

Quick Reads

Gerd W. Clabaugh, MPA
Director, Iowa Department of Public Health



Brenda Dobson retires

After 35 years with the Iowa Department of Public Health, [Division of Health Promotion & Chronic Disease](#) Director Brenda Dobson retired late last month. Brenda began her career at IDPH as a WIC consultant in 1984. She went on to become the WIC Nutrition Services coordinator, and took the position as division director in 2015.

After decades of dedication to maternal and child health, preventing and managing obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and cancer, and a long list of other public health concerns and programs, Brenda can now spend more time pursuing her hobbies, including quilting and taekwondo. Jill Lange will serve as the interim division director.



Brenda Dobson with IDPH Director Gerd Clabaugh

Local public health updates

The [Polk County Health Department](#) is rolling out an initiative to reach youth with reliable, evidence-based and relatable information about STIs.

Online strategies include [YouTube](#) "Sex 'n Stuff" videos (targeted to ages 12-18) and the "Down & Dirty" podcasts (targeted to ages 18-24). Education will be promoted through county college campuses, school nurses and counselors.

[Harrison County Public Health](#) joined with Project Harmony for an interesting and well-attended program on child sex trafficking called "[Darkness to Light](#)." They have several other activities planned throughout the county that are unique.



Medical cannabidiol update

According to the most recent [data](#) from the IDPH [Office of Medical Cannabidiol](#), more than 1,700 medical CBD cards have been approved by IDPH and issued by the Department of Transportation. The average patient age is 56 and patients are nearly evenly divided between male (48.3 percent) and female (51.7 percent). The overwhelming number of cards have been issued to patients with untreatable pain (55 percent). The second highest percentage of cards issued is for cancer, with severe or chronic pain (11 percent).





National Public Health Week

IDPH joins public health professionals around the world in celebrating [National Public Health Week](#) April 1-7. Look for special social media messages during the week and join IDPH in the [NPHW Titter chat](#) April 3 from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Iowa Youth Survey

The [Iowa Youth Survey](#) released this month shows in general, underage drinking continues to decline among Iowa sixth, eighth and 11th graders and tobacco use is down as well; however, e-cigarette use is up significantly, as is suicide ideation.

Sharing public health's story

IDPH was proud to host a health-focused delegation from the Ukraine, arranged through [Iowa Sister States](#). IDPH leaders met with the delegation, which is evaluating legislative health care and health-related issues. Ukraine is currently overhauling much of its government systems, including health care reform. This group consisted of delegates who are playing a key role in the in Ukraine's implementation of the sweeping health care reforms.



IDPH Director Gerd Clabaugh, Interim Behavioral Health Division Director DeAnn Decker and retiring Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Division Director Brenda Dobson meet with Ukrainian delegation

IDPH spotlight: Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology

The [Center for Acute Disease Epidemiology](#) (CADE) works to prevent and control infectious disease through investigation of cases and outbreaks, disease-specific surveillance, outreach to the health care community, and education of partners and the public.

CADE works in collaboration with a number of partners, including local public health agencies, the [State Hygienic Lab](#) and the [Department of Inspections and Appeals](#) (DIA). In 2017, CADE and local public health partners investigated more than 4,000 disease reports.

Each outbreak investigation involves creation of a report detailing case counts, epidemiological data and statistical evaluations. The data in these reports helps develop guidelines for investigating outbreaks, create educational and training materials, and collect and disseminate data.

CADE also provides consultation to county and local health agencies on diseases requiring public health intervention, collaborates with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention by weekly reporting of nationally [reportable diseases](#), and offers health education opportunities through lectures and organizational seminars. CADE is also a key internal partner for IDPH efforts in preparedness planning, response and recovery.

