

PULSE

A look at what keeps ISDH ticking

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FUN FACT

The most common place for skin cancer is your nose. More than 90 percent of all skin cancers are found on body parts that get the most sun most of the time.



Indiana State Department of Health

Mission:

To promote, protect, and improve the health and safety of all Hoosiers

ANY TIME IS A GOOD TIME FOR BETTER HEALTH

Summer is a time when people tend to be more health-focused. We're often more active because the weather is good, and we like to take advantage of fresh fruits and vegetables that come into season this time of year. So it seems appropriate that two ISDH-driven events designed to improve Hoosiers' health occurred this month.



Kris Box, MD, FACOG

On July 15, I signed a statewide standing order that allows Hoosiers to buy tobacco cessation products at Indiana pharmacies without first obtaining a prescription from their healthcare provider. Tobacco is a

contributing factor for many of our state's most critical public health issues, including infant mortality and cardiovascular disease.

Quitting tobacco is hard. We want to make sure that when someone is ready to quit, we have removed as many barriers as possible. This action will make sure that no Hoosiers who use tobacco miss an opportunity to stop because they can't access products to help them quit.

That same week, we hosted the 2019 Indiana Black and Minority Health Fair. Hundreds of thousands of Hoosiers have passed through this event over the last 34 years, taking advantage of thousands of dollars in free health screenings and getting education to improve their lives. I enjoyed seeing all of

the ISDH staff, volunteers and sponsors who bring this event to life every year to help Hoosiers take their health to the next level.

Both of these events were significant in scope, but good health doesn't need to wait for the moment that sparks headlines. We can take steps every day to reduce the burden of poor health in our homes, our workplaces and our communities.

I continue to be emboldened and impressed by the talent of ISDH staff members who are committed to tackling what can at times seem like overwhelming challenges. Thank you all for being ambassadors for health in Indiana and making an impact on the lives of others.

**Yours in health,
Kris**

READY FOR PHAB SITE VISIT

ISDH celebrated in June that it has submitted all 357 documents needed for accreditation! The A-Team has been working hard to get this far, but the work is not over.

Accreditation Coordinator Patricia Truelove will be working closely with the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB), the A-Team and executive staff to schedule the site visit. A walk through the ISDH facilities will be part of the visit. **Any staff member may become part of this visit by being asked a question during a tour!**

Here's what you can do to be prepared:

- Know where to locate the agency's Strategic Plan (Hint: Under the Office of Public Health Performance Management on the [intranet](#)).
- Lock work stations when not at your desk, especially in HIPAA areas.
- Make sure your ISDH ID is visible at all times (be ISDH loud, be ISDH proud).
- Keep your area clean, organized and safe.
- Know how to access policies and procedures.



The last documents for PHAB accreditation were submitted June 28 during a celebration in Rice Auditorium.

Mock Site Visit Coming Soon

To be better prepared for the PHAB site visit, which will be scheduled at a later date, the Accreditation Team will hold a mock site visit Aug. 13 and 14 with external volunteers who are familiar with the accreditation process.

Please help prepare for this visit! Any questions on accreditation should be directed to Truelove at PTruelove1@isdh.in.gov.

GET TO KNOW ORAL HEALTH

By Dr. James Miller

The ISDH Oral Health Program (OHP) is part of the Health and Human Services Commission. The OHP is composed of a state oral health director, two part-time health educators and a part-time infection control consultant.

The mission of the OHP is to promote, protect and improve oral health and to help ensure a safe environment for oral health care. Several goals have been established to help meet this mission: Measure oral diseases, prevent oral diseases, use teamwork to improve oral health and develop policies to improve oral health.

OHP activities designed to meet these goals include keeping a database of dentists and dental facilities around the state that provide low-cost dental care that the public can access through the MOMS Helpline, administering state funds for the Indiana Donated Dental Services program and working with the ISDH Office of Legal Affairs to help provide a safe environment for oral health care.

The OHP is fortunate to have a part-time consultant in infection control, Mary Jane Mesmer, who owned a company in Indiana for many years that helped train dentists on appropriate infection control practices. The laws, rules and regulations, and federal guidelines that govern infection control practices in dental facilities are complex, and Mary Jane's added experience and knowledge are invaluable. Health educators Patty Morris and Linda Hillers bring their

unique knowledge and skills to the OHP and contribute much to the operations.

