

May 2006

## Iowa responds to mumps outbreak

By Don McCormick\*

"Public health's daily job is to investigate normal and unusual cases of illness," Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) Director, Mary Mincer Hansen, R.N., Ph.D., told reporters at an April 20 news conference. Dr. Hansen called the news conference to announce a two-phase vaccination strategy to deal with the largest outbreak of mumps in the U.S. in nearly 20 years.

"This mumps situation has given us the chance to utilize department plans and procedures and will benefit the department's response for future situations and public health emergencies," Hansen added.

Those plans and procedures are the direct result of federal funding that began in 2002 to aid bioterrorism preparedness and strategic national stockpile coordination. Iowa recently secured additional assistance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the form of 25,000 doses of the MMR (mumps, measles, and rubella) vaccine.

As of April 27, Iowa has reported 1,273

cases in 71 counties since multiple reports of mumps began in December of 2005. About half of the Iowa cases are occurring among persons 18 through 22 years of age, roughly 50 percent of whom are college students.

The first phase of Iowa's vaccination strategy took place April 26 – 28 in 35 counties across the state. These counties are home to post-secondary educational facilities such as colleges and universities. The formula for vaccine distribution takes into account college enrollment population as well as the total of similarly aged non-students in each county.

Extending the age for targeted vaccinations to 25 years old was announced on April 28. The remaining counties not included in phase one will begin vaccinations on May 2.



*Mackenzi Dailey attended a mass mumps vaccination clinic at Grandview College where she is a student.*

Amy Thoreson, public information officer at the Scott County Health Department commented on the unique

*(Continued on page 5)*

# Directly observed therapy ensures treatment, prevents spread of TB

By Allan Lynch\*

Public health professionals in the state of Iowa are committed to halting the spread of tuberculosis (TB), one of the most deadly and common major infectious diseases today. The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) TB Control Program provides all antibiotics necessary to cure this disease and provides funding to local public health agencies to ensure that treatment is effective through “directly observed therapy.”

Directly observed therapy usually occurs in the patient’s home or other location convenient to him or her and involves a significant time commitment on part of the public health nurse. For these dedicated professionals, this means watching the patient swallow every dose of medication, every time.

Sue Boley, a nurse from the Polk County Health Department, believes that directly observed therapy is the only way to ensure TB is cured. “Many of the individuals we see have language or cultural barriers and are not used to taking medication,” Boley said. “I’m sure that our directly observed therapy practices have prevented the spread of TB to friends, family and co-workers of our patients.”

Treatment for TB disease typically ranges from six to nine months and can last up to two years. Consequences of incomplete therapy include treatment failure or relapse, developing multi-drug resistant TB, and further spread of TB in the community.

Directly observed therapy is the standard of care in the most effective TB control programs in the country. To encourage the use of directly observed therapy, IDPH reimburses local public health agencies for each and every visit. Iowa is one of the few states that do this.

“Without directly observed therapy, treatment completion may not occur in



*Angie Graham, Community Health nurse for Black Hawk County, meets with a client during a directly observed therapy visit.*

many cases. The regimen can be difficult to tolerate and monitoring for side effects is essential,” said Angie Graham, community health nurse for Black Hawk County. Graham added that some clients find it difficult to understand that it is necessary to take all the prescribed medications. “When has a physician ever ordered you to take 15-21 tablets at one time?”

It is clear that many patients would never complete treatment without a public health nurse managing their care. In fact, studies have proven there is no way to predict which TB patients will comply with treatment and which will not. The consequences of incomplete treatment of such an infectious disease are great and easily outweigh the burden to the public health system of implementing directly observed therapy on all patients.

*\* Allan Lynch is the TB Program manager at IDPH.*

# Reports show progress toward 2010 health goals

By Louise Lex\*

Reports filed by partners working toward goals outlined in the state health plan, *Healthy Iowans 2010*, indicate that Iowa completed a banner year in 2005. From the prioritization of childhood care, to a diabetes rate declining faster than that of the nation as a whole, to new oral health programs for home-bound seniors, the reports show that Iowa is making progress on a variety of health fronts.

Those achievements and more are now available as a chapter-by-chapter summary on the Iowa Department of Public Health Web site. Click on [www.idph.state.ia.us/resources.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/resources.asp) and scroll down to "Healthy Iowans 2010 Progress Report."

