



Greetings:

I recently had the opportunity to attend the North Dakota Oral Health Conference in Mandan where more than 100 public health and dental professionals came together to learn about creative ways to improve the oral health status of all ND residents.

An important theme throughout the day was that we are all a part of the puzzle. We each hold one piece and when we put the pieces together, we can accomplish great things. Each person received a charm in the shape of a puzzle piece reminding us of the importance of partnerships. Our public health work has become more complex and we need the expertise of many people to craft creative strategies to improving health in the populations we serve. I challenge each member to engage in partnerships, collaborative work or coalitions that will help us to solve the puzzle in some area of public health.

The Healthy North Dakota Funding Task Force has met twice and will deliver some criteria for corporate funding of Healthy North Dakota initiatives in the near future. As the representative for the North Dakota Public Health Association, I used the APHA position statement on acceptance of funding from tobacco and alcohol sponsors as guidance for the discussion.

Plans for Public Health Day at the Legislature are well underway. NDPHA has taken a lead role in the event and will provide members with some advocacy tools to effectively demonstrate the importance of public health prevention. Join us for "Prevention is Priceless" at the capitol on February 6, 2007. Additional registration information is included in the newsletter.

Debbie Swanson, President



North Dakota Oral Health Coalition and ND Department of Health Sponsor Conference

Did you know that 56% of children ages 6-8 have cavities and/or fillings, which is higher than the Healthy People 2010 goal of 42%? This was the finding of a survey conducted in ND schools during the 2004-2005 school year. An additional finding is that 17% of those children had untreated caries.

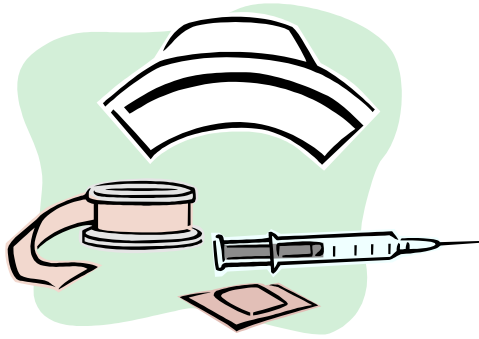
Data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) shows that 32 percent of all adults had not visited a dentist or dental clinic in the past year. A significantly higher percentage of pregnant women on Medicaid did not go the dentist during their pregnancy than did non-Medicaid pregnant women (68.7 percent vs. 51.7 percent.) These are just a few examples that demonstrate the burden of oral disease in our state revealed at

the first ND Conference on Oral Health held September 29 in Mandan, ND.

Now, the good news...North Dakota fares very well in one indicator of oral health and that is the population that is served by fluoridated water systems. At 96 percent, this is a significant accomplishment in a rural state and much higher than the Healthy People 2010 goal of 75 percent.

The North Dakota Oral Health Coalition helped to produce a companion document entitled *Plan for the Future*. The coalition has set an ambitious agenda for working together to improve access to dental care, integrate oral health into overall health, educate the public about the burden of oral disease and provide education opportunities for dental education. Together we will put the pieces together.

Debbie Swanson
Northern Valley Dental Health Coalition
Member, ND Oral Health Coalition
Solutions Committee



COLLEGE OF NURSING RECEIVES GRANT TO SUPPORT PSYCH-MENTAL HEALTH NURSE PRACTITIONER PROGRAM

The College of Nursing at the University of North Dakota is now better equipped to address the mental health issues facing many North Dakotans. The College has recently been awarded a 3-year grant, totaling nearly \$760,000, from the Health Resources and Services Administration, a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The grant will fund the Advanced Psych-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (APMH-NP) program focusing in Adult and Family Nursing. "Typically only 20-30 grants of this nature are awarded nationwide. We are thrilled to have been selected" shares Dr. Chandice Covington, Dean of Nursing.

Nurses enrolled in the program will become educated professionals, able to provide care for culturally diverse populations in the rural and underserved areas of North Dakota, including American Indians. It is often the primary care provider who is the entry point for many individuals experiencing a mental health problem. However, it is estimated that 9.5% of people in the U.S. suffer from a depressive illness and 21% of children ages 9 to 17 are in need of mental health services annually.

