



President's Message  
Debbie Swanson

The Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health in Fargo, March 22-24 was another successful event. It is always an enjoyable experience to connect with public health colleagues from across the state at our annual meeting and learn new things from the professionals in rural health as well. This year we were fortunate to have Dr. Patricia (Pat) Mail, the president of the American Public Health Association (APHA) with us for two days. Pat brought us the message of member involvement and the vision of being part of the "bigger picture" of the public health workforce in our nation.

Pat was impressed with our collegiality, the cutting edge public health programs in our state and most importantly our access to members of Congress. Sen. Byron Dorgan and Rep. Earl Pomeroy were able to join us in person this year and invited us to contact them on policy matters important to improving the public's health.

It is my mission to serve as the liaison between APHA and our North Dakota affiliate during this next year and to inform members of public health issues of national importance. I encourage you to visit with policy makers on the local, state and national level at every opportunity. Advocacy is our life's work.

My sincere thanks to Jim Hausauer for his leadership of NDPHA during the past year and to all the members of the Governing Council who have served our organization. We bid farewell to Paula Flanders, Secretary Treasurer and Carol Meidinger, Chair of Health Policy, Planning and Administration Section, and we welcome new members Karen Volk, Vice President, Nikki Medalen, Secretary-Treasurer and Paula Flanders, back to the board as the new Health Policy, Planning and Administration Section Chair.

I would be remiss not to extend thanks to the membership of NDPHA for supporting our colleagues in the Louisiana Public Health Association with a donation for their annual meeting. Little things can really make a difference among those impacted by disaster.

## **Congratulations 2006 Public Health Worker of the Year--- Barb Frydenlund, Rolette County Public Health**



At the recent annual Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health, Barb

Frydenlund, of Rolla was given the distinct honor of becoming the 2006 North Dakota Public Health Worker of the Year. With the willingness of her staff, members of the health board, and other members of the community and a husband who lied to her, the award was kept a surprise until just minutes before presentation.

Frydenlund was appointed to the Rolette County Board of Health in 2002 and elected vice president her first year. She became the Nurse Administrator for the Rolette County Public Health Department in February 2003.

President of the board of health, Wade Burgess said, "It certainly was with some regret on my part because I knew we were losing an excellent nurse at the hospital. On the other hand, I was excited to

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have her take charge of the public health department for our county.

The public health office started in a 600 sq. foot renovated apartment on Main Street in Rolla. Frydenlund partnered with other key healthcare and community workers to bring programs such as WIC, the Region 3 Substance Abuse and Prevention Program and Safe Communities Programs under one roof, allowing for easy access upon moving to its present location next to the county sheriff's office in a building with 2340 sq. feet. Rolette County Public Health has gone from an unheard of service to a well-used place in the community. Immunizations have doubled, maternal/child health services have expanded, tobacco cessation classes are provided, prenatal classes given, a grant was obtained to teach First Aid classes to day cares and others and she has been a leader in developing the Rolette County Wellness Coalition, among many other things.

"There are not many times I was speechless, but

that one had me", commented Frydenlund about the realization of winning the award. "Immediately I thought of all those who have helped me get to this point. This really isn't just for me, teamwork is what brought the award here." Frydenlund went on to comment about her staff and the strong support she has received from them as well as other public health workers who have shared information and provided her with ideas to aid in the growth of the public health department in Rolette County.

"She is being too modest. We need a leader to provide us leadership and Barb has been that," coworker Margaret Leas commented. "What many don't realize is that no one ever has won this award who has been relatively new to public health. There were those who have been in public health for many years that were also nominated for this award. It is amazing what she has done here. She has no problems going from grant writing to painting, to carpentry and back again."

(Story & picture provided by the Turtle Mt. Star)

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## **CONGRATULATIONS 2006 OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD**

**Dede Meidinger  
Fargo Cass Public Health**



Dede Meidinger, retired Public Health Nurse at Fargo Cass Public Health, was honored with the 2006 Outstanding Service Award at the annual Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health.

Dede started her work in public health in 1989 at Fargo Cass Public Health. She worked part-time as a public health nurse doing home visits. In 1991 she took on the role as school nurse for Fargo Public Schools. She was the only nurse that worked with Fargo Public Schools 10,000 plus students. Dede worked to develop and build support for school nurses; working with the school district, the City of Fargo, and the Legislature to gain support for nurses in schools.

Dede also has been a statewide leader in school nursing. She helped establish the North Dakota School Nurse Organization in 1998. She served on

the National Association of School Nurses board as the representative for North Dakota. Dede has also served as a mentor of other school nurses statewide and has assisted in the development of school nurse policies that have been utilized statewide. Dede was one of the first school nurses in North Dakota to be certified through National Association of School Nurses.

Congratulations Dede on your award and on a job well done!

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## **DARLENE HEIB HONORED DURING PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK**

Bismarck Burleigh Public Health (BBPH) celebrated Public Health Week by honoring one of their own for outstanding service. Darlene Heib, who was the lead office assistant for 46 years, did not receive an award for longevity; she was honored for her meritorious contributions and personal achievements.

Darlene learned two major accounting programs in the last 8 years and continues to learn new functions. She is responsible for tracking BBPH's numerous pay sources. She is a resource to all of the BBPH staff AND she helped them through 8 relocations, 4 directors, and 3 name changes!

The changes and accomplishments Darlene has achieved make her a phenomenal woman.

