

PH TIMES

NDSU Department of Public Health Newsletter

Summer 2015

What's Happening

The Master of Public Health program is officially within the new Department of Public Health as of July 1, 2015 along with the official name change of the College of Pharmacy, Nursing and Allied Sciences to the College of Health Professions.

We are excited to be starting quarterly publications to fill you in on the latest of what is going on in our department. If you have information you would like considered for inclusion, please email angela.skaff@ndsu.edu.

NDSU Student Public Health Association

"The North Dakota State University (NDSU) Public Health Association is a student organization led by graduate students in the Master of Public Health program at NDSU as well as undergraduate students interested in public health. The purpose of the NDSU Public Health Association is to strive to meet the public health needs of the community through the multidisciplinary collaboration of NDSU students, faculty and staff with the goals of promoting health, preventing disease, and improving the quality of life. The group works in partnership with many local organizations including the American Heart Association, the Fargo Marathon, WDAY News, the City of Fargo, and the African Initiative for Progress among others. Each year during National Public Health Week, the NDSU Public Health Association hosts various events to promote public health on campus and in the community. This year, the group looks forward to holding events surrounding American Indian health, vaccine preventable diseases, health promotion and wellness, global health and careers in public health." NDPHA News Jan 2015



NDSU MPH Students at the Dakota Conference

*"For he who has
health has hope; and
he who has hope,
has everything."*

- Owen Arthur

In This Issue

- What's Happening
- Student PHA
- Alumni
- New Faculty Welcome
- Celebrations
- Program Info
- Chair's Corner
- Grant Feature
- Resources
- Contact Us



Erin Ourada, NDSU MPH First Graduate

Alumni Spotlight

Erin is the first graduate from the MPH program, she graduated in December of 2013. Here what she has to say from her experience with us and where it has taken her.

What is your background?

I am from Raleigh, ND and I graduated from NDSU in 2012 with my undergraduate degree in Microbiology. During my time in college I worked for the USDA Agricultural Research Services and studied antibodies and drug interactions in animals.

What did you specialize in at NDSU?

I specialized in Infectious Diseases during my MPH at NDSU.

How did the NDSU MPH prepare you for the workforce?

I work with communities and I assess the health needs of different communities at my job. As an MPH student, I learned about the different social and behavioral aspects of health that have considerably helped my work with communities and how to interact with them. It also helped me to be aware of all of the different aspects that affect health and how best to reduce health disparities in the different communities and cultures that I come across.

What is your current position or academic pursuit?

I am a Regional Coordinator at Custer Health in Mandan, ND. I oversee a grant that has created a network or collaboration between four public health units in North Dakota. The hope of this network is that the health units will be able to share resources and develop ways to improve services across the entire eight county region. The region is mostly rural and health units are understaffed because of a lack in resources and funding. Hopefully the collaboration between the health units will be valuable to make sure that the public is still being adequately served. As part of my job I have been conducting community health needs assessments in all of the counties in our regional network.

How are you impacting the health of North Dakotans (answer as applicable)?

I believe I am impacting the health of North Dakotans by determining what the needs and problems are in communities so that we as a group can come up with creative solutions to these needs and problems. Helping communities to identify these needs will be a huge step in the right direction. All of the rural areas in our region create access issues for everyone especially the elderly. We are also experiencing a workforce shortage not only in public health but in our critical care hospitals as well. The only way to start addressing these problems is to first identify them as a group and then continue to work together to fix them.

New Faculty Welcome



Welcome Dr. Andrea Huseth-Zosel, our new Social and Behavioral Science faculty member. Dr. Huseth-Zosel will be teaching courses in the MPH Core curriculum.

Here is a little

primer regarding her public health interests.

What excites you about public health in North Dakota?

I am most excited about working with the MPH program in developing a public health research agenda for NDSU and for the state. North Dakota has a public health platform, but because the MPH program is so new, we are essentially opening a floodgate in regards to public health research, and the implications for public health in the state are exciting.

Where do you see our Master of Public Health Program going in the future?

I see the NDSU MPH program expanding beyond its initial tracks to encompass a greater public health footprint. There are many health issues important to North Dakota and to rural populations in general, including my interest areas of injury prevention and aging-related public health topics, such as transportation, social support, and gender issues.

How will the MPH program address these issues in the future?

I don't know, but I want to be there for the ride!

What research areas will you be sharing with students?

My specific research interests are related to aging issues, injury prevention, gender issues, and rural/urban disparities. I am looking forward to sharing this research with our students, and involving them in the research process.

Celebrations

Stefanie Meyer welcomed a little boy into their family on February 21, 2015 – Levi Brandon, weighing in at 7 pounds 12 ounces. Big sisters Kallie and Mackenzie are very proud!

Molly Secor-Turner and Abby Gold were recommended by the Provost Ingram for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure.

Mark Strand was recommended to Full Professor and tenure promotion by Provost Ingram.

Abby Gold attended the Society for Public Health Education's conference in Portland, OR to present the poster, "Food preferences and attitudes related to fruit and vegetable amongst 3rd graders."

Andrea Huseeth attended the American Society on Aging conference in Chicago, IL to present the poster, "Mobility Counseling Provided by Health Care Providers to Older Drivers: A Rural/Urban Comparison."

Dr. Warne received the National Indian Health Board 2015 Public Health Innovation Award in April.



Incoming Student Orientation 2014

Program Info

Professionalism & Ethics

Our program values and promotes professionalism and ethics. We foster an environment where students, faculty, and staff serve as role models in the profession and community by representing the highest standards of professional and ethical behavior. Honesty, integrity, and collegiality guide all interactions with students, faculty, staff, administration, peers, and the public.

