

OCTOBER 2018

# PULSE

A look at what keeps ISDH ticking

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### FUN FACT

Researchers in Belgium found that certain taste bud receptors are most sensitive to food molecules that are at or just above room temperature. So hot coffee may seem less bitter (and, in turn, taste better) because our bitter-detecting taste buds aren't as sensitive when coffee is hot.



### Mission:

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

## READY FOR ANOTHER GREAT YEAR

When I started as state health commissioner in October 2017, I made it my goal to learn – about public health, about the work we do at ISDH and about the challenges we face across the state in keeping Hoosiers safe and healthy.



Kris Box,  
MD, FACOG

To better understand how Indiana can become the “best at getting better,” I first wanted to hear from our partners across the state. Much of my first year has been focused on gathering that feedback, connecting with stakeholders and meeting with local health departments – many of whom have said they haven’t had a state health commissioner visit them in at least a decade.

I believe firmly that we can’t make decisions in a vacuum. We have to know what people are saying and doing in our communities, because what we think will work from 2 North Meridi-

an might not be a good fit in rural southern Indiana. My visits to the local health departments – 65 and counting! – have been incredibly enlightening and have helped shape my thoughts on how ISDH needs to address the most pressing health issues facing our state: the opioid epidemic, infant mortality, tobacco use and obesity. I feel blessed to have such an amazing team to carry these ideas forward.

We won’t lose our focus on our partners as I begin my second year. We will be restarting a local health department advisory group to ensure that we get the feedback needed to help us understand how initiatives at the state level impact our local communities. This also will be a year with a big legislative focus. We are entering a budget session, and we are fighting for every dollar we can get to improve Hoosiers’ health.

We also have some big tasks ahead of us outside our key health priorities. Our accreditation team has been working tire-

lessly to collect documentation for our application, and we hope to submit that in 2019. We also are looking forward to rolling out our new birth and death registration system, which should benefit not just ISDH, but partners across the state.

While 2018 has had a big external focus, it also has been a year of significant change here at ISDH. We have new leaders in many key roles, and that can be hard for everyone. I am confident, however, that we are moving in the right direction.

We will continue to deploy the amazing programming in each of our divisions, from infectious disease and infant mortality to emergency preparedness, smoking cessation, lead, diabetes prevention and others that are so critical to the health of our state.

Thank you all for your support this past year. With such an incredible team, I know we will continue to do great things for Hoosiers!

**Yours in health,  
Kris**

## LEE NAMED AN INDY’S BEST FINALIST

By Greta Sanderson

ISDH Office of Women’s Health (OWH) Director Terri Lee doesn’t know how she was selected as a finalist for Indy’s Best and Brightest awards, but she’s happy to be nominated.

Ten finalists in 10 different industries were named 2018 Indy’s Best finalists, and Lee was included among nine other Health & Life Sciences professionals. The nominations recognized 100 of central Indiana’s most outstanding young pro-

fessionals, age 40 and younger. The winner in each category will be announced at an awards program Nov. 8 at the Hilbert Circle Theatre in downtown Indianapolis.

The big mystery is who nominated Lee.



Terri Lee

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## SHOT CLINIC SUCCESS



ISDH's Immunization and Preparedness divisions collaborated with IUPUI and the Indiana Immunization Coalition to conduct a mass immunization exercise on Oct. 3. The event was held at the IUPUI Campus Center, and 1,662 vaccinations were administered. Three vaccines were offered to the students. As a result of this event, the following vaccines were administered: 500 meningitis B vaccines, 378 human papilloma-virus vaccine and 784 seasonal influenza vaccines.



Would you like an intern for the Spring (January-May) 2019 Semester? Now's the time to get your projects ready, and the Office of Public Health Performance Management can help. New for the upcoming semester are PAID internships! Email [OPHPM@isdh.in.gov](mailto:OPHPM@isdh.in.gov) to get started.

### ► LEE, continued from page 1

"I have no idea," Lee said. "It's just nice to be invited to the dance."