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## 2006 NDPHA LONGEVITY AWARDS

The NDPHA Longevity Award recognizes NDPHA members who have maintained continuous membership for 10 and 20 years. This year's awards were presented to:

### 20-Year Awards

Sandra Adams, Retired  
Sharon Buhr, Young People's Healthy Heart Program  
Jeffrey Burgess, Lignite Energy Council  
Kathy Mangskau, ND Department of Health  
Pat McGeary, Bismarck Burleigh Public Health

### 10-Year Awards

Lisa Clute, First District Health Unit  
Lynette Klein, Richland County Health Department  
Nancy Leith, Fargo Cass Public Health  
Colleen Sundquist, Sargent County District Health

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## GRAND FORKS CELEBRATES NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH WEEK



The Grand Forks Public Health Department in conjunction with University of North Dakota Community Health Nursing Students, the Grand Forks YMCA and a variety of health and safety organizations celebrated National Public Health Week. A "Healthy Kids Fair" was held on April 8, 2006 at the YMCA in Grand Forks, ND. The event, which attracted more than 80 kids and their families, featured free healthy snacks and hands-on YMCA activities designed for children and their families to learn more about healthy lifestyles while having fun. One of the goals of the event was to empower Grand Forks parents and their children to make simple lifestyle changes to improve their health.

## NORTH DAKOTA'S COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CONTROL PLAN

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines comprehensive cancer control as an integrated and coordinated approach to reducing cancer incidence, mortality, and morbidity through prevention, early detection, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliation. The approach is comprehensive in that it emphasizes integration of many disciplines, including administration, basic and applied research, health education, clinical services, public health, home health, advocacy groups, long-term care and higher education.

Since June 2005 the North Dakota Cancer Coalition (a partnership of key stakeholders from across North Dakota), the North Dakota Department of Health Comprehensive Cancer Control program, and other partners have been formulating a state comprehensive cancer plan. Using a multi-disciplinary approach, partners worked to identify issues related to cancer, define goals, create objectives and strategies, and identify resources needed to implement the strategies.

The North Dakota State Cancer Plan is a five-year strategic plan that contains objectives and strategies aimed at reducing the hardship of cancer in the state. Individual chapters focus on a range of topic areas, including: history and vision; cancer burden; prevention; early detection and screening; treatment, disease management, and clinical trials; quality of life; workforce of the future; and disparities.

The final draft of the state cancer plan is now available for review and comment on the North Dakota Department of Health website at: [www.ndhealth.gov/compcancer/State%20Cancer%20Plan.htm](http://www.ndhealth.gov/compcancer/State%20Cancer%20Plan.htm). Please use the evaluation form available on the website to provide comments.

If you would like to participate in the planning and implementation process for the North Dakota State Cancer Plan, please contact Denise Steinbach, North Dakota Department of Health Comprehensive Cancer Control Program Coordinator at 800.280.5512 or by email at [dsteinb@state.nd.us](mailto:dsteinb@state.nd.us).

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Check out the NDPHA website for the 2006 NDPHA Officers and Committee Members:

[www.health.state.nd.us/ndpha](http://www.health.state.nd.us/ndpha)

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## May is Stroke Month

### *Avoid treatment delays: know the signs of stroke*

A stroke patient's perception of his condition, as well as social and behavioral factors may affect delays in seeking treatment, according to a study reported in *Stroke: Journal of the American Heart Association*. Public health providers play a key role in helping to educate their clients about the signs of a stroke.

"The time from symptom onset to seeking medical help is influenced by a patient's perception of the seriousness of symptoms, being advised by others to seek help, and calling 9-1-1 immediately," said Lori Mandelzweig, Ph.D., lead author of the study and a researcher at the Sheba Medical Center in Tel Hashomer in Israel.

If you get to the hospital within three hours of having an ischemic stroke (which is most often caused by a blood clot in the brain), you could receive a clot-busting drug to restore blood flow — and reduce brain damage.

Researchers interviewed a sample group of stroke patients to determine factors influencing decisions to seek treatment. Researchers found:

- Patients who called for an ambulance reduced their risk of delaying treatment by almost 75 percent.
- Patients who perceived their symptoms as "severe" reduced their risk of delay by almost 60 percent compared to patients who failed to recognize the severity of symptoms.
- Patients who had sudden onset of symptoms were highly unlikely to delay treatment.
- While fatigue was associated with delay in both sexes, a patient's perception of control of symptoms was associated with a more than five-fold risk of delay in women.
- When someone else recognized the

seriousness of the symptoms and advised the patient to get help, patients reduced their risk of delaying treatment by more than 80 percent.

- Overall, the risk of delay in hospital arrival among women was three times greater than among men. But Mandelzweig cautioned against over-interpreting this finding because "this study was not powered to detect a gender difference and 69 percent of the study subjects were men."

Results of the study show the need for more educational efforts on interpreting and perceiving symptoms and to emphasize the importance of the intervention of others, Mandelzweig said. "The study of perceptual, social and behavioral factors is obviously complex and deserves further research."

May is Stroke Month. The American Stroke Association urges you to learn the warning signs of stroke. Stroke is a medical emergency. Call 9-1-1 or your emergency medical services. Get to a hospital right away! If you notice one or more of these signs, don't wait:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden, severe headache with no known cause

For stroke month educational material, contact Lynne Struble or Barb Sand at the North Dakota office of the American Heart Association, 1-800-437-9710.



Plan to attend the Vaccination Expedition 2006 in Grand Forks, May 18-19 at the Alerus Center. Registration deadline is May 1, 2006. For more information contact Grand Forks Public Health at 701-787-8100.