Our Mission

“To assure the highest possible level of health for the people of the communities we serve.”

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Access to Fluoride for Children’s Health

In order to optimize children’s access to fluoride, the U.P. Wide Smiles Project, created by all U.P. health departments and funded by the Superior Health Foundation, is offering all U.P. elementary schools the opportunity to start school-based fluoride rinse programs. Rinse programs are an inexpensive, fast and easy way to give children access to fluoride.

Fluoride is the 13th most common element in our earth’s crust and is naturally present in most water sources, even in the oceans. Fluoride is a mineral that naturally helps fight tooth decay. That is why it is often called, “nature’s cavity fighter.” When we brush our teeth with fluoride toothpaste, or use other fluoride dental products, we help to prevent cavities and strengthen tooth enamel.

On January 25, 1945, Grand Rapids, Michigan became the world’s first city to adjust the level of fluoride in its drinking water supply. About 10-15 years later, children in that community developed 50-70% less tooth decay than area children did prior to fluoridation. We fortify many things in our diet to make them healthier, such as adding iron to cereal and vitamin D to milk. Fluoridating water is very similar. As communities, we are able to adjust the fluoride levels in our water supplies to make them healthier.

For optimal dental health, children need one source of systemic (ingested) fluoride-- either fluoridated water or prescription fluoride tablets if they have non-fluoridated water. They also need sources of topical fluoride, such as fluoride toothpastes and rinses. There is added benefit from having both systemic and topical fluoride working together to help make their teeth stronger and resistant to cavities.

Children in the U.P. have high rates of dental disease when compared to other areas of the state. In fact, U.P. 3rd graders living in low income households, have the highest rates of dental decay in the state of Michigan. Some of this is due to the fact that many U.P. children do not have access to fluoride in their water at home (either because they drink well water or because their town does not fluoridate its water), or to topical fluoride products that could strengthen and protect their teeth. Even those children, who have access to fluoridated water at home, are often “on the go” and drinking primarily bottled beverages which typically do not contain significant amounts of fluoride.

Public Health: “Restoring kids smile for a lifetime.”
National Public Health Week (April 6-12, 2015)

Daily Themes

Monday, April 6: Raising the Grade. The U.S. trails other countries in life expectancy and other measures of good health, and this holds true across all ages and income levels. Too many people, including some of our political leaders, still believe we have the best health care in the world. We have great doctors, state-of-the-art hospitals and are leaders in advanced procedures and pharmaceuticals - yet our health ranks poorly when compared to other countries. To kick off NPHW 2015, the public health community will come together to talk frankly about what the data reveal about America’s public health.

Tuesday, April 7: Starting from Zip. Today, your zip code says too much about your health. Within the United States, there are unacceptable disparities in health by race and ethnic group, state by state and even county by county. The effort to make the U.S. the Healthiest Nation in One Generation starts with equity across our communities. During the second day of NPHW 2015, the public health community will shine a light on local/state/regional disparities. We’ll come together to discuss the role – and success – of the Affordable Care Act in addressing disparities in access to care, while also laying out what else is needed to achieve health equity across our communities.

Wednesday, April 8: Building Momentum. Influential leaders, companies and organizations are taking important steps in line with creating the healthiest nation: just look at recent actions by CVS, America’s major food and beverage companies (Bumble Bee Foods, Campbell Soup Company, ConAgra Foods, General Mills, Inc., Hillshire Brands, Kellogg Company, Kraft Foods Group/Mondelez, Mars Inc., McCormick & Company, Inc., Nestle USA, PepsiCo, Inc., Post Foods, The Coca-Cola Company, The Hershey Company, The J.M. Smucker Company and Unilever), Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the American Planning Association, Michelle Obama, and many others. On the third day of NPHW 2015, the public health community will outline major recent changes and what they mean for our health. While the outcomes of these changes will play out over many years ahead, these are significant shifts that demonstrate momentum is building around a higher commitment to our nation’s public health.

Thursday, April 9: Building Broader Connections. In the work to become the healthiest nation, we can’t do it all on our own. We have to expand our partnerships to collaborate with city planners, education officials, public, private and for-profit organizations – everyone who has an impact on our health. During NPHW 2015, the fourth day will focus on communities mapping the network of partners and connections needed in their areas to make the U.S. the Healthiest Nation in One Generation.