The finalists in each category are judged on professional accomplishments, civic contributions, character and leadership qualities, and the awards are organized by Junior Achievement of Central Indiana.

Lee has been with ISDH since August 2014, having started as the violence prevention program director before becoming Women's Health director in February 2017.

She said some of the key issues she tackles, besides sexual violence prevention, are related to many of ISDH's top priorities, including smoking, obesity, infant mortality and opioid misuse.

Her role is to provide leadership and guidance to OWH staff, be a resource in the state by helping communities and organizations connect with ISDH, advocate for programs that support women's health and provide education to the greater community.

Lee was born in Gary and first came to Indianapolis to attend Butler University. After graduating in 2011 and completing a term of service as an AmeriCorps VISTA, she then earned her Master's in Public Health at Indiana University in Bloomington (IUB) in May 2014, before joining ISDH. She is now a doctoral student at IUB, an adjunct instructor at Butler and an associate instructor at IUB.

The daughter of a police officer father and a librarian mother, she knew she was destined to work in public service. She enjoys her work at ISDH because of the reach she has to impact the lives of Hoosier women from Gary, Indianapolis or anywhere in the state.

"That's the beauty of being here in this role," Lee said. "They may not know I'm here, but I'm working for them."

When she's not working or in the classroom, Lee enjoys traveling. Many of her trips focus on her love of seeing live concerts. She estimates that she's seen more than 75 different artists, from Bruno Mars and Beyoncé and to Prince and Journey. Every year she takes a whirlwind trip to see Mariah Carey perform at the Christmas at the Beacon Theatre in New York City, making the round trip in 24 hours.

"I'm obsessed with going to concerts," she said.

Who's on her list yet to see? Cher and Elton John, she said. Good luck, Terri!

## TALKING PUBLIC HEALTH



Dr. Kris Box and Executive Director for Drug Prevention, Treatment and Enforcement Jim McClelland talk with participants at the Local Public Health Leadership Symposium Oct. 10 at 502 E. Event Centre in Carmel.



## GRANTS TARGET OPIOIDS, SCHOOL VIOLENCE

By Greta Sanderson

ISDH has received two grants from the U.S. Department of Justice, one to boost the opioid crisis response and a second to help prevent school violence.

The opioid crisis response grant is \$1 million a year for three years. It has five components that build toward the overall goal of improving opioid crisis data, said Trauma and Injury Epidemiologist Jeremy Funk, who leads the grant project.

First, the overdose response project that funds local health department surveillance programs and creates additional reporting and responses based on drug overdose data will be expanded.

Second, the database that supports syringe service programs will be redesigned to collect specific information about how naloxone is used. ISDH also plans to replicate the toxicology program that tests for substances in fatal drug overdoses in hospitals to look at opioid mortality and identify trends in a specific community.

"We don't really get much data on recovery or treatment, so that will be a new aspect," Funk said.

To help strengthen how the data is managed, ISDH will develop a statewide media toolkit that local health departments can customize. It will include social media messaging, press releases, fact sheets and talking points.

The last component of the opioid response

grant includes establishing a statewide harm reduction advisory committee and speakers bureau.

The Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing School Violence, or STOP, grant is a \$1 million, three-year grant aimed at training school officials, educating students and improving the response to potential threats.

"This collects the data and helps direct programs," said Morgan Sprecher, Indiana Violent Death Reporting System (INVDRS) epidemiologist.

Included in the first year is implementation of a mobile phone app statewide for students, teachers and parents to submit tips on students who may be at high risk for suicide, mental illness, school violence or bullying. It will also provide expanded funding for other prevention education and training.

"This app will go statewide and will be free for any Indiana parent, student or teacher," Sprecher said. She said that in many school shootings, multiple people had suspicions, and the app would provide a way to quickly combine that knowledge so proactive action can be taken.

In the second year, the grant will focus on the collection and timeliness of the data, serving as a type of triage system to flag potential threats.

The grant will eventually fund a statewide campaign about mental illness and trauma for in-school programming and create a school crisis intervention team.

