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Dickinson-Iron District Health Department PUBLIC HEALTH PRESS

~ Health * Health * Health * Disease
Protection * Promotion * Education * Prevention ~



Our Mission

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

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~ An Active Member of the Dickinson-Iron County Collaborative Boards~

FROM THE DIRECTOR....

Welcome to our Newsletter!

We are delighted to share this first edition and volume our new newsletter with you! Communicating with the customers and key stakeholders served by any public service agency is crucial to the successful accomplishment of the organization's mission. The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department has a long history of working together with community partners to assess the health needs of our community, to develop appropriate policies that direct program efforts, and to assure the highest quality service delivery to residents of both counties. Many community residents may not be aware of the nature of health problems that we face as a community, may not know what services are provided by their health and human services organizations, and may be unsure of how to access services. Our newsletter is intended to communicate directly with key stakeholders in our communities on these topics and many more.

Health protection, promotion and education, and disease prevention anchor the Department's approach to public health. Our efforts in these activities are necessary, but singularly are not likely to be sufficient to achieve desired levels of community health status improvement. We recognize that....

.... improving a community's health status requires a partnership between the public and private, profit and nonprofit health care systems and other members of the community,

including individuals and organizations, working together in the health assessment and improvement process, and implementing effective responses. And we believe that **prevention** is the foundation for improving the health status of our communities.

We will use the newsletter to provide information about Health Department services and how to access them, to educate ourselves about the human and environmental health problems facing us, and to report to you on what your Health Department is doing about identified health problems in the community. We solicit your comments, concerns, suggestions and ideas for ways that we can improve this product and respond to your needs. Your letters, telephone calls, and email messages are always welcome!

Richard J. Thoune, RS, MPH
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Dickinson and Iron Counties Preparing Smallpox Control Plans

Public officials and health care professionals in both counties are working to develop local "pre-event" and "post-event" smallpox control plans. The plans will provide a blueprint for how smallpox vaccinations would be carried out, both as a preparedness effort and in the event of a confirmed case or cases of smallpox. The plans will include strategies for disease surveillance and containment, and for mass vaccinations. The plans will also identify vaccine distribution methods, staffing and monitoring.

At this time there is no information that suggests an imminent smallpox threat. However, the White House announced in early December that the decision was made to proceed with pre-event vaccination of public health response teams and smallpox health care teams throughout the country as a preparedness effort. There are no plans to inoculate the general public or all health care professionals in the initial preparations.

Smallpox control plans are an important component of our efforts to be prepared for and quickly respond to the threat of bioterrorism. In follow-up to the recent federal government announcement of its plans to vaccinate key public health and medical personnel, we must move forward in our planning and continue to work with our local partners to ensure Dickinson and Iron Counties are well prepared in the event of a smallpox emergency.

Although smallpox vaccine is

effective if given within days of exposure, it will be important that key public health and medical personnel be pre-vaccinated so that they can respond quickly in the event of an outbreak.

The smallpox vaccine is very effective at preventing disease, however, it does have some significant risks. Out of every one million people vaccinated, one or two may die as a result of life-threatening reactions to the vaccine. In the absence of actual smallpox disease, careful screening of potential vaccine recipients is essential to ensure that those at increased risk for adverse reactions do not receive the vaccine. If we have smallpox disease, all persons exposed and potentially exposed should be vaccinated.

Individuals who should NOT be vaccinated as a pre-event measure include people with the following conditions AND those who live with someone who has such a condition:

- Expectant mothers;
- People with eczema or atopic dermatitis, or a history of either;
- People being treated for cancer;
- People who are HIV-positive; and
- People who have had an organ transplant.

Individuals who should not receive pre-event smallpox vaccine also include:

- People who are allergic to the vaccine or any of its ingredients;
- People who have a

moderate or severe short-term illness; and

Anyone who is less than 18 years of age.

Smallpox planning is part of the District Health Department and county public health emergency preparedness efforts. The Health Department is working closely with state officials, other local government agencies, area hospitals, physicians, local EMS providers, and others to ensure the safety of county residents. Although the majority of patients with actual smallpox disease recover, death may occur in approximately 30% of cases. Many smallpox survivors suffer permanent scarring over large areas of their bodies, including their faces. Some are left blind.