Friday, April 10: Building on 20 Years of Success. 2015 marks the 20th anniversary of APHA coordinating National Public Health Week, and the accomplishments of the public health community over the last two decades are significant. These and earlier efforts have led to a 25-year improvement in the average lifespan for Americans and a 70 percent reduction in HIV/AIDS-related deaths. During the fifth day of NPHW 2015, the public health community (and especially public health student leaders) will come together to celebrate these and other accomplishments and bring a renewed focus to the work ahead - and what it will take to become the Healthiest Nation in One Generation.
Access for Fluoride and Children’s Health

The school Fluoride Rinse Program is designed to help level the playing field for area children and provide them with some of the early protection they need for good oral health. Parental approval must be obtained for each child to participate in the program. Once the consent is signed and returned to the school, each student that has permission will rinse his/her mouth in school with a fluoride solution for one minute, once a week, under adult supervision, throughout the school year. The rinse comes in great flavors such as bubble gum, root beer, grape, raspberry, and mint!

Regular rinsing with a fluoride mouth rinse is an effective means of preventing tooth decay. Research has shown a 30% decrease in tooth decay for students rinsing weekly with fluoride. This program is enthusiastically endorsed by area dentists, the ADA, and the Michigan Department of Community Health. Although effective, this program is not considered a substitute for daily brushing and flossing or regular dental visits. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to visit their dentist and practice good oral hygiene habits to build and keep a healthy smile.

For more in this program call the Health Department at 774-1868 or 265-9913.

Have a High Deductible? Now There’s Help!

The Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) has historically targeted income eligible women aged 40-64, who are either under-insured or un-insured. Now, many of these women have insurance coverage through the Affordable Care Act and are seeing their private providers for breast and cervical cancer screenings. However, if a breast or cervical abnormality is detected, many health insurance plans will not cover follow-up diagnostic services until the woman has met a high deductible.

The BCCCP eligibility requirements have been expanded. Now there’s help for women requiring follow-up diagnostic services who also have a high deductible insurance plan! Women with high deductibles may be eligible to receive follow-up services for an abnormal breast or cervical screening but, they must enroll onto BCCCP BEFORE receiving the services. Once enrolled, the women will be seen by local BCCCP healthcare providers.

Again, it is important that women and their providers are aware that a referral from their private provider to the Health Department BCCCP must be made BEFORE follow-up services are scheduled.

Below are the 2015 BCCCP eligibility guidelines:

- Women aged 40-64 years;
- Michigan resident;
- Un-insured or Under-insured, or
- Have a High Deductible Health Insurance Plan and need Follow-Up Diagnostic Services; and
- Meet the following income guidelines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Family Unit</th>
<th>Maximum Income per Year</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$50,225</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>$60,625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Each Additional Member Add:</td>
<td>$10,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Barbara Peterson, Dickinson-Iron District Health Department, Nurse Practitioner, stated, “Among Michigan women, breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths and is the most frequently diagnosed cancer. Early detection is the key to survival! With regular screening, breast cancer is more likely to be detected at an earlier stage, when it is most treatable.” Peterson also stated, “Cervical cancer is the easiest gynecologic cancer to prevent with regular screening tests and follow-up. It also is highly curable when found and treated early.”

Women and healthcare providers with questions may contact the Health Department at 774-1868 or 265-9913.
The Smart Source for Asthma Management

Get the Whole Story

*What you know:* Asthma affects one of the most important organs in the body—the lungs.

*What you might not know:* The condition causes inflammation in all airways of the lungs, both large and small. These airways carry air in and out of the body. Treating inflammation in both the large and small airways may help in managing asthma symptoms.

*Do you also know?* It's possible to have inflammation even when typical signs of asthma, like wheezing and coughing, are absent.

If you or your child has been diagnosed with persistent asthma, you may need to treat that inflammation every day. That’s why it’s important to know the whole story about managing persistent asthma.

Get the Facts About Asthma

Armed with the right knowledge, attitude and a proactive approach to asthma management, you can minimize the symptoms associated with persistent asthma. This website, www.getsmartaboutasthma.com offers information about the latest research in asthma, and tools and resources to help you talk with a doctor, control asthma symptoms on a daily basis and be an advocate for yourself or your child. It’s time to get smart about asthma.

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