## DRESS CODE POLICY REMINDER

Did you know that ISDH has a dress code policy? Please review [this policy](#) on the ISDH Intranet. The ISDH workforce is expected to maintain a neat and clean appearance appropriate for a professional work environment.

Appropriate work attire consists of dresses, slacks, skirts, sweaters, blouses, suits, capris and tennis shoes.

Inappropriate work attire consists of low necklines/bare backs, halter tops, midriffs, clothing that is worn/torn/frayed/has holes or is threadbare, shorts, tank tops, spaghetti straps, mini-skirts, jeans, stretch pants, ill-fitting clothing, unclean clothing or shoes, clothing with inappropriate logos or other attire that is inappropriate.

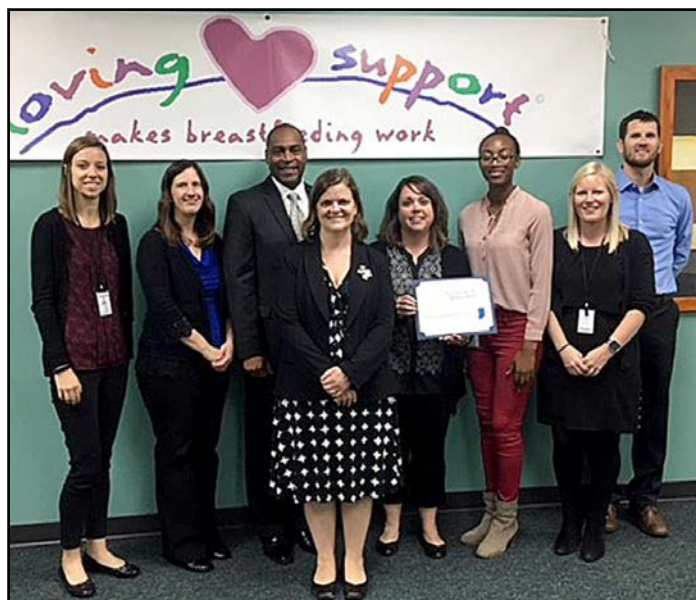
On Fridays, it is appropriate to wear jeans, sweatshirts and T-shirts in good condition. Please take into account your schedule when planning your attire.

Reach out to the [Human Resources team](#) or your supervisor if you have questions about this or any other [ISDH policy](#).

## WIC PROGRAM RECOGNIZED

USDA selected Indiana to receive the WIC Breastfeeding Performance Bonus Award in recognition of the agency's outstanding achievement in improving breastfeeding rates among WIC clients. Indiana is one of only two states nationwide (the other is Iowa) to receive this award. WIC has worked hard over the last few years to increase its presence in birthing hospitals, improve the Peer Counseling program, collaborate with vital community partners to promote breastfeeding and provide quality education and resources, resulting in a 2.6 percent increase in breastfed infants. The increase was a team effort by the state WIC breastfeeding team and the local agency WIC staff.

Accepting the award were ISDH State Nutrition Consultant Tonya Long, Interim WIC Director Laura Chavez, USDA Branch Chief Bruce Hillman, ISDH Chief Medical Officer Dr. Melissa Collier, ISDH WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator Crystal Fowler, Breastfeeding Consultant Brea Birdsong, Peer Counselor Coordinator Jana Gach and Assistant Commissioner Eldon Whetstone.



## ACCREDITATION COORDINATOR: MISSING!

By Patricia Truelove

Patricia Truelove, ISDH's very own accreditation coordinator, has been reported missing as of Oct. 12. Negotiations are underway, and we hope for her safe return in late November when she returns from maternity leave.

While professionals are awaiting baby pictures as proof of celebration, they are also diligently working to maintain the momentum of the work on accreditation. Domain teams are continuing to collect documents, and the review team has already started its assignments and is providing great feedback. Remember,

you can still be a part of this journey by joining the review team. Team members work at their own pace to review documents and learn more about what ISDH is doing across the agency.