The national shortage of registered nurses is well known, but that shortage extends beyond bedside care and into advanced practice nursing as well. The UND Center for Rural Health has reported that 50 out of 54 counties in North Dakota are designated as shortage areas of APMH-NP providers.

Covington describes the grant as vital to the health of the state. "While North Dakota is a wonderful place to live and raise a family, the rural nature and rapidly aging population lead to more than our share of depression. The production of high quality mental health nursing professionals made possible through this grant will help to address critical mental health issues facing the state."

If you are interested in finding out more about the APMH-NP Program at the UND College of Nursing, please contact Eleanor Yurkovich at 701-777-4554 or Jane Beasley at 701-777-4511.

The UND College of Nursing offers undergraduate and graduate programs, from a baccalaureate nursing program that is fully accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education to master's education with six specializations and a doctoral program that prepares nurses for roles as nurse scientists and faculty. The Department of Nutrition and Dietetics prepares students for roles in community nutrition or dietetics and is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Dietetics Education of the American Dietetic Association.

Becky Cournia, Alumni & Development Coordinator,
(701) 777-4526
beckycournia@mail.und.nodak.edu

SHARON UNRUH RETIRES

Sharon Unruh, who retired as director of nursing and unit administrator at Central Valley Health District, never intended to be an administrator when she began her nursing career 37 years ago. "I was going to be a nurse. I was going to take care of people," she said.

After graduating from Jamestown College in 1969, Unruh did spend the next four years as a city nurse with Leona Gray in what was then the two-person Jamestown City Health Department.



Soon after Unruh started, she and Gray added monthly childcare nursing conferences, but public health was still a much smaller program than it is today.

"When I first started in public health, I knew every public health nurse in the state," Unruh said.

In 1973, the Jamestown and Stutsman County health departments merged, creating one public health district with a combined staff of six. The new program needed an administrator, and because

Unruh had a bachelor's degree and seniority, she was offered the position.

"I wasn't sure I was qualified, but I said yes," she said. Gradually, the department grew. "We started in '73-'74 doing county clinics."

Unruh has had the assistance of experienced project managers to help run all the programs at Central Valley Health District, but she still leaves a large legacy to fill. The two staff members who will replace her — Robin Iszler as unit administrator and Marsha Bollingberg as director of nursing — bring years of experience to their new positions. "They've got lots of experience to lend, which will be good," Unruh said.

Figuring out budgets, writing grants and overseeing new programs in public health will be a thing of the past. Sharon plans to spend her time doing things she hasn't had time for, like cleaning out closets, and things she enjoys, like reading, doing handiwork and visiting her grandchildren in Kansas City.

"I'm going to do a little traveling, enjoying my family and not having all the responsibility," she said, although, "I'm sure there will be some days I'll miss this too. It's been very fulfilling."

Excerpts from the Jamestown Sun, September 26, 2006



VOTE AND VACCINATE

On Tuesday, November 7, 2006, Grand Forks Public Health, along with Altru Health System, is

asking area residents to make another choice—Choose to stay healthy this winter by being vaccinated. Grand Forks is one of several communities across the country participating in a nationwide pilot program called Vote and Vaccinate. Collaboration among area providers, agencies, and volunteers will make the Vote and Vaccinate Clinics a reality. There will be 4 clinics on November 7th, 2 in the county and 2 in the city, each offering influenza, pneumococcal, Td, and Tdap vaccinations. One of the clinics will be a Drive-Through. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is funding this program. It was initiated to vaccinate those hard to reach populations in readily accessible locations.




You are invited to participate in Public Health Day at the Legislature on February 6, 2007. This will be a great opportunity to engage in important discussions about creating a healthy North Dakota during this year's legislative session. This year's theme is "Prevention is Priceless." We hope to focus on the importance of funding for prevention and how it is more cost effective to treat patients with primary prevention than after an illness has occurred. The event will be held in the Great Hall of the Capitol from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the 6th of February.

