



State Report

State: Iowa

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Projects/Issues Addressed This Year:

- Finalization of the Iowa Public Health Standards and the endorsement of these standards by the State Board of Health
http://www.idph.state.ia.us/rphi/common/pdf/final_version.pdf
- Providing leadership for the Implementation phase of the Iowa Public Health Standards
- Passage of the Iowa Smokefree Air Act which goes into effect on July 1, 2008. Smoking will be regulated in public places, places of employment, and certain outdoor areas. The Smokefree Air Act outlines areas where smoking is prohibited, areas where smoking is not regulated, enforcement details, and scheduled penalties for persons and businesses that violate the law.
- Response to the public health emergencies of floods and tornadoes in Iowa. Public health nurses demonstrated leadership in
 - coordinating community health needs assessments of flooded communities to better address those needs
 - providing vaccinations to those for whom it is recommended
 - ensuring clean water supplies and functional sanitary systems
 - providing a variety of educational resources on topics such as what to do with a flooded well, cleaning and disinfecting, returning home safely, and preventing CO poisoning and injuries

- promoting efforts to manage stress
 - monitoring for acute disease outbreaks
 - providing medical information to health care providers about flood related health issues
 - providing leadership at local and state emergency operating centers
 - staffing and management of “at risk” Iowans in shelters
- **Passage of the Health Care Reform bill. Some examples of this bill include:**
 - Expansion of the hawk-i and Medicaid programs to provide increased coverage for children
 - Establishes an Electronic Health Information Advisory Council who are charged with developing a statewide health information technology plan due July 1, 2009
 - Establishes a two year patient autonomy in health care decisions pilot project
 - Establishes a Medical Home System Advisory Council
 - Establishes a Prevention and Chronic Care Management Advisory Council with a requirement for the Council to submit initial recommendations to the department no later than July 1, 2009
 - Requires the Iowa Department of Public Health to develop a statewide health care delivery infrastructure and health care workforces strategic plan due to the Governor and General Assembly by January 1, 2010 and every two years thereafter
 - Establishes community wellness grants, a Governor’s Council on Physical Fitness and Nutrition, establishes a best practices Web site, and directs IDPH to provide oversight for the Governor’s physical fitness challenge.
 - Development of a plan for small business wellness tax credits due to the Governor and General Assembly by December 15, 2008.
 - Requires IDPH to establish a Direct Care Worker Advisory Council to advise regarding regulation and certification of direct care workers by November 30, 2008 with implementation of certification to begin July 1, 2009
- **Development of a Local Public Health Agency Nurse Leader Orientation Plan**

- **Ongoing efforts to improve and expand “long term living” in Iowa with a focus on “healthy aging” and the provision of home and community based services.**
- **Continuing to develop and implement culturally competent strategies that address the unique needs and health beliefs of Iowa’s growing ethnic and minority populations**

Projects/Issues Pending:

- **Retention and recruitment of public health nurses in a climate of workforce shortages: i.e. aging/retiring workforce, turnover due to stress, salaries that are not competitive, changing expectations of “Generation Y” nurses**
- **Providing culturally appropriate care in an Iowa that is more diverse**

Issues and Concerns for Public Health Nurses in Iowa

- **Status quo/reduction in funding with expanded need for delivery of services**
- **Accountability and measuring outcomes**
- **Evidence-based delivery of services**
- **Telling “our story” – marketing the importance of public health nursing to consumers, stakeholders and funders**