Each year, partners responsible for taking action are asked to report on progress, barriers, revisions and results. This year's reports bear out comments by Deputy Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services, Capt. Penelope S. Royalle during her address at the Governor's Conference on Public Health last summer. "Here in Iowa, hundreds of professionals, paraprofessionals, consumers and their families have contributed to the design and redesign of the goals and action steps of the *Healthy Iowans* plan," Royalle said. "Working together is the only way of improving your state's health services. Being prepared to compete for funding by knowing what your goals are and who you need to work with to get

## Top Priorities By Number of Counties

Nutrition & Overweight (64)  
Substance Abuse (55)  
Environmental Health (30)  
Access to Health Services (27)  
Maternal, Infant & Child Health (25)  
Mental Health & Mental Disorders (22)  
Tobacco Use (22)  
Heart Disease and Stroke (15)  
Cancer (14)  
Violent and Abusive Behavior (14)  
Oral Health (11)

the job done gives you a step up on applying for federal funding opportunities."

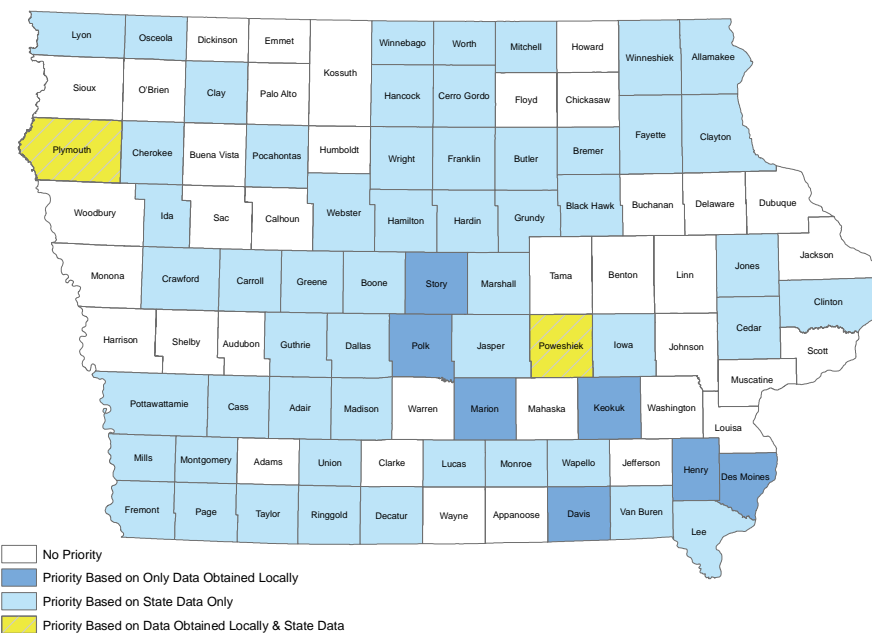
Just as *Healthy Iowans 2010* complements goals in the national plan, *Healthy People 2010*, local health plans are critical to Iowa's planning efforts. Local plans are contained in the oft-cited Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Improvement Plans (CHNA/HIP). To

make the connection between local and state plans more visible, Juan Carlos Cadenillas, a graduate intern at Des Moines University, developed a series of CHNA/HIP maps showing county health priority issues. "The maps are organized under the umbrella of *Healthy Iowans 2010* chapters and are currently being shared at county board of health meetings where, for the first time, members can see patterns of priority issues beyond their immediate county borders," Cadenillas said. The next step is to make the maps more interactive and post them on the department Web site.

For complete chapter reports or copies of the CHNA/HIP maps, write to [llelex@idph.state.ia.us](mailto:llelex@idph.state.ia.us).

\* Louise Lex is the *Healthy Iowans 2010* coordinator at IDPH.

## CHNA/HIP 2005 County Health Priorities Chapter 13: Nutrition & Overweight



# Inaugural Protect Iowa Health poster contest big success

By Nicole Peckumn\*

The importance of emergency preparedness through the eyes of Iowa's youth were captured in the nearly 190 posters submitted by Iowa 6th, 7th, and 8th graders for the 2006 Protect Iowa Health poster contest. This year's theme "Prepare Because You Care" encouraged students to create artwork showing how they can be heroes by helping their family and loved ones prepare for emergencies.