Anyone interested in learning more about being a part of the review team should contact the Office of Public Health Performance Management while Patricia is out at [OPHPM@isdh.in.gov](mailto:OPHPM@isdh.in.gov) for more information.

### Domain 1: Conduct and Disseminate Assessments Focused on Population Health Status and Public Health Issues Facing the Community

In a nutshell, this domain asks us to

describe how we collect data, how we use that data to make informed recommendations and decisions and how we provide the data we collect to stakeholders in Indiana and beyond. Examples include [Stats Explorer](#), Indiana's updated [State Health Assessment](#), comprehensive reports on [natality](#) and [mortality](#), [behavioral risk factors](#) and [much, much more](#). ISDH staff work to provide reports, summaries, alerts, trainings and more to inform the public, policy makers and public health professionals around the state.

Special thanks to the members of Domain Team 1, Eden Bezy (OPHPM), Ann Alley (Chronic Disease), Lindsey Bouza (DNPA), Caitlin Conrad (HIV/STD), Kayley Dotson (ERC), Sara Griewank (Tobacco), Eric Hawkins (ERC), Antoniette Holt (Minority Health), Peter Krombach (ERC), Terri Lee (Women's Health), Paravdeep Nijjar (Trauma), Andrew Pappas (EPH), Chris Waldon (ERC), and Klaudia Wojciechowska (Trauma) for all of their hard work.



### Meet a member of the Core Team

#### Eden Bezy—Office of Public Health Performance Management Director

Eden has been hanging around the agency doing various jobs for the past 6 years. In her current post, Eden directs the Office of Public Health Performance Management where she gets the privilege of leading three great staff doing: accreditation readiness, workforce development, performance management, quality improvement, leadership development, strategic planning, and more. She says the best part of her job is being able to see the awesome work her colleagues at the agency do every day through OPHPM's efforts in preparing for accreditation. Eden's interests include: old-timey public health posters, reading, cross-words, and trying new French fries.



## BENEFITS DEADLINE IS NOV. 14

Open Enrollment is your annual opportunity to explore the many benefit options the State of Indiana has to offer and make changes to your coverage. Now is the perfect time to review your benefit needs.

Open Enrollment went live Oct. 24, and there are several ways to learn more about the plan options and wellness programs available for next year.

#### Open Enrollment help sessions

Help sessions are provided in the Indiana Government Center South Training Room 31 for those who need assistance navigating PeopleSoft or have questions about their elections. Hours are listed below and are Eastern Savings Time (ends Nov. 4):

- Oct. 29 to Nov. 2: noon to 4 p.m.
- Nov. 5 to Nov. 13: 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Nov. 14: 9 a.m. to noon



**Call the Benefits Hotline** toll-free at 1-877-248-0007 outside of Indianapolis or 317-232-1167 within the Indianapolis area.

Benefit specialists are available from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (EST), Monday through Friday.

You can also email the benefits team at [SPDBenefits@spd.in.gov](mailto:SPDBenefits@spd.in.gov).

## EARN GO365 POINTS FOR YOUR FLU SHOT

Did you know you can earn Go365 points when you or your covered adult dependents receive a flu shot?

The flu shot will be free to state employees who carry the state's medical insurance.

If you do not have the state's medical insurance, you can still get a flu shot; however, there may be a fee and it is not guaranteed that your provider will be accepted.

For information regarding the flu shots, locations for open clinics or information on how to receive the Go365 points, check out the [Invest in your Health Indiana Flu Shot](#) page.





## DIVISION UPDATES

### An invitation from Liv

Liv, the ISDH pregnancy mobile app for Hoosier women, celebrates her first birthday in November. It seems like only yesterday that the Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Division launched the app at the annual Labor of Love Summit. In the last year, MCH has continued to add information and resources so Liv can better serve women who are pregnant, thinking about pregnancy, delaying pregnancy or are new parents.