Interdisciplinary Team Approach

Our program recognizes and values an interdisciplinary team approach to public health, education, and research where each discipline works collaboratively to attain greater knowledge, expertise, and outcomes than what they are capable of accomplishing individually.

Social Justice

Our program values the promotion of health equity through equitable allocation and distribution of resources, services, programs among all populations; access to healthy environments, systems, and policies that promote health and eliminate health disparities.

Diversity

Our program values diversity within our student body, faculty, and staff to assure broad perspectives in culture, world-view, and experiences.

Public Health Chair's Corner

Op-Ed written by Dr. Warne



As a medical doctor and American Cancer Society board member, I want to thank the North Dakota Legislature for passing into law the Oral Oncology Parity Act. I often learn about patients stopping their cancer treatments because of worries about the side effects of long-term therapy or chronic side effects. But over the years, I have seen patients who have good health insurance forgo treatment because of the high copays each month for oral anticancer medications.

Oral chemotherapy medications are revolutionizing oncology and converting diseases like myeloma that were previously considered a death sentence into chronic illnesses. In addition to effectiveness, oral medications are more convenient, generate fewer office visits and are more suitable for people who can continue to stay productive and active in society. However, health plan benefit designs have not kept up with medical innovation.

Payment models treat infusion chemotherapy as a medical benefit with patients responsible for nominal copayments per treatment, while orally administered anticancer medications are usually covered under a health

plan's pharmacy benefit, requiring patients to pay high out-of-pocket costs, including requiring patients to pay a co-insurance – or a percentage of the overall total cost of the drug. Patients can end up footing thousands of dollars each month when they are responsible for a percentage of the cost. I have seen firsthand how this payment model has restricted patient access to life-saving oral anticancer therapies for an untold number of cancer patients.

A new law passed earlier this month will alleviate this financial burden for cancer patients in North Dakota as it requires health plans to make copayments, deductibles or co-insurance amounts for oral anticancer medications no greater than those that are required for traditional IV chemotherapy. Additionally, health plans are prohibited from increasing the out-of-pocket costs for IV chemotherapy or reclassifying benefits to circumvent complying from this new provision.

The law, which will take effect Aug. 1, does not require health plans to cover a new service and only impacts those that currently list chemotherapy as a covered benefit. The state law impacts residents covered by a private commercial health plan. The law does not impact the federal Medicare program. North Dakota joins 37 other states and the District of Columbia in enacting similar legislation.

The Oral Oncology Parity Act was a hard fought battle by a coalition of patient organizations, including the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network, the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, International Myeloma Foundation and dozens of other coalition partners.

I would like to recognize Sen. Dick Dever, R-Bismarck, and Reps. Andrew Maragos, R-Minot; Lois Delmore, D-Grand Forks; Thomas Beadle, R-Fargo; and Jason Dockter, R-Bismarck, for their leadership on this issue. This law is the right thing to do and will help the many cancer patients across the state.

For more information about the Oral Oncology Parity Act, please contact the North Dakota Chapter of the American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network or (701) 250-1022.

Dr. Warne, MD, MPH, is chairman, Department of Public Health, North Dakota State University, and a member of the National Board of Directors of the American Cancer Society. He is Mary J. Berg Distinguished Professor in Women's Health.



Grant Feature

The Master of Public Health (MPH) program is vested not only in the education of students, but is engaged in research activities for the betterment of society. In the past three fiscal years, the MPH program generated 19 grants with the potential revenue of more than \$2 million. The vast majority of the grants procured seek to improve health disparities of the American Indian population.

One such grant is Money Follows the Person – Tribal Initiative (MFP-TI). The purpose of the MFP-TI program is to help tribal elders and/or tribal members with disabilities transition from long term care facilities or institutions to community living that meets their needs and wants. Currently, if health necessitates medical care of an elder or a tribal member with a disability, a long term care setting placement is sought. Since there are no long term care facilities on tribal lands in North Dakota, the elder or tribal member with a disability must move not only out of his/

her home, but out of their community. Research has shown that quality of life diminishes once a person is placed outside of their home and community. MFP-TI supports elders and tribal members who have a disability in moving back to their homes from an institution, or staying within their homes and thus not entering a long term care facility or institution in the first place. This will be accomplished by providing appropriate in-home services and support.

The MFP-TI grant is funded by the North Dakota Department of Human Services through the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services (CMS). CMS acknowledges the associated well-being of a tribal elder or tribal member with a disability staying within their own home. CMS realizes the costs linked with a long term care facility placement, as there is a financial savings when long term care facility placement is delayed or prevented.

The MFP-TI grant is expected to span five years and includes four phases. In the first phase, the MPH program is obligated to complete a concept paper which defines tribal characteristics and includes partnership agreements between the state and the tribes. Later phases will address Medicaid expansion, the development of community-based long term supports and services programs and the sustainability of such programs. The MPH program is honored to be involved in supporting tribal elders and tribal members who have disabilities have a better quality of life by helping them live in their own communities, closer to family and loved ones.

Upcoming Events/Resources

Faculty Retreat Aug. 17

Student Orientation Aug. 20-21

****NEW** 1st Department Meeting Sept. 15**

APHA Annual Conference Oct. 31-Nov 4

Student Opportunities

The link below is frequently updated with jobs, assistantships, and other professional development opportunities.

http://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/student_opportunities/

Student Travel

The link below will take you to the information and application for applying for student travel awards. Please review this information carefully if you are considering applying. Please understand that this opportunity is not a guaranteed funding source.

https://www.ndsu.edu/publichealth/student_opportunities/

Contact Us

For more information about our program:

NDSU
Department of Public Health
1805 Research Park Dr
Fargo ND 58102

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