Nine finalists and their guests were invited to Des Moines during National Public Health Week for an awards ceremony at the Science Center of Iowa.

Zeb Marvin of Alta Vista, an 8th grader at New Hampton Middle School, received the \$200 U.S. Savings Bond grand prize. Copies of his poster have been distributed to Iowa communities with help from local public health agencies and hospitals.

Marvin's school received a \$500 gift card to purchase educational supplies for submitting the winning entry. Each of the other eight finalists also received a



L-R, Lt. Governor Sally Pederson, grand prize winner Zeb Marvin of Alta Vista, and IDPH Director Dr. Mary Mincer Hansen. His poster and others can be viewed on the Protect Iowa Health Web site at [www.protectiowahealth.org](http://www.protectiowahealth.org).

U.S. Savings Bond ranging from \$50 to \$100.

The ceremony's special guests included Lt. Governor Sally Pederson and Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) Director, Dr. Mary Mincer Hansen. Both praised the students for their efforts and hard work.

Students and their guests were encouraged to keep talking about the importance of preparedness in their communities.

"We all have a role to play in being prepared for emergencies. Engaging Iowa's youth makes it even more likely families will take the necessary steps to make an emergency supply kit and

create a communications plan," said Hansen.

After the ceremony, the students and their guests watched WHO-TV 13 broadcast live weather reports from their satellite location at the Science Center.

Protect Iowa Health was launched in August 2005 by IDPH, local public health, hospitals, and emergency medical services to raise awareness about personal preparedness and the role of public health in emergencies.

\* Nicole Peckumn is the IDPH bioterrorism risk communication officer.

## First Place

Lyndsey Dresen, Council Bluffs, Grade 6  
Emily Carlisle, Waukee, Grade 7

## Second Place

Schae Greenzweig, Charles City, Grade 6  
Nikki Ellis, Waukee, Grade 7  
Jessica Knappl, Elkader, Grade 8

## Third Place

Alexandria Collins, Ottumwa, Grade 6  
Maria Cortes, Waukee, Grade 7  
Tanner Wenger, Elkader, Grade 8



Iowa Department of Public Health

Advancing Health Through the Generations

# Training, communication important in dealing with mumps

(Continued from page 1)



*Lori Parsons, a nurse from the Polk County Health Department, gives an MMR vaccination to Melissa Just, who was due to graduate the following Saturday. "Right when (the schools) think the year is over, we ask to invade their space. They've been so accommodating and really understand the importance of what we're doing," Parsons said.*

nature of targeting this particular population. "This experience has helped us get a feel for the community in terms of risk communication needs, in that we've had to look for and use methods of communication with a population we haven't had to target before," Thoreson said.

In addition to using traditional television and print media to reach the 18- to 22-year-old population in the days before the phase one vaccinations, Scott County Health relied heavily on electronic modes of communication, such as e-mail and Web sites.

Mumps is a viral infection of the salivary glands spread through coughing, sneezing and sharing saliva. For most, mumps is a mild to moderate disease; serious, long-term complications are rare but may include deafness, swelling of the testicles, meningitis, encephalitis, and pancreatitis. Additionally, there is the issue of time lost to work and school because of the illness.

"Every epidemic, regardless of how 'severe' people think it is, requires a science-based and strategic approach," said Dr. Patricia Quinlisk, state epidemiologist at IDPH. "In the case of mumps, we have identified the area where we can most effectively prevent the spread of disease. We've been prepared for this, and now we're doing it."

The principle strategy of preventing mumps is to achieve and maintain high immunization levels. The CDC recommends that all U.S. children aged 12 months and older receive one dose of the MMR vaccine and that they have received a second dose by the time they enter elementary school.

The MMR vaccine is 95 percent effective in protecting against mumps in people who receive the recommended two doses. By comparison, seasonal flu vaccines are 70 to 90 percent effective in preventing influenza infection in healthy individuals under 65 years of age.

Quinlisk stressed that the current MMR vaccine is, in fact, protecting Iowans. If it were not, she said, "there would be considerably more mumps than we are experiencing" due to the contagious

*Whether dealing with seasonal influenza, responding to a mumps outbreak, or planning for a possible pandemic, state and local public health is constantly striving to enhance our ability to protect the health of Iowans.*

– IDPH Director, Dr. Mary Mincer Hansen

nature of the disease. IDPH recommends that Iowans sick with mumps stay home for at least five days, or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.