Whether you work directly with moms and infants or not, you can help promote the app among your individual constituencies. By offering Liv flyers and cards at your public events or by providing content for the app, you can make Indiana moms and babies healthier. Liv contains a big library of articles, how-to's, resources, events, links to videos and targeted push notices. Let us know if you'd like to provide information on Liv as you work to improve the health of Indiana residents.

If you haven't already, get to know Liv at <https://www.in.gov/isdh/files/liv-mobile-app-flyer.pdf> or read Dr. Box's letter to health providers at <https://www.in.gov/isdh/files/dr-box-liv-mobile-app-intro-may-2018.pdf>. Want to go directly to the app? You can find Liv online at [www.askliv.com](http://www.askliv.com) or download it at the iTunes or Google Play stores (search Liv pregnancy). You can also download Liv using the QR code below. Liv is free to use and compatible with all mobile devices. Follow her on Twitter @thelivapp.



Email Infant Mortality Education Liaison Linda Heacox at [lheacox@isdh.in.gov](mailto:lheacox@isdh.in.gov) or call 317-233-1269 for more information.

### Division has new name

The Child Fatality Review Division is now called the Division of Fatality Review and Prevention, a name that more accurately illustrates the division's scope and programs.

When the division was formed by legislation in 2013, child fatality review was its only focus. The program was responsible for recommending policy changes and opportunities for education and engaging local professionals to examine child deaths for their risk factors and circumstances and help communities put prevention programs in place and keep Hoosier children safe. Topic areas included suicide, child maltreatment, drowning, motor vehicle deaths, safe sleep and infant mortality, and ATV safety.

Over the past five years, other types of preventable death have been added to the review process, including fetal and infant deaths, maternal deaths (deaths of mothers within one year of giving birth) and deaths if drugs are a cause or contributing factor.

The overarching goal of reviewing all of these cases is to identify the risk factors and circumstances that were involved, learn from the tragedy, and work to prevent similar deaths and injuries.

For example, in one case, a dangerous intersection received a much-needed stop sign. In another, a rural high school began teaching infant safety and safe sleep as part of its health curriculum. Local law enforcement and coroners in another community learned where to dispose of unused prescription medication in their jurisdictions. These seemingly small improvements were all the result of reviewing cases where a child or at-risk adult was fatally injured. These deaths

are sentinel events, and communities are catalyzed by these tragedies to keep them from happening again.

The fatality review division coordinates a total of 75 fatality review teams in 90 of the 92 Indiana counties, a statewide child fatality review committee and a statewide maternal mortality review committee.

The division also provides child death and serious injury investigation training to law enforcement, Department of Child Services staff, coroners, prosecutors and EMS/fire responders throughout the state and houses the Safe Sleep/Sudden Unexplained Infant Death (SUID) Prevention Program.

The Safe Sleep/SUID Prevention Program is one of the most active programs in the country. It coordinates with, and provides education, resources and technical assistance to, more than 160 safe sleep education/resource sites in all 92 counties.

These sites provide infant safe sleep education, information on other topics such as breastfeeding and resources such as portable cribs to help every parent or caregiver ensure their infant has a first birthday.

Because they believe in the power of local prevention, the team members are often on the road traveling to local review team meetings, presenting prevention programming to local stakeholders and working with injury prevention advocates across the state. They also encourage state and local collaboration.

Continued partnerships with other divisions, agencies, partners and advocacy groups are helping to ensure that Indiana families have access to the resources and information they need to stay safe and healthy. The focus will continue to be learning from the worst outcomes to encourage safer communities across Indiana.

## STAFFING UPDATES

Please welcome the following new employees who joined ISDH last month:

Lisa McColly, program coordinator, Acute Care; Alicia Earnest, refugee health coordinator, TB/Refugee Control; Jalen West, WIC finance specialist, Finance; Sarah Schmitt, disease intervention specialist, HIV/STD; Lolita Smith, public health nurse surveyor, Long Term Care; Marketia Jones, special projects manager, Emergency Preparedness; and Nicole Morley, quality improvement coordinator, Public Health Performance Management; Kate Schedel, MCH program director, Maternal

and Child Health; Sonya Hughes, public health nurse surveyor, Acute Care; Suzanne Foley, EHDI director, Maternal and Child Health.

