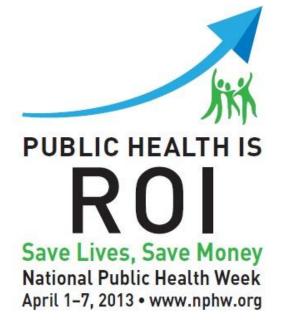# LONG TERM CARE NEWSLETTER

Indiana State Department of Health

ISDH Long Term Care
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PUBLIC HEALTH IS
ROI
Save Lives, Save Money
National Public Health Week
April 1–7, 2013 • www.nphw.org

National Public Health Week - Day 3

CREATE A SAFE AND HEALTHY PLACE TO WORK
Celebrate National Public Health Week

INDIANAPOLIS-Good health and a safe work environment are essential components of productivity, job satisfaction and overall quality of life for employees. In recent years, workplaces have recognized this and have taken steps to improve workplace settings. As National Public Health Week continues, employers are encouraged to institute workplace wellness programs, as well as ensure adequate safety gear and training are provided to staff.

Research from the American Public Health Association shows that investing in workplace wellness programs made positive impacts on workers' health and pocketbooks. Such wellness efforts also help employers contain health care costs. The cost of obesity among full-time employees tops $73 billion, which includes the total value of lost productivity and medical costs.

"I've seen firsthand the dramatic impact effective workplace wellness programs can have on employee

morale and job satisfaction, as well as on healthcare expenses," said State Health Commissioner William VanNess, M.D. "Employers don't need to spend a ton of money on activities, every bit of encouragement helps. There are lots of ways to incentivize employees toward good health in the workplace that are little to no cost. The results are well worth the time and effort."

Employers can request a free copy of the *Indiana Healthy Worksites Toolkit for Small Businesses* from the Indiana Healthy Weight Initiative website or download it directly at http://inhealthyweight.org/273.htm . The toolkit provides several suggestions for increasing the number of opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity in the workplace.

"Employers who invest in occupational safety and health benefit from increased employee morale, worker productivity and reduced workplace injuries and illnesses, as well as lower insurance premiums," said Indiana Department of Labor Commissioner Sean Keefer.

According to the National Safety County, deaths from unintentional work injuries dropped 90 percent from 1933 to 1997. However, workers still get injured on the job. According to the Indiana Department of Labor, Indiana reported 122 fatal occupational injuries in 2011. Nationally, nearly 5,000 workers died in the United States due to an injury on the job in 2011. That same year, fatal work injuries also rose among workers ages 20-24 by 18 percent.

"Proactively addressing workplace safety and health is not only the right thing to do, but it makes good business sense," said Keefer.

Employers can do many things to improve safety. One is to understand and follow all workplace safety regulations and best practices. Employers can educate employees about workplace safety regulations and train employees to recognize unsafe or unhealthy settings and if applicable, have safety training available in multiple languages. Employers should strive to create a work environment in which employees feel comfortable reporting unsafe working conditions or workplace abuse.

Additional suggestions for creating a safe and healthy workplace include:

- Provide the required equipment to keep workers safe, such as respiratory gear and hard hats.
- Hold subcontractors accountable for implementing safety standards and trainings.
- Have mechanisms in place for recognizing and addressing the potential for workplace violence.
- Practice fire safety drills and prepare your workplace for an unexpected emergency or disaster.
- Post hand-washing reminders, provide healthy foods at meetings and celebrations, and organizing workplace walking groups. If you provide employer-based health insurance, consider certain financial incentives that can improve health, such as incentivizing employees to quit using tobacco.

Importantly, make your support for investments in workplace health and safety known. Talk to leadership about inviting local policymakers and others to a community roundtable to discuss injury prevention and wellness in the workplace and follow up with specific actions.

To learn more about National Public Health Week, visit www.nphw.org.

For more information about the Indiana State Department of Health, visit www.StateHealth.in.gov.

For more information about learning how to ensure workplace health and safety, visit the Indiana Department of Labor's website at www.in.gov/dol/insafe.htm.

APIC Implementation Guides

The Association for Professionals in Infection Prevention (APIC) has revised and expanded their *Guide to Preventing Clostridium difficile Infections* [http://apic.org/Resource_/EliminationGuideForm/59397fc6-3f90-43d1-9325-e8be75d86888/File/2013CDiffFinal.pdf]. This new edition is now available as a free online download. It features up-to-date research and guidance on the prevention and treatment of Clostridium difficile infections (CDI) and incorporates current regulations. The guide includes an overview of CDI, strategies for prevention, considerations for specific patient populations, and evolving practices. Topics include:

- Clostridium difficile in pediatrics and skilled nursing facilities
- The pathogenesis and changing epidemiology of CDI diagnosis
- Environmental control
- New and emerging technologies

APIC Implementation Guides provide practical, evidence-based strategies for surveillance and the elimination of infection. Each guide includes online tools and resources. Guides are available at http://apic.org/Professional-Practice/Implementation-guides.

Carbapenem-Resistant Enterobacteriaceae

In conjunction with its Vital Signs report about CRE, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is offering educational resources for both healthcare providers and consumers through its partnership with WebMD.

On WebMD, CDC is providing valuable consumer information a Q&A format on Dr. Arjun Srinivasan's WebMD Answers expert page. People can find helpful answers to questions ranging from "What are CRE?" to "What can patients do to protect themselves from getting a CRE infection?"

For additional CRE resources, tool kits, and materials, see http://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/hai/cre.

National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN)

CDC recently unveiled its redesigned National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN) website. Intuitive and simple to navigate, the new NHSN site offers users and visitors:

- clear enrollment instructions
- one-stop information pages for each facility type (e.g., acute care page has links to all protocols, trainings, manual chapters, analysis tools, etc.)
- easy access to user updates/newsletter and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid rule information
- direct links to the NHSN application log-in page
- a new "About NHSN" page

The update is intended to better meet NHSN user needs and also make it easier for visitors to learn about NHSN and its value to the healthcare system.