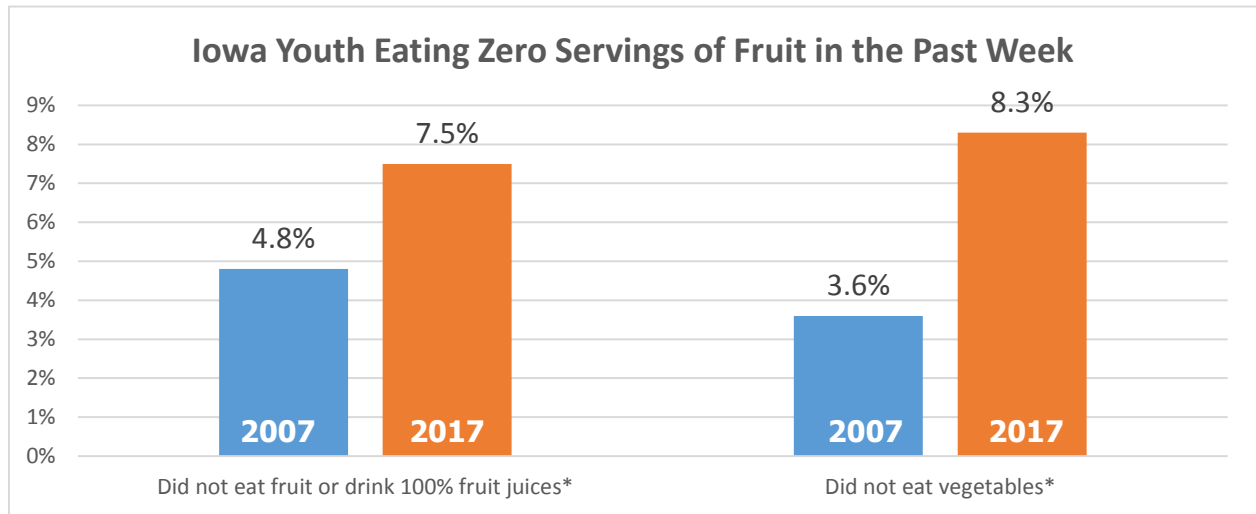
Give Back Iowa

I invite you to join IDPH in participating in the fifth annual [Give Back Iowa Challenge](#). Running from April 1 to May 31, the challenge supports employers in engaging their employees in community volunteering. By [registering](#) for the challenge, employers are provided with toolkits, templates and support to make it easy to get staff involved.



Monthly data snapshot

Data are essential to the practice of public health. Each month, Quick Reads highlights selected tidbits to help create awareness of IDPH data and epidemiology.



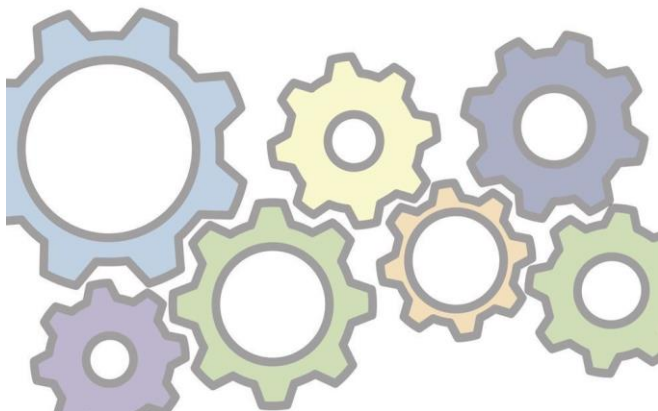
*Source: 2017 Iowa Youth Risk Behavior Survey.

According to the Iowa Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), a survey designed to track cause of death, disability and social problems in Iowa students, the percentage of Iowa high school students consuming zero servings of fruits or vegetables per week has increased in the last 10 years. The Iowa Department of Public Health recommends eating five servings of fruits and vegetables each day through its [5-2-1-0 Healthy Choices Count Program](#), and encourages increased consumption of fruits and vegetables with fun eating habits through its [Pick a Better Snack Program](#). Find more information on YRBSS [here](#). Send questions or comments about IDPH data [here](#).



**Stronger Collaborations, Better Health:
Bringing Organizations Together to
Improve Systems**

**April 23-24, 2019
Airport Holiday Inn in Des Moines**



Congrats and kudos

Congrats to Gundersen Palmer Lutheran Hospital, led by its [Community Health](#) department (the local public health agency in Fayette County), which was the winner of the [Healthiest State Initiative's](#) Medium Workplace Award and to Jes Wegner, Public Health Coordinator, who received the Healthiest State's Individual Impact Award.

Iowa's opioid crisis: an update

[Iowa's Opioid Crisis: An Update](#) provides a comprehensive update on Iowa-specific measures, IDPH efforts and an overview of funding the state has received to address opioid misuse. Among the highlights of the report: preliminary data indicate a reduction in the number of deaths related to opioids in 2018.