



# Project Newsletter

October 2011

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## Future Plans:

- IDPH data needs assessment- Fall
- Draft business plan- Fall 2011
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## Project Update

- The pilot phase of the Iowa Department of Public Health data needs assessment began the week of August 29<sup>th</sup>. The Bureau of Environmental Health along with two programs in chronic disease served as pilot programs.
- The Health Information Network (HIN) and Public Health Modernization (PHM) groups have joined the planning group for the department data needs assessment. Both groups had outstanding initiatives revolving around data assessments. The objectives of this assessment will now meet the needs of the HIN and PHM.
- Data is moving! Data from 2009 is being migrated and tested by data owners and Bureau of Information Management staff. The data from 2009 should be available in November.
- New users from IDPH will be added throughout the months of September and October.
- Training materials are now available for data warehouse users in the form of recorded webinars. Users are required to complete the overview training associated with their level of access (basic or advanced) prior to receiving access to the data warehouse. In addition to the overview training, users have access to lab webinars developed to familiarize users with use of the system. For advanced users there are four lab webinars; one for each of the following: Birth data, BRFSS data, Death data, and Inpatient Discharge data. For basic users there is only one lab webinar and it is comprehensive to all datasets currently available.
- Data Warehouse (DWH), Information Management, and Environmental Public Health Tracking staff is evaluating inclusion of air quality, water quality and blood lead data into the warehouse.

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## *Iowa Department of Public Health Data Needs Assessment*

The Data Warehouse and Environmental Public Health Tracking teams are leading an effort to assess the data needs and capacity of the department. The outcome of the assessment will be used to identify strengths and weaknesses in data management, training needs, and will be used in planning future iterations of the warehouse. The components of the assessment are as follows:

### **Assessment surveys**

- 1) *Staff capacity and data management (70 questions)***- *Improved efficiency of data access and use, standardization, and utilizing data in performance management*
  - Assess department data management and analysis capacity at the program level
  - Ascertain the most commonly used types, formats and sources of data
  - Uncover barriers to data access
  - Identify data-related training needs
  - Determine use of data in key program functions (e.g., service prioritization, grant applications, developing public health indicators)
  - Assess use of review processes for data release including confidentiality
  
- 2) *Dataset catalog (37 questions)***- *Master map of datasets*
  - Revise 2008 list of department datasets; identify new datasets created after 2008
  - Develop a catalog of all major datasets maintained by the department
  - Catalog includes:
    - Authorship, formats, content changes, reporting, use
  - Assess which datasets are candidates for inclusion into the DWH
  
- 3) *Reports catalog (40 questions)***- *Master catalog of reports to be used in assessing overlap, duplication, data release, and potential for automation*
  - Develop a database of all IDPH publicly-release reports
  - Reports catalog includes:
    - Content characteristics of the reports
    - Location of publication
    - Frequency, review, authors
    - Datasets used in the report
  - Determine whether duplication exists with department reports
  - Assess which types of reports are most frequently used for DWH planning

The results of the assessment will be published in a business needs and data integration plan and will be provided to bureau chiefs and division directors.

The reports and dataset catalogs will be made available to all staff.

## *Risk Management*

Upon learning the chilling statistic that data warehousing projects in the initial stages of development have failure rate of 50 percent or greater<sup>1</sup>, it became clear that a risk management plan needed to be developed. The first step in the risk assessment was the identification of risks. Twenty-nine risks in six categories were identified for the Data Warehouse project.

**User-related risks:** risks that involve any type of application user including internal IDPH staff with advanced access and external users with basic access. There are four risks in this category.

**Planning and communication associated risks:** risks identified through experience in building the application and in progressing other IDPH applications. There are twelve risks in this category.

**Data risks:** known issues present when working with large, longitudinal datasets and threats experienced in various projects in the department. There are seven risks in this category.

**Financial risks:** risks that are solely focused on streams that directly impact the DWH project. There are two risks in this category.

**Technical risks:** risks limited to known weaknesses in information management competencies and process of data management and application construction/maintenance. There are two risks in this category.

**Contractor risks:** risks specific to the contractor secured to complete the data needs assessment over the next 14 months (through July 31, 2012). There are two risks in this category.

Following risk identification, strategies for the mitigation of risks were developed. The most frequently mentioned mitigation strategy was the establishment of data governance. As of June, 2011, DWH staff has started to research data governance ideology.

Also started is an assessment of the weaknesses in data governance throughout the department. The data needs assessment will cover the majority of issues surrounding data use, but not all. Assessing data governance issues should be complete by mid-fall. Staff in the Bureau of Performance Management and the Performance Management team (Communication and Planning) are contributing to this effort.

<sup>1</sup> H. Watson, B. Haley, Managerial considerations, Commun. ACM 41 (9), 1998, pp. 32–37.