Steve Mercer, IDPH Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) officer emphasized the importance of mass vaccination trainings sponsored by IDPH the past four years. "Based on their exposure to SNS training and the experience gained from their own mass vaccination clinics, local public health agencies are better able to respond to an outbreak such as the one we have here," Mercer said.

\* Don McCormick is the FOCUS editor.

# CNN's Gupta visits Ames, touts LUI

By Tim Lane\*

CNN Senior Medical Correspondent, Dr. Sanjay Gupta, visited Ames on March 30 as part of his Fit Nation tour. He was joined by U.S. Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), Iowa State University (ISU) President Gregory Geoffroy, Professor and Chairwoman of Food Science at ISU Dr. Ruth MacDonald, Olympic Gold Medalist Cael Sanderson, Dr. Marc Shulman from ISU Student Health Services, and approximately 130 audience members.

The gathering focused on the epidemic of poor nutrition and sedentary lifestyle. Gupta, a practicing neurosurgeon and an assistant professor of neurosurgery, not only led the discussion, but also sought input from Iowa State University students. The event was offered to viewers around the world via a live webcast.

According to Gupta, the year-long CNN Fit Nation campaign was the result of a conversation he had with Senator Harkin. In that conversation, Harkin urged Gupta and CNN to not only report on the topics of nutrition and obesity, but to actually do



*Iowa Games Executive Director, Jim Hallihan appearing on CNN's House Call. The program featured the Games and Lighten Up Iowa.*

something about them.

Gupta also reported on the success of Lighten Up Iowa (LUI), the statewide initiative to help Iowans get involved in creating healthy lifestyle changes. Gupta announced that the meeting also marked the release of CNN coverage of this year's Lighten Up

Iowa Campaign. The campaign, which is sponsored by the Iowa Department of Public Health, the Iowa Games, and Iowa State University Extension, was also featured in Gupta's weekend program on CNN, House Call.

At the end of the event, a competition was announced for students to successfully complete and document an idea contributing to a more fit nation. The winning entry will receive \$5,000. Deadline for submissions is Oct. 1. For details, visit [www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2006/fit.nation/contest/rules.html](http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2006/fit.nation/contest/rules.html).

*\* Tim Lane is the fitness consultant in the IDPH Bureau of Nutrition and Health Promotion.*

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in Iowa. How can you tell if someone is having a stroke?

Use the **F.A.S.T.** method to easily assess stroke symptoms.

**Face:** Does one side of the face droop? Ask the person to smile.

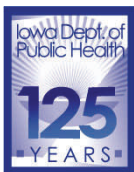
**Arm:** Does one arm drift downward? Ask the person to raise both arms.

**Speech:** Does the person's speech sound slurred or strange? Ask him or her to repeat a simple phrase.

**Time:** If you observe any of these signs, it's time to call 9-1-1

As a part of May, National Stroke Awareness Month, the IDPH Cardiovascular Risk Reduction (CVRR) Program urges all Iowans to learn more about stroke by visiting [www.stroke.org](http://www.stroke.org) or calling 1-800-STROKES.

For information about the CVRR Program, write to [ajohnson@idph.state.ia.us](mailto:ajohnson@idph.state.ia.us), or call 515-281-7097.



Iowa Department of Public Health

Advancing Health Through the Generations

# National campaign shows impact of low teen pregnancy rates

By Carol Hinton\*

Governor Tom Vilsack has pledged Iowa's support of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy. The national campaign is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization supported primarily by private donations. The campaign's goal is to reduce the teen pregnancy rate by one-third over the next 10 years. Its mission is to improve the well-being of children, youth and families by reducing teen pregnancy.

The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) is collaborating with adolescent pregnancy prevention programs throughout the state to actively meet the challenge to further reduce teen preg-

nancy. "Preventing teen pregnancy is one of the most direct and effective ways states can reduce poverty and improve overall child well-being," said Jane Borst, chief of the IDPH Bureau of Family Health.