If you would like to participate, please complete and return the following. Any questions can be directed to Debbie Swanson, President, at (701) 787-8113 or Danell Eklund, President Elect, at (701) 852-1376.

Name: _____
Public Health Department/Organization: _____
Topic to be displayed: _____
Electricity Needed: Yes No
Contact Phone: _____ Contact Email: _____

Grand Forks Public Health Department
Attn: Debbie Swanson
151 S. 4th St. Suite #301
Grand Forks, ND 58201

*This event is made possible by NDPHA in conjunction with
UND Community Health Nursing Students
Heather Nielsen, Jacqueline Reineke, Vanessa Zimprich, and Chris Cooley. *



It's Flu Season in North Dakota!

Flu campaign materials are available for the 2006-2007 influenza season at www.ndflu.com.

Ordering Information

The North Dakota Department of Health has influenza educational materials available **free of charge** on the state website at www.ndflu.com. Flu information brochures, high-risk specific brochures, posters, bookmarks and more can be accessed by clicking on the "Campaign Material" button. Additional educational materials such as fliers and fact sheets are available under the "Fact Sheets and Education" button located at the top of the page. Pneumococcal vaccine educational materials also are available to order free of charge!

For more information contact Michelle Feist mafeist@nd.gov or Tracy Miller tkmiller@nd.gov (800-472-2180)



Youth Nutrition Education Program Honored

“On the Move to Better Health,” a collaborative effort by the North Dakota State University Extension Service and Fargo Cass Public Health to combat childhood overweight and obesity, has won national recognition.

The program, a multilesson curriculum to encourage elementary-age youth to develop healthy eating and physical activity habits that last a lifetime, has been named a National 4-H Program of Distinction. It also has been selected to receive an Annie E. Casey Foundation Family Strengthening Award.

The foundation’s primary mission is to foster policies, reforms and support to help today’s vulnerable children and their families. Jim Casey, founder of UPS, established the Baltimore-based foundation in 1948.

“We are pleased that the committee recognized a nutrition and fitness-based program in its Family Strengthening Award program,” says NDSU Extension food and nutrition specialist Julie Garden-Robinson. “Good health is one of the foundations for a strong family, and it takes many community partners to make a difference.” Research indicates that for the first time in U.S. history, children may live shorter lives than their parents. That’s because poor nutrition and lack of physical activity put them at risk of developing chronic diseases, such as diabetes, some types of cancer and heart disease, at an earlier age.

Since the 1970s, the nationwide rate of childhood obesity has doubled among preschoolers and adolescents, and tripled among children ages 6 to 11. A growing number of children are being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, and overweight children as young as 3 and 4 are showing signs of high blood pressure and cholesterol.

In 2005, almost a third of North Dakota’s high school students didn’t participate in recommended levels of vigorous physical activity, and fewer than one in five ate enough fruits and vegetables. Also, nearly one-fourth were overweight or at risk of becoming overweight, up from 19 percent in 1999. Health officials are concerned because childhood obesity often persists into adulthood. Adult obesity-related medical expenses total about \$209 million in North Dakota.

The Family Strengthening Award honors Garden- Robinson; Kim Lipetzky, a nutritionist with Fargo Cass Public Health; Rita Ussatis, an Extension agent in Cass County; and Sue Isbell, an Extension agent in Sioux County.

Julie Garden-Robinson, PhD, LRD
Associate Professor and Food and Nutrition Specialist
North Dakota State University Extension Service



Vaccination Expedition 2006
A North Dakota Adventure



**WE PROTECT OUR COMMUNITY
YES WE DO
WE GOT Tdap
HOW ABOUT YOU?**

**DR. ATKINSON CHALLENGED US!!
WE CHALLENGE YOU!!**

At the May 19, 2006 Vaccination Expedition 2006 Immunization Conference in Grand Forks, Dr. William Atkinson, CDC National Immunization Program Medical Epidemiologist, challenged North Dakota Healthcare providers to get their Tdap (tetanus/diphtheria/acellular pertussis) vaccination. He received his during his presentation, on stage, to the applause of more than 300 conference attendees. Grand Forks Public Health took up his challenge and vaccinated their staff. In turn, Grand Forks Public Health challenged all other North Dakota Health Units to do the same. To date, 74 ND healthcare providers have been vaccinated. A \$500 mini grant will be awarded to one lucky health unit on **December 1, 2006**. For more information, contact Kathy Dunn at 701-787-8119.