The local planning effort is being coordinated with plans the state of Michigan recently submitted to the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC). Michigan's smallpox preparedness efforts involve a number of health care teams across the state. The state has been divided into eight regions (the U.P. is Region 8), and each region will have at least one public health response team and two health care teams, for a total of approximately 30 health care teams across the state. Should there be an

actual case of smallpox identified, these teams will be ready and in place to vaccinate and follow-up with persons exposed and care for those with smallpox.

The first group of individuals considered for voluntary pre-event smallpox vaccination would include the vaccinators themselves, public health response teams to be mobilized in the case of smallpox reintroduction and health care response teams at designated hospitals. Vaccination of health care response teams will include approximately 150 people at each of two selected hospitals in the Upper Peninsula. After these initial vaccinations are successfully completed, smallpox vaccine may be offered in a second phase to other healthcare workers, emergency responders, police and fire fighters in each county. Planning efforts for phase two are currently underway.

Area residents can obtain additional current and accurate information about smallpox and smallpox vaccination at the CDC smallpox website <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox> or by calling the CDC Hotline: (888) 246-2675, TTY (866) 874-2646.



Breast & Cervical Cancer Control Program

The Breast & Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) is a state and federally funded program administered through local health departments throughout the United States. Federal funding is received from the Centers for Disease Control.

The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department has been a part of this valuable program since its inception in 1992.

The goal of the BCCCP is to significantly reduce the mortality of breast and cervical cancer through early detection. All

uninsured and underinsured women who are Michigan residents between the ages of 40 to 64 and meet income guidelines (250% of poverty) are eligible to receive the following services at no cost:

- Clinical Breast Exam
- Pap Smear & Pelvic Exam
- Mammogram
- Care coordination for abnormalities

If a woman is diagnosed through the BCCCP with breast or cervical cancer

she is able to receive full Medicaid coverage until a physician states she is cancer free.

We are extremely proud of the service and care the women of Dickinson and Iron Counties have received and will continue to receive through the BCCCP.

For further information, please call Susie in the Iron County office at 265-4162 or Barb in the Dickinson County office at 779-7247.



Cancer affects everyone!

Take the Radon Test!

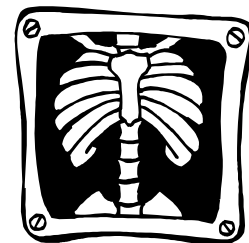
1. All homes should be tested for Radon.
TRUE FALSE
2. Radon is a radioactive gas that is odorless and colorless.
TRUE FALSE
3. Some people are immune from Radon.
TRUE FALSE
4. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer.
TRUE FALSE
5. As many as one in eight homes in Michigan have elevated Radon levels.
TRUE FALSE

PROTECT YOUR FAMILY FROM RADON GAS EXPOSURE.

TEST YOUR HOME TODAY!

Answers: 1. True 2. True 3. False 4. True 5. True

To learn more about radon testing and how to protect your family from radon, call the Environmental Health Division at 774-1868 or 265-9913.



Summary of Public Health Emergency Preparedness

Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

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We're on the Web!
See us at:
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Public Health Emergency Preparedness involves planning, organizing, and coordinating the public health emergency response network for the Dickinson-Iron District Health Department. Through a full-time staff position, we are working to enhance the collaboration of networks between the health department and emergency response stakeholders. Through this partnership, this will enable us to enhance hospital and health department disease surveillance for the rapid detection of disease outbreaks. This will allow us to develop a risk communication plan to disseminate timely

information during a bioterrorist incident or public health emergency. Through this process we will be able to educate and train public health and emergency response personnel so they are prepared for and capable of responding to a bioterrorist incident.

Currently, smallpox vaccination control plans are being developed to prepare the Health Department, Emergency Response Personnel, and Hospitals to respond to a smallpox outbreak. The first phase of the plan includes vaccinating public healthcare workers and hospital emergency department personnel. The second phase of the

plan includes vaccinating first responders (fire, police, and EMS) and additional healthcare workers. The pre-vaccination of these key emergency response personnel will ensure an effective and immediate response to a smallpox outbreak. The department is also developing a mass vaccination plan for disease containment during a public health emergency or bioterrorist incident.

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