According to a state-by-state analysis conducted by the campaign, a 24 percent decline in Iowa's teen birth rate between 1991 and 2002 has played a major role in improving the state's child well-being. Without the decline, analysts estimate that 7.4 percent more Iowa children would have been living in poverty in 2002, while 9.7 percent more children under age 6 would have been living in single mother households.

For more information, including detailed fact sheets for each state, charts showing state rankings, data pertaining to racial and ethnic background, visit [www.teenpregnancy.org](http://www.teenpregnancy.org).

*\* Carol Hinton is the Adolescent and School Health coordinator in the Bureau of Family Health at IDPH.*

## Comments, please!

The Redesigning Public Health in Iowa work group is seeking comments and suggestions about the proposed Iowa Local Public Health Standards from all interested parties **through June 12**. The standards describe the basic public health services and local infrastructure that all Iowans can reasonably expect from local public health no matter where they live in the state.

These draft standards represent the collaborative effort of more than 100 local and state public health professionals and public health partners. It is important to note that these are proposed standards which may be modified based on stakeholders' comments and further discussion.

To view the standards, visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/rphi/default.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/rphi/default.asp). Comments can be sent electronically through the Web site. Comments may also be made to directly to:

Martha Gelhaus  
321 E. 12<sup>th</sup> St.  
Des Moines, IA 50319  
Phone: 515-242-5224  
[mgelhaus@idph.state.ia.us](mailto:mgelhaus@idph.state.ia.us)

Interested parties will also have the opportunity to comment during community visits conducted by the IDPH Executive Team. See the Web site above for details and mark your calendar.



# Local underage alcohol prevention meetings summarized

By Cindy Schroder \*

On April 10, the Iowa Departments of Public Health and Safety, community coalition leaders, and substance abuse prevention staff gathered in West Des Moines to discuss the results of underage alcohol prevention town hall meetings that had occurred across Iowa between March 23 and April 10. More than 4,000 community members attended these local gatherings.

The meetings were sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Similar meetings were held across the nation concurrently with the goals of informing the public and gathering input from community members.

## Iowa community concerns included:

- community norm for kids to drink – “we did it and we turned out OK” mentality
- easy access: perceived and actual availability of alcohol for underage alcohol consumption
- apathy in the community, state and nation
- lack of awareness and consequences for social hosts serving alcohol to young people
- lack of enforcement to servers and underage drinkers
- too much alcohol served at public gatherings, sports events, summer fairs, etc.
- tourism industry promoting alcohol; happy-hour and drink promotions

## Community suggestions included:

- continue to support school-based education
- decrease availability
- gain support to decrease drink promotions, such as happy-hours
- gain support from city/county boards, schools, faith community, etc.
- gain support for policy and law changes to promote increased beer tax
- fund community coalition prevention efforts and community education campaigns
- enhance school policy consequences for students who drink

The town hall meetings were called to inform the public and gather community input following release of SAMHSA’s 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health. The SAMHSA study offers state-by-state data for binge and underage drinking, illegal drugs, tobacco use, and serious mental illness caused by substance abuse.

During the local meetings, participants recommended ways that parents, youth, and community members can work together to create new social norms, reduce availability, and change local/state policies that affect underage alcohol issues.

Marilyn Alger, a consultant in the IDPH Office of Substance Abuse Prevention, attended the April 10 culmination meeting. “Local community members came together, sharing common issues and successes, knowing that together their efforts are making a difference in Iowa,” Alger said.

To learn more about the IDPH Office of Substance Abuse Prevention and its programs visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/bhpl/substance\\_abuse\\_prevention.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/bhpl/substance_abuse_prevention.asp).

\* Cindy Schroder is a Substance Abuse Prevention consultant at IDPH.



*Representatives from public health, safety, community organizations and substance abuse prevention staff summarize concerns and prevention efforts suggested by communities at town hall meetings.*



# New report recommends lower fluoride toxicity levels

By Bob Russell \*

On March 22, 2006, the National Research Council (NRC) released a report recommending new guidelines for water fluoride toxicity. The report was generated as a request for updated information by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on the latest scientific evidence and safe levels for naturally occurring fluoride in water sources consumed by the public.

The report recommends the current toxicity level set by the EPA be lowered from 4 to 2 milligrams of fluoride per liter of water. The risk of dental fluorosis, a discoloration and, in severe cases, pitting seen on tooth enamel, increases when water is consumed with fluoride above the 2 milligram per liter level. The new recommendation lowers the maximum level to include reducing the risk for dental fluorosis and other potential adverse affects.