The OHP cannot meet its goals alone and relies on the collaboration of other ISDH divisions, state agencies, educational institutions and organizations to carry out the OHP mission. The collaboration with the Indiana University School of Dentistry in recent years has been particularly productive, as evidenced by more than \$2.5 million in grants from the Health Resources and Services Administration for oral health activities in the state.

The OHP collaborated with pain specialists to develop [courses](#) for dentists on the management of orofacial pain to help reduce the number of opioid prescriptions by dentists. The OHP is developing another course with a pediatric dentist on perinatal oral health. OHP has also developed information about infection control that is available to both professionals and the public.

As these activities indicate, there is an increasing interest in the connection between oral health and systemic health. This is a complex topic and much research has been done in various related areas. I anticipate the OHP will build on its past activities in this area as it moves forward. In addition to promoting oral health, the OHP looks forward to contributing to the overall health of Hoosiers.



STAFFING UPDATES

Erin Bristow, public health administrator, HIV/STD/Viral Hepatitis; Cheryl York, administrative assistant, Office of Legal Affairs; Camille Dugger, lab technician, Laboratory; Michael Ramey Jr., HIV services enrollment specialist, HIV/STD/Viral Hepatitis; Katie Etter, lead and healthy homes program manager, Lead and Healthy Homes; Hailey Sherwood, HIV surveillance case manager, HIV/STD/Viral Hepatitis; Courtney Sampson-Day, Medical Surveyor 3, ICF/IID; Madison Hensley, STD prevention program specialist, HIV/STD/Viral Hepatitis; Nirupam Verma, application system analyst/program manager, OTC; Yvette Miller, administrative assistant 5, Long Term Care.

Transfers Jessica Cobb, digital and creative communications coordinator, transferred from the Lieutenant Governor's Office to the Office of Public Affairs, and Shreelakshmi Gopal, microbiologist, transferred from the BioWatch lab to the TB lab.

Congratulations to Crystal Fowler, who was promoted to OB Navigators program coordinator, Maternal and Child Health, and Brian Busching, who was promoted to deputy director, WIC.



STRIKE TEAM REACHES OUT

The ISDH Hepatitis A immunization strike team has expanded its outreach efforts to community locations in counties experiencing the biggest impact of the outbreak. Strike team nurses Lisa Pearson and Janet McCutcheon staff an immunization clinic July 10 at the Bartholomew County Fair.

NEW PROCESS, GREATER EFFICIENCY

Congratulations to our newest certified Lean practitioner Jyl Madlem! Lean is the model ISDH uses for process improvement to reduce waste.

Starting in early September 2018, Madlem worked with HIV/STD to facilitate a rapid improvement event (RIE) centered on Interstate Communication Control Records (ICCRs). Cumulatively, staff had been consistently spending more than 45 hours a week to reconcile these records. An ICCR is a laboratory report of positive STD result for a patient who was tested in Indiana and lives elsewhere or is an Indiana resident who was tested out of state.

The number of Indiana cases of syphilis had increased by 90 percent from 2014 to 2018. Reassigning overburdened staff to work the backlog of ICCRs was delaying work in other vital areas, such as case investigations and responding to out-of-jurisdiction requests. Generally, these investigations and requests should be completed within two or three weeks, depending on disease stage.

Completing investigations and closing cases in a timely fashion is critical to the reduction in STDs. Delays in case closures and other obligatory tasks would increase the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, further impacting this very issue.

To address this concern, the team reached consensus that post-RIE they wanted ICCR syphilis cases to be closed within two weeks for early syphilis cases and within three weeks for latent syphilis cases more than 93 and 63 percent of the time, respectively.

Within the RIE, Madlym worked with the team to understand the procedure for processing ICCRs and helped the team communicate with each other to create a sense of direction, get on the same page, identify steps that could be consolidated, create solutions to the gaps they identified and create a flow of how their process ran from start to



The STD RIE Team: Front Row, Jyl Madlem, Amara Ross, Caitlin Conrad and Olivia Ridgeway; back row, Jeremy Turner, Aaron Agle, Hyejee Ellis, Emily Fussell, Brandon Halleck and Pam Pontones.

finish.

One of the team members shared that, “I think this training was a great opportunity for our team to collaborate and offered that safe space to brainstorm new ideas on what changes could be made. Plus, our trainers were fantastic and very supportive of our goal throughout the whole training and even beyond.”