We also welcome Lauren Dreyling, chemist, transferred within the laboratory; and Donna Walker, food scientist, transferred to Food Protection from the Indiana Department of Corrections.

Congratulations go to Nicholas Burch, who was promoted to finance manager, Finance; and Latunya Horton, who was promoted to administrative assistant, Children's Special Health Care.

# LAB CELEBRATES SCIENCE



Jennine Griffith-Vandi, Jessica Gentry, Stephanie Dalenberg and Erica Vecchio staff the ISDH Celebrate Science exhibit.

By Katlyn Wainwright

The Indiana State Department of Health Laboratories (ISDHL) had an awesome, hands-on science booth at this year's Celebrate Science Indiana on Oct. 6 at the Indiana State Fairgrounds. The event included more than 70 exhibitors for a day about science.

ISDHL's booth continued to be a crowd favorite for both the youth and adult visiting "scientists," and staff volunteers remained busy throughout the day. It was divided into several areas highlighting microbes all around us while providing fun and interactive experiments and activities.

The first section was a handwashing experiment that allowed participants to see how well they wash their hands using Glo-Germ, a lotion that glows under black light. A handout on proper handwashing technique was provided and a black light examination of the participant's hands after washing off the Glo-Germ was completed. Both parents and children were surprised when they saw how well or how poorly they washed their hands.

The second section displayed the different types of agar plates used to grow bacteria. We had uninoculated agar plates that people were allowed to touch and observe the differences in the selective media used at ISDHL. Some ISDHL staff members showed off their artistic talents through "agar art," drawing pictures with agar with different types of bacteria serving as the "ink."

To demonstrate that we all live in a bacteria-filled world, large plates were inoculated

from swabs of common sources such as cell phones, elevator buttons, unwashed fruit and the bottom of shoes. We also included a set of plates showing bacterial growth from a visibly dirty hand, a hand cleaned with hand sanitizer and a hand washed with soap and water. This emphasized the importance of washing hands after playing outside and washing fruit before you eat it.

Agar plates with bacteria typically cultivated at ISDHL, such as *Staphylococcus aureus*, *E. coli* and *Salmonella*, along with their scanning electron microscope images from CDC's Public Health Image Library, were also available for participants to see.

Our third section allowed participants to try their hand at pipetting. A common laboratory technique to measure and transfer fluid media, this pipetting section was crowded with kids wanting to try their hand as a laboratory scientist. We even had some plate map diagrams that they could follow to try to create pictures in the plates. Most kids just liked mixing colors and overfilling the wells in the plates.

The fourth section of our booth was an experiment section where we were able to make use of polymers and chemistry. Thanks to the fantastic science products from Steve Spangler Science, we were able to provide a new section of hands-on fun for the children. We had Insta-Snow, Jelly Marbles and Colored Orbs.

This section allowed the kids to explore polymers by watching a powder puff up into fake snow, by finding clear-colored Jelly Marbles that grew from a tiny bead to a 3-cm marble and then seemingly disap-



Art with agar by local lab artists Christina Garner, Jennine Griffith-Vandi and Mardene Wade.

peared in water and by playing with Colored Orbs that also grew in size and were just fun to squish. Such hands-on activities are key to engaging and inspiring the next generation of scientists.

The last section of the booth was all about slime. There was magnetic slime, thermochromic slime that changed color when heat was applied, electric-blue string slime and glow-in-the-dark slime. There was even a rainbow selection of colored slime in small petri dishes that the children were able to take home. Staff made 500 petri dishes of this slime and still ran out of this popular takeaway item two hours before the end of day.

ISDHL had many volunteers before and after this event who made this another successful year and booth. Thank you to everyone who helped share the lab's passion for science with a new generation and, hopefully, the event encourages more children to look into a career in science. Next year's event is set for Saturday, Oct. 5, 2019.