The NRC report does not impact or make any recommendations in regard to therapeutic levels of fluoride used to reduce dental decay rates. The public health benefit of water fluoridation at the safe optimum level of 0.7 to 1.2 milligrams fluoride per liter of water, as established by the U.S. Public Health Service more than 40 years ago, remains the standard of safe consumption of fluoridated water.

While consumption of therapeutic levels of fluoridated water and the use of fluoride toothpaste and professional dental fluoride treatments are safe, the risk for dental fluorosis increases



*Water fluoridation devices, such as this one, add a therapeutic level of fluoride to community water supplies. In the case of high levels of naturally occurring fluoride, the amount of the mineral is reduced using osmosis.*

with higher consumption. The public should be aware to safeguard themselves from excessive exposure as seen in the following statement from the Centers on Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

*"The CDC continues to recommend steps to prevent moderate and severe enamel fluorosis; these recommendations... include using an alternate water source for children under age 8, if the primary drinking water source has naturally occurring fluoride above 2 mg/L, and supervising the use of toothpaste by children younger than 6 years to reduce swallowing."*

Water fluoridation at therapeutic levels and the prescribed use of fluoridated dental products are safe and effective when used in appropriate amounts.

Dr. Steven Levy, professor of research in the Department of Preventive and Community Dentistry at the University of Iowa College of Dentistry, agrees. "Along with pit-and-fissure sealants, widespread use of community water fluoridation and fluoridated toothpaste throughout the United States, and especially in Iowa, are responsible for the great improvements in oral health over the past 50-60 years." Levy served on the National Research Council fluoride review group and the CDC task force that developed the 2001 MMWR guidelines.

Indeed, many common medications used to treat various diseases can be safe and effective if

*(Continued on page 10)*

# Anti-smoking, personal protection campaigns earn 10 awards

By Bobbie Bohnsack\*

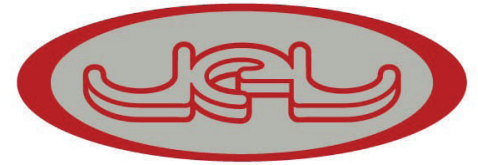
The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) recently received a total of 10 ADDY Awards from the American Advertising Federation (AAF). The ADDYs recognize and reward creative excellence in the art of advertising. Sponsored by Advertising Professionals of Des Moines, the annual awards are the first of a three step national competition. This year more than 600 entries were submitted by applicants from Central Iowa.

JEL (Just Eliminate Lies), Iowa's youth-led advocacy group against tobacco, received seven ADDY awards. In addition to three gold and three silver awards, JEL won the coveted

Best of Class. The top honor was given to the print ad titled "Crime Scene Outdoor," in which the well-known chalk outline of a dead body is depicted in cigarette butts laid end to end.

The JEL campaign began in 2000 with only a few hundred members. Today, more than 2,000 members statewide advocate for the health of all Iowans by addressing the number one preventable cause of death. JEL's campaign is designed to counter-market the tobacco industry's strategy of addicting Iowa's youth to tobacco products. Since 2001, JEL has received a total of 48 ADDY awards. For more information, visit [www.jeliowa.org](http://www.jeliowa.org).

Protect Iowa Health, an IDPH-sponsored campaign which began last year, earned three silver ADDY awards. Designed to raise awareness about personal preparedness and the role of public health in emergencies, the effort is the result of IDPH partnerships with local public health,



hospitals, and emergency medical services. The Protect Iowa Health campaign encourages Iowans to develop a communication plan to contact loved ones during an emergency and create an emergency supply kit. For more information, visit [www.protectioniowahealth.org/](http://www.protectioniowahealth.org/).

For more information about the ADDY awards, visit [www.adprodsdm.com/](http://www.adprodsdm.com/) and click on "Local Buzz."

*\* Bobbie Bohnsack is a health consultant in the IDPH Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control.*



## Recommended levels of therapeutic fluoride remain

(Continued from page 9)

consumed in the correct dosage. For example, aspirin can be very effective in relieving pain and potentially reducing the risks of heart attacks or strokes. However, if consumed in higher dosages than therapeutically recommended, aspirin can become toxic and even fatal. All medications should be respected and used with

care. The same applies to water fluoridation and the use of fluoridated products. This is the take-away message from the NRC water fluoridation report and recommendations.