The team created and implemented balanced solutions to help address identified barriers within the process, including: visual management of workstations, creating and updating standard operating procedures and integrating a new staff schedule of rotating ICCR duties.

“Seeing my team go from constantly being behind to being successful is a great way to change an entire program in a small but effective way,” said STD Prevention Program Director Caitlin Conrad, after com-

pleting the quality improvement event. “It not only is a great way to boost morale, but it also allows staff to have a better understanding of why we do things. It is so rewarding to hear their frustrations, make achievable change in a meaningful way and ultimately improve processes to yield better and consistent results.”

Now being a little more than six months out from their RIE, the team has continuously worked on applying the new process through the completion of its action plan, check-ins with Madlem, the adoption of a new database system, and team changes! Despite the barriers the team experienced, the HIV/STD team has reported that ICCR syphilis cases for early syphilis are being completed within two weeks at a rate of greater than 83 percent and latent syphilis are being completed within three weeks at a rate of more than 80 percent.

HOW TO AVOID BECOMING A DESK POTATO

Work-related disorders aren't just limited to heavy manufacturing or construction. They can occur in all types of industries and work environments, including office spaces. Research [shows](#) that repetitive motion, poor posture and staying in the same position can cause or worsen musculoskeletal disorders.

Staying in one position while doing repetitive motions is typical of a desk job. An [analysis](#) of job industry trends over the past 50 years revealed that at least 8 in 10 American workers are desk potatoes. ISDH staff are encouraged to put into practice some of the stretching and strength building exercises demonstrated in the videos found [here](#).





CELEBRATING LEADERSHIP

Seventy-two participants representing nine different state agencies graduated July 2 from the Leadership at All Levels Blue course at the Indiana State Department of Health. The leadership program has been reformatted due to the high demand so the three courses are no longer required to be taken in order. This class was the first to complete the revised Blue course curriculum, which focuses on managing and leading change. The leadership program, created by Deputy State Health Commissioner and State Epidemiologist Pam Pontones, is open to all state contractors and employees. Registration for the next class opens in mid-September, and the course will begin in October. Congratulations to all the graduates!



OB NAVIGATOR LAUNCHES

Program director Karen McKeown speaks as Dr. Box and a full house in Rice Auditorium join together to launch the [OB Navigator Project](#) kick-off July 23, with representatives from statewide partners attending. Indiana ranks seventh worst in the United States and last in the Midwest for infant mortality. Gov. Eric Holcomb has challenged us to be best in the Midwest by 2024. In real numbers affecting real people, that means we need to be saving the lives of at least 200 babies per year by 2024, and the OB Navigator project is part of this work. If you are interested in learning more about the OB Navigator Project, please join us from 9 to 10 a.m. Aug. 7, in Rice Conference room, for an overview and opportunity to ask questions.



LOOK WHO I MET ON THE ELEVATOR!

Jyl Madlem



NAME: Jyl Madlem

TITLE: Laboratory Program Advisor

Brief job description: As part of a two-woman outreach and training team, I get to develop, market and train laboratorians, clinicians, providers and other healthcare workers throughout the state on topics such as phlebotomy, biothreat organism identification, packaging and shipping, and other public health-related issues. I also assist DNEP from time to time, when my skill set is needed.

Time at ISDH: 8 years

What do you like most about working at ISDH: Have you read my job description? I "get" to do all those things and more. I get to develop new things, train new people and present our work through presentations and posters at conferences. I also serve on the board

of directors for the South Central Association for Clinical Microbiology (SCACM) in my spare time. I also recently earned my Lean practitioner certification through Purdue University (a huge thank you goes out to the STD Division and the OPHPM crew, they're all simply fantastic!).

Other information: I try to stay active, and that's easy to do with my daughters, who are now 18 and 14. Both will be freshmen this fall, one in college, the other in high school. I'm still, and likely forever will be, working on home improvement projects, the latest of which is my girls' bathroom, which is challenging because they've taken over mine.

I'm still in love with softball and have played in the agency league for several years on various teams. I may have to sit out for a year with other things going on, but that's ok.

