618,139 pounds and log over 26 million miles of activity since 2002. Once again, I'm calling on *Quick Reads* readers to become leaders in this important effort. It's time to walk the walk and lead by example. Visit www.livehealthyiowa.org today to form a team with family members, co-workers, or community members. Remind potential team members that for a small \$20 registration fee, everyone will receive a Live Healthy Iowa T-shirt, a free one-year subscription to one of ten lifestyle magazines, a coupon book containing valuable discounts and health information, nutrition and recipe tips, access to a personal online progress tracking page, and much, much more.

IDPH annual report now available

The IDPH [2009 Annual Report & Budget Summary](#) was recently posted to the IDPH Web site. I hope that you will find this publication a helpful resource in learning more about how IDPH's programs and services promote and protect the health of Iowans. To help save taxpayer dollars and to encourage greater access to the report, the department is making it available on our Web site at www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/annual_reports.asp.

Contracting process improvements forthcoming

In November 2009, IDPH sponsored a "kaizen" (continuous improvement) event to streamline the department's current service contracting process. Representatives from each of the department's six divisions, several local partners, a member of the Iowa

Department of Human Services, and a special guest from the Minnesota Health Department took part in the event and helped develop a more efficient and effective process. As the department goes about rolling out these improvements, the IDPH continuous improvement team will provide updates to our service contract partners and may ask for feedback. For more information, contact Bruce Brown at bbrown@idph.state.ia.us.

Public health journal highlights QI and Accreditation

A [special issue](#) of the Journal of Public Health Management and Practice examines quality improvement in public health, and includes highlights of some of the innovative work conducted by participants of the Multi-State Learning Collaborative: Lead States in Public Health Quality Improvement. Iowa is part of this collaborative. To access this important and free publication, visit www.jphmp.com.

Sign up now for legislative updates

Stay up-to-date on all of the public health-related discussions in the General Assembly with the weekly [Legislative Update](#) from IDPH. Available by subscription or online, this important publication provides important information for agency staff, department regulatory and advisory board members, local health departments and contract agencies, and public health leaders in the community. To get the Legislative Update in your inbox each week, please send a blank e-mail to join-IDPHLEGUPDATE@lists.ia.gov.

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To get *Quick Reads* directly in your inbox, please send a blank e-mail to join-quick_reads@lists.ia.gov. To contribute a news item or smart practice, please write to Don McCormick at dmccormi@idph.state.ia.us.

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

— Tom