*\* Bob Russell is the public health dental director at IDPH.*



Iowa Department of Public Health

Advancing Health Through the Generations

# Arthritis Walks raise funds, awareness

By Laurene Hendricks\*

Do you know any of the estimated 585,000 Iowans who have been diagnosed with some form of arthritis? Or perhaps you know one of the 384,000 Iowans who experience chronic joint symptoms (possible arthritis). Chances are you do. You may even be affected yourself.

During the month of May, National Arthritis Awareness Month, the Arthritis Foundation Iowa Chapter is increasing its efforts to improve the lives of Iowans with this painful disease. The Iowa Chapter, an important partner in carrying out the Iowa Arthritis Action Plan developed by the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), will hold Arthritis Walk events in three cities across Iowa to raise awareness and funds to prevent, control and cure arthritis, the nation's leading cause of disability.

Melissa Marchant, Arthritis Foundation Iowa Chapter senior development director, points out how these walks, held nationwide during May, raise both funding and general awareness. "At all of our walks, those with arthritis receive a blue hat that

signifies they are taking control of their arthritis. When we're out there walking, people see us and stop to ask, 'What do those blue hats mean and what are you all doing?'" Marchant said.

For more information or to register for walks in Dubuque (May 6), Cedar Rapids (May 13), or Clive (May 20), visit [www.arthritis.org](http://www.arthritis.org), and enter "Iowa" as the keyword at the top of the page.

To learn about other ways to take control of arthritis, contact the Arthritis Foundation Iowa Chapter at 515-278-0636 or 866-378-

0636. For information about the IDPH Iowa Arthritis Program or the Iowa Arthritis Action Plan, call 515-281-5675 or visit [www.idph.state.ia.us/bhpl/arthritis.asp](http://www.idph.state.ia.us/bhpl/arthritis.asp)

*\* Laurene Hendricks is the IDPH Iowa Arthritis Program manager.*



## National Women's Health Week in Iowa

Governor Tom Vilsack has signed a proclamation recognizing May 14-20 as National Women's Health Week (NWHW) in Iowa. The Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) is a proud partner in promoting the health observance, the purpose of

which is to raise awareness about manageable

steps women can take to improve their health.

"There is so much women can do to incorporate simple, preventive and positive health behaviors into everyday life," says Janet Peterson, IDPH Women's Health coordinator.

Peterson says that the national campaign has generated

so much interest in Iowa this year, it is difficult to keep up with the additions to the calendar of events. Activities listed at press time included the Iowa Women's Health Information Center, promotional displays, women's health screening and breast health screenings. For an up-

*(Continued on page 12)*



Iowa Department of Public Health

Advancing Health Through the Generations

# ...and then some

## NWHW encourages manageable steps toward health for women

*(Continued from page 11)*

dated list of events or to add your own activity, visit the NWHW Web site at [www.womenshealth.gov/whw/](http://www.womenshealth.gov/whw/) and navigate using the "Shortcuts" on the right side of the page. Information about the campaign is also available by calling 1-800-994-WOMAN (9662).

NWHW encourages awareness about key health issues among all women, including women with disabilities, African American, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latinas, and American Indian/Alaska Native

women. Research has shown there are significant health disparities among these groups.

For information on women's health during NWHW and throughout the year, visit the IDPH-sponsored Iowa Women's Health Information Center Web site at [www.womenshealthiowa.info](http://www.womenshealthiowa.info) or contact Janet Peterson at 515-242-6388 or [jpeterso@idph.state.ia.us](mailto:jpeterso@idph.state.ia.us).



---

### Iowa Department of Public Health

Lucas State Office Building  
321 E. 12th Street  
Des Moines, IA 50319-0075  
Phone: 515 281-5787

[www.idph.state.ia.us](http://www.idph.state.ia.us)

Please send your suggestions for future articles, comments on this issue and requests regarding our mailing list to *FOCUS* Editor Don McCormick at [dmccormi@idph.state.ia.us](mailto:dmccormi@idph.state.ia.us).



Iowa Department of Public Health

Advancing Health Through the Generations