Upcoming Events

NDPHA members can submit information about upcoming events to be listed in our quarterly newsletter. This issue features the first installment of events of importance to public health workers in North Dakota. To promote your event, contact Debbie Swanson email: dswanson@grandforksgov.com or 701-787-8113.

February 6, 2007 Public Health Day at the ND Legislature
March 20-22, 2007 Dakota Conference on Rural and Public Health, Seven Seas, Mandan
HealthCare Horizons: Innovative Ideas and Successes

HEALTHY SCHOOLS PROGRAM

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation – a joint initiative of the William J. Clinton Foundation and the American Heart Association – recently announced a breakthrough collaboration with five of the nation's leading food manufacturers to help combat childhood obesity in America. Campbell Soup Company, Dannon, Kraft Foods, Mars and PepsiCo have joined with the Alliance to establish first-ever voluntary guidelines for snacks and side items sold in schools that will provide healthier food choices for the nation's children.

These five food industry leaders will invest in product reformulation and new product development, while encouraging broader support of the guidelines. The new guidelines, which were developed in conjunction with nutrition experts at the American Heart Association, will apply to foods offered for sale in schools outside of the National School Lunch Program to students before, during and after the school day. The guidelines cover foods and snacks, desserts, side items and treats sold throughout schools, including school vending machines, ala carte lines, school stores, snack carts and fundraisers.

This is the third major attack on childhood obesity announced by the Alliance for a Healthier Generation this year. In February the Healthy Schools Program was launched by the Alliance with funding from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Influencing and helping schools to provide healthy environments is one of the most efficient and effective ways of shaping the health, education and well being of America's children. Fifty-four million kids attend nearly 123,000 schools nationwide. Six million adults work in schools as teachers, nurses, administrators and other staff. In the 2006–07 school year, the Healthy Schools program will target nearly 300 elementary, middle and high schools in 13 states. Initially schools will be selected to reach especially vulnerable children, including African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans and children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. This focus will ensure that the program will immediately reach children at greatest risk for obesity and its related health dangers. It is the goal to have the program available to all schools in the future.

The Healthy Schools Recognition Program acknowledges schools that have met set standards for nutrition, physical activity and staff wellness. Schools will be evaluated on:

- Healthy foods offered as part of the national school breakfast and lunch program
- Foods offered to children through competitive food offerings in schools

- Physical activity programs meeting national PE standards
- After-school programs that incorporate physical activity and offer children healthy snacks
- Availability of wellness programs for school staff

Schools will be recognized by three award levels (gold, silver and bronze).

In May the Alliance worked with representatives of Cadbury Schweppes, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, and the American Beverage Association to establish new guidelines to limit portion sizes and reduce the number of calories available to children during the school day. Under these guidelines, only lower calorie and nutritious beverages will be sold to schools. This was the Alliance's first industry agreement as part of its Healthy Schools Program. To learn more about the Alliance for a Healthier Generation or the Healthy Schools program visit www.healthiergeneration.org or call 701-252-5122.

Jodi Baumgartner
Communications Director
American Heart Association
Greater Midwest Affiliate



A friendly reminder about the Annual Conference, March 20-22 at the Seven Seas in Mandan!

The Awards Committee will soon be asking for nominations for Public Health Worker of the Year and Outstanding Service Awards. The nomination forms are available on our web site at <http://www.health.state.nd.us/ndpha/awards.htm>

The Nominating Committee will be looking for a current member to run for Vice President of the Governing Council.

A call for resolutions from the Resolutions Committee will soon be made.
