



# *Quick Reads*

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**August 15, 2014**

## **Strategic Operational Plan**

Two years ago, the IDPH Executive Team began meeting to consider the many changes occurring in health care delivery systems, and the potential impact on Iowa's public health agencies. This work resulted in the development of the IDPH Strategic Operational Plan. Since that time, we've begun implementation of a performance standard which directly links performance to quality improvement; we're better understanding our data collection systems; and we're optimizing the way we disseminate that data to better understand and address the public's health. Our work is not finished. Over the past several months, we have examined, evaluated, and where necessary, revised and updated this document to address the ever-changing environment in which public health operates. The [updated IDPH Strategic Operational Plan](#) has been posted to the Internet. I invite you to take a few moments to examine it and I invite your questions and comments.

## **Public input requested**

The public comment period for the proposed administrative rules implementing [Senate File 2360](#), the Medical Cannabidiol Act, is underway. Written comments will be accepted until August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2014. On August 26<sup>th</sup>, a public hearing will be held from 11:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. via the Iowa Communications Network. Details are available [here](#).

A public hearing for the amended administrative rules for 641 IAC 4, the [Center for Congenital and Inherited Disorders](#), will also be held August 26, 2014. Major amendments to these rules address newborn screening for critical congenital heart

disease, and provide for informed consent prior to releasing residual newborns dried blood spot specimens for research.

## **From Iowa to West Africa**

Iowa has 'boots on the ground' in the public health battle against the [West African Ebola outbreak](#). Samir Koirala, an epidemiologist working for IDPH, is part of the CDC team working to treat victims of the outbreak and control its spread. Dr. Samir, as he is known, is providing updates about his work in Sierra Leone via the IDPH [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) accounts. His insights provide an up-close look at challenges ranging from simple hand-washing protocols to battling societal fear. We all wish Dr. Samir success in his work and look forward to his safe return.

## **IDPH fitness challenge**

As public health professionals, we are all keenly aware of the need for all of us to move more and eat healthier food. We preach it every day. Are we practicing what we preach? The IDPH Fall Fitness Challenge is an opportunity for all of us to 'walk the talk' of health and fitness. Within the department, a variety of Lunch-Learn-Join sessions are underway addressing everything from how to choose the best shoes for walking to how to get ready to run a marathon. Friendly divisional competitions are being held and the October 19th [Des Moines Marathon](#) will be the culminating event for our 2014 Fall Fitness Challenge. I invite you to create your own Fitness Challenge and I'd love to hear about the results. Remember, you don't have to run (or walk) a marathon to 'walk the talk.' The annual [Healthiest State Walk](#) is October 8. Please plan to participate as we all work towards healthier individuals, communities and a healthier Iowa.

## **Quality Improvement Success**

Since the January 2014 implementation of [AMANDA licensure software](#), the IDPH [Bureau of Professional Licensure](#) has received and processed over 15,000 renewals, 2,000 new applications, and 200 complaints.

Temporary staff has been hired in the Bureau of Professional Licensure to begin scanning permanent application documents to a licensee's record. To date, more than 4,000 permanent records have been scanned and attached to individual and establishment records using AMANDA. Once these permanent licensure documents are attached to the licensee's record, the paper documents can be archived.

## **Congrats and kudos**

Congratulations to [Iowa State Board of Health](#) member Maggie Tinsman of Bettendorf, who will be inducted into the [Iowa Women's Hall of Fame](#) during ceremonies on August 23<sup>rd</sup> at the State Historical Building in Des Moines.

Eric Preuss of the IDPH [Gambling Treatment Program](#) has been elected to the [Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators](#) (APGSA) Board of Directors.

A fourth Iowa hospital is now included in the [Immunization Action Coalition's](#) (IAC) [Hepatitis B Birth Dose Honor Roll](#). [Mercy Medical Center](#) in Mason City reported a coverage rate of 93 percent from June 1, 2013 to June 1, 2014. It joins [Myrtue Medical Center](#), Harlan; [Greene County Medical Center](#), Jefferson; and [Mary Greeley Medical Center](#), Ames.

On July 15, 2014, the [Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health](#) was one of 14 Iowa organizations and business to receive the Environmental Excellence award from Governor Terry Branstad. This award recognizes leadership and innovation in managing the state's natural resources.

Congratulations to [Monroe County Public Health](#) Administrator [Kathy Welsh](#), who has retired after serving as Administrator for 10 years. Previous to that, she was a public health nurse in Monroe County.

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

— Gerd