Other hobbies and interests ... I love to read a good book in the hammock, but have little spare time to do so. When friends call to go to a wine tasting or concert, I'll certainly not let them down. Thank you, Shelley and Sarah! And while some may call me a wine snob, I've discovered an appreciation for craft beer. I have Tess Gorden (some folks may remember her) to thank for that one.

PROMOTING PUBLIC HEALTH AT EXPO

A big thank-you goes to all ISDH staff members who helped with the 2019 Indiana Black and Minority Health Fair at Indiana Black Expo's Summer Celebration this month.

RIGHT: Health Commissioner Dr. Kris Box shows off her fitness skills while test riding a Pacers Bike Share bicycle.

BELOW: MOMS Helpline Community Outreach Liaison Intern Amanda Warnock shares some helpful information with visitors at the health fair.



TALKING TOBACCO

Indiana was one of two states selected this year to host a Leadership Academy for Wellness and Tobacco Free Recovery. The event was June 26-27 in Indianapolis. Here, attendees review posters in the event gallery.

The goal of the strategy session is to create statewide collaboration among public health, tobacco control, mental health and addiction treatment departments to produce a strategic action plan to reduce the smoking rates among behavioral health consumers and staff.

The Smoking Cessation Leadership Center (SCLC), in partnership with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and the CDC National Behavioral Health Network for Tobacco and Cancer Control (NBHN), supports the team in Indiana in its process of hosting the invitation-only state summit.



LINKEDIN LEARNING COURSE OF THE MONTH

The Chair Workout

July is Health and Wellness Month, an occasion to be extra mindful about fitness. But if you spend most of the day in an office, it might seem like thinking about fitness is the limit of what you can do about this topic while at work. The Chair Workout course is one reminder that that doesn't need to be the case. As the course description states:

"Learn simple yoga and stretching exercises you can do at your desk. The instructors at Desk Yogi have adapted traditional yoga poses into exercises that are suitable for the

office. Follow along and learn basic stretches, bends, and exercises that help you improve your posture, strengthen your muscles and joints, increase blood flow, and keep you feeling strong and energetic throughout the day. This simple daily investment in your body — a program you can complete on your lunch break—will carry you through the work week and beyond."

That's right, the 13,000-plus LinkedIn Learning video tutorials, which cover topics such as technology, business and even creative endeavors, help your professional devel-

opment and career advancement and help you pursue your fitness goals.

Remember that you can access LinkedIn Learning courses from any device — anytime and anywhere. (Access during work hours is subject to supervisor approval and is restricted to courses designed specifically for relevant professional development. Overtime-eligible employees are prohibited from accessing work-related training outside assigned work hours; time spent on these trainings is not authorized for overtime. Of course, during your free time, the sky's the limit).



MONUMENTAL EVENT

Food Scientists Sharon Farrell and Stanley Danao show off the division’s new banner and tablecloth at the June 28 Monumental Marketplace event on the Circle. More than 150 farmers, artisans and Indiana-based businesses participated in Monument Circle for Indiana Grown’s third annual Monumental Marketplace. This pop-up market on July 28 featured everything from locally-grown food and drinks to homemade wares and food trucks. Attendees could sip, sample and shop from an assortment of Indiana products, as well as support the farmers and businesses behind them.



NATIONAL STAGE

ISDH Viral Hepatitis Program Director Deborah Nichols presented July 10 at the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials National Viral Hepatitis Program Planning Meeting in Atlanta.

VIRAL HEPATITIS CO-HOSTS FIRST SUMMIT

The inaugural Indiana Hepatitis C Summit: Challenges & Opportunities was held by The Midwest AIDS Training + Education Center (MATEC) of Indiana and its collaborators and title partner, the Indiana State Department of Health’s Division of HIV/STD/Viral Hepatitis, on June 26. This summit brought together partners from across the state to learn about and discuss hepatitis C prevention, treatment and elimination. More than 200 public health professionals, including substance use counselors, social workers, nurses, physicians, pharmacists and local health departments joined together to further the cause. We are excited to continue improving collaborations and efforts to treat and eliminate hepatitis C in Indiana.

Pictured from the HIV/STD/Viral Hepatitis Division are, from left, Epidemiologists Brittany Gross and Hannah Henry, Graduate Student Investigator Kirstin Alexander, Disease Investigation Specialist Irene Gonzalez, Director Deborah Nichols, and (seated) Graduate Student Investigator Emily Pinckert.

