

IDPH Legislative Update
Iowa Department of Public Health
January 17, 2012

[Allow me to Introduce Myself](#)

Greetings colleagues! My name is Deborah Thompson. I started at IDPH on December 9th as the Policy Advisor and Healthiest State Initiative Coordinator (yes, that fit on my business cards somehow) and it has been a whirlwind of meetings and conversations with many of you already. Thank you for making me feel welcome. I am very excited to be a part of the IDPH team! To begin my first Legislative Update, I would like to provide you with a brief background about myself.

I moved to Iowa from Texas in 2000 to attend Drake University. I met my husband a couple of years after moving to Iowa and we have enjoyed living in the Des Moines area for eleven years now. We celebrated our first wedding anniversary this past October.

I worked for the Legislative Services Agency's Fiscal Division for four years before joining IDPH. This department was assigned to me for three of those years and although I can say I have a basic foundation of knowledge about the department, there is clearly a great deal more for me to learn! I thank you all in advance for your help in ensuring that IDPH continues to have a positive reputation of providing information to legislators, staff, and others that is accurate, informative, and timely. This assists us in our overall effort to promote and protect the health of Iowans.

[The First Week](#)

The 84th General Assembly started its second session on Monday, January 9th. The following are some highlights from the first week:

- **Condition of the State.** Governor Branstad delivered his 17th Condition of the State address to the General Assembly on January 10th. The address focused on his two major priorities for this legislative session, a four point jobs and careers plan of action, and to again have the nation's best school system. To view his remarks click [here](#).
- **Governor's Budget Recommendations.** Accompanying Governor Branstad's Condition of the State were his recommendations to the General Assembly for the FY 2013 state budget. He has recommended that IDPH receive a status quo budget for FY 2013. In other words, he has not recommended any changes for FY 2013 compared to the FY 2012 budget that was passed last session. To read his recommendations in their entirety, click [here](#). The section for IDPH begins on page 451.
- **Committee Work Begins.** The House Human Resources Committee hit the ground running on Monday and Wednesday with presentations on the interim work relating to mental health redesign and the child abuse registry. Both of these topics, mental health and child abuse, (including work on the registry), will be two high priorities for the members of this committee. In fact, Chairwoman Linda Miller assigned a standing subcommittee of Reps. Joel Fry (chair), Julian Garrett, Bruce Hunter, Mark Lofgren, and Mary Mascher to study all bills relating to child abuse for this session. A bill relating to mental health redesign has yet to be introduced.

The Senate Human Resources Committee also began work this week on Thursday and heard a presentation from the Department on Aging relating to the redesign of the Area Agencies on Aging.

To view information on the members and committee information for each of these committees, click [here](#).

[The IDPH Legislative Package](#)

The department has two bills for the 2012 legislative session.

- **Iowa Health Information Network (IHIN).** This bill provides for the creation of a statewide health information network referred to as the IHIN. The bills also provides for components that are critical to its development and operation, including but not limited to:
 - Authorization of the collection and retention of participant fees.
 - Establishment of a fund.
 - Provision of the mechanisms to facilitate and support the secure exchange of electronic health information.
 - Clarification that the IHIN will continue to operate under the current governance structure until the end of the initial federally-funded cooperative agreement period in March 2014. Recommendations will be provided to the General Assembly relating to future governance options in December 2013.
- **IDPH Technical/Omnibus Bill.** This bill is still undergoing drafting and review. More information regarding its components should be available by the next Legislative Update.

The four boards that are not located under the purview of the Bureau of Professional Licensing are responsible for filing their own legislation. This also includes tracking and answering questions relating to the legislation. For the 2012 session, the board of pharmacy has two bills, the board of nursing has one bill, and the dental board will continue to work on legislation introduced last session. The board of medicine will not introduce legislation in 2012.

- **Board of Pharmacy Updates to Controlled Substances Act.** This is an annual clean-up bill by the board that makes changes to the Controlled Substances Act in state code to align with federal changes.
- **Board of Pharmacy Iowa Prescription Monitoring Program.** Iowa's Prescription Monitoring Program (PMP) has been operational since March 2009. During the 2011 session, the legislature eliminated the sunset provisions and made the Iowa PMP a continuing program. This bill authorizes the board to enter into agreements for the sharing of information from the Iowa PMP with other states' PMP databases, making it possible for a practitioner requesting patient prescription history from the Iowa PMP to also identify and request information from other state PMPs with which the board has an agreement for the mutual exchange of PMP information. Such agreement would also make it possible for a practitioner requesting patient prescription history from another state's PMP to request information from the Iowa PMP. The request for exchanged information would process only if the requesting practitioner is authorized to receive the information as a practitioner practicing in the state wherein the PMP resides.
- **Dental Board Changes to Practicing without a License.** Senate File (SF) 401 would make it a class D felony for persons to practice dentistry without a license. Currently, practicing dentistry illegally is only a serious misdemeanor. The statutory amendment would address a public safety concern in cases where a dentist that has had his or her license revoked in one state and has moved to Iowa to begin practicing illegally. This bill passed the Senate last year and is currently in the House Human Resources Committee.
- **Board of Nursing Regulation of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (ARNP).** In this legislation, the regulation of ARNPs is added to the code with a definition, scope of practice, a license, title protection, and code references regarding prescriptive authority and signing death certificates. ARNPs have been regulated via registration; this code change will require a license to practice. Qualifications for a license to practice are defined. The bill also deletes provisions that the board finds restrictive to its authority and responsibilities in the regulation of nursing and adds language that requires education, continuing education, demonstrated competencies and experience, all of which ensure the nurse has the knowledge, skills, and abilities to practice nursing. Other changes are technical in nature.

Highlights for Next Week

- Dr. Miller-Meeks and key IDPH staff have been invited to present to the House Human Resources Committee on Tuesday, January 17 on the subject of e-Health. She will provide information on the IHIN and IDPH IHIN bill.
- The Joint Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee will meet for the first time on Thursday, January 19. As of this writing, an agenda has not been released; however, a typical first day includes remarks from the co-chairs and ranking members as well as a brief presentation from the Legislative Services Agency on the governor's budget recommendations. For more information on the membership and work of this subcommittee, please click [here](#).

Other Information

Mark Your Calendar. The first funnel for the year is now scheduled for February 24. This is one week earlier than the date listed on the original calendar. The second funnel has also been moved up to March 16. April 17 is the 100th day of session and therefore the tentative end date for the 2012 session. For a more complete and updated session timeline please click [here](#).

The Iowa General Assembly website is a great source of legislative information. The address is www.legis.iowa.gov. Finding your legislator, committee members, photos of legislators and bills is easy to locate. Please take some time to check it out.

The Legislative Update is also posted on the IDPH website at www.idph.state.ia.us/newsletters.asp. To subscribe to the IDPH Legislative Update, please send a blank email to join-IDPHLEGUPDATE@lists.ia.gov.