

Oregon Public Health Connection

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In This Issue

- **Special Issue: Public Health Education and Outreach – Highlights from 2008**
- **Top Priority:** Statewide outreach and education examples
- **County Perspective:** Lane, Clackamas, Washington, Multnomah and Hood River counties outreach

Latest Links

[Community Health & Health Planning](#)

[January 2009 EMS Newsletter](#)

[Community Liaison](#)

[Latest County Public Health Jobs](#)

[Disease Prevention & Epidemiology](#)

[CD Summary: Arthritis](#)

[Healthy Places, Healthy People](#)

[Disease Reporting 2009](#)

[Latest Influenza Info](#)

[Environmental Health](#)

[Latest Lead Alerts](#)

[Environmental Health News & Events](#)

[Family Health](#)

[Latest Family Planning Newsletters](#)

[County WIC Clinics](#)

[Women's Health Network Lecture Series 2009](#)

[PHEP](#)

[PHEP Newsletter January 2009](#)

[CLHO](#)

[Exec Committee & Coalition Minutes](#)

Top Priority: Public Health Community Outreach & Education

(Editor's Note: This edition of the Oregon Public Health Connection takes a look back at various successful public health community outreach and education efforts conducted at the state and county levels in the past year. The issue includes a few of the many highlights of 2008 in this area, as submitted by programs and local officials.)



Area children participate in the White Rose Educational Fund's "National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day" Art Contest.

Oregon Office of Multicultural Health

The Oregon Office of Multicultural Health (OMH) has participated, facilitated, and collaborated with various public health offices and community-based organizations on training and conferences, community and media events, and data collection and analysis.

OMH financially supported Josiah Hill III Clinic in 2007 and 2008. The clinic's mission is to protect children from environmental hazards and promote community action for healthy homes. Clinic work is targeted towards underserved communities in order to remove barriers to care and reduce health disparities. OMH was a sponsor for their first and second annual events. OMH's support directly impacts the organization as it works with community leaders to identify and reduce environmental hazards (such as lead, mold, and household chemicals) to create healthier environments for children.



National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Contest draws a large number of participants from throughout the Portland metro area.

OMH continually seeks underrepresented groups such as rural Pacific Islander communities, urban refugee populations, and senior citizens of color to learn about health concerns and devise innovative strategies to address ethnic-specific health disparities.

In June 2008, OMH staff participated in a videoconference with the states of Hawaii and Arkansas to discuss health and social service access concerns of the Marshallese, and other Micronesians in each of the three states. The conversation led to proposed changes by state policymakers and further outreach to Micronesian communities in eastern Oregon, Marion County, and other parts of the state.



Somali Women's Support Group Sewing Circle. (Photos courtesy OMH and Multnomah County HD)

OMH continues to focus on the six health disparity areas prioritized by the Governor's Task Force on Racial and Ethnic Health. The final report (1999) listed the following priorities: access to health and mental health care, HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, diabetes, asthma, and lead poisoning.

continued on page 4

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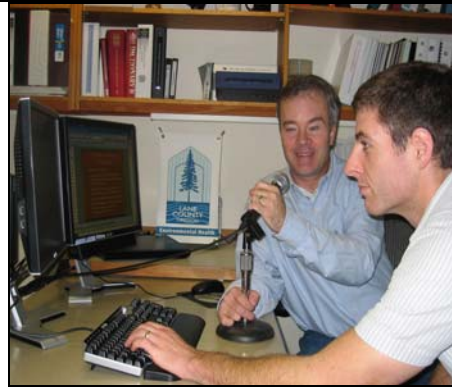
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County Outreach & Education Best Practices: Lane, Clackamas, Washington, Multnomah, Hood River



Lane County Environmental Health Specialists Jeff Birdsall and Zach Manning present statewide Norovirus webinar to long-term care providers. (Photo courtesy Lane County Environmental Health.)



Michael and Karen Girard celebrate Oregon's Smokefree Workplace Law at a salsa-dancing event. (Photo courtesy Clackamas County Health Department.)



Hood River County begins Environmental Health Food Safety Merit Recognition Incentive Program. (Photo courtesy Oregon State Archives.)

Lane County Public Health Presents Statewide Environmental Webinar

Lane County Environmental Health recently presented a statewide webinar in conjunction with the Oregon Health Care Association (OCHA). "Norovirus in Community Care Facilities – 'Tis the Season" was presented by Lane County Environmental Health Specialists Jeff Birdsall and Zach Manning. OCHA Director of Education, Melodie King, provided the link for the webinar and health care workers from around the state registered to participate in the web presentation that covered assessment and control of the virus, outbreak investigation, prevention and outbreak abatement. The frequency of Norovirus outbreaks has been shown to increase significantly during the winter months. Lane County is looking forward to providing webinar presentations in the future. For more information contact Lane County Environmental Health at 541-682-4480.

Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties celebrate Smokefree Workplaces

Partygoers in the Portland metro area had a unique opportunity to ring in the New Year. Aztec Willies in NE Portland hosted salsa dancing to celebrate Oregon's Smokefree Workplace Law that went into effect on January 1, 2009. The law protects nearly every Oregon employee from the health risks of secondhand smoke. The celebration was the culmination of several months of collaboration between the Tobacco Prevention and Education Programs in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties and the Oregon Human Development Corporation. In 2008, they focused on preparing business owners and the public for the new law. Among other efforts, the group recruited champions from the community to help promote the smokefree event. For more information, contact Erin Nortrup, Clackamas County Health Division, 503-742-5382

Hood River County Environmental Health Food Safety Merit Recognition Incentives

The Hood River County Health Department wants to recognize food establishments in its community that lead the way in food safety. Food establishments that earn a food inspection score of 95 or greater on their Oregon State Facility Inspection Report will be presented with a Certificate of Recognition for exceptional food safety compliance. To honor that accomplishment, the establishment will be presented with a certificate that can be proudly displayed and be acknowledged through public announcement in the local newspaper, on the radio and through the chamber of commerce. With proper food handling practices, food handlers can significantly reduce the spread of serious infectious diseases such as Norovirus (Norwalk), Hepatitis A, Salmonella, and E. coli.

Hood River County Environmental Health developed the program in 2007-2008. After gaining approval from the county commissioners and the Foodborne Illness Prevention Program staff, it was rolled out in July of 2008. We invited those that scored 100 on their last semiannual inspection to be presented with the first certificates of recognition. We worked with the local media to recognize all facilities that scored 95 or better. In January of 2009 the list grew to include 34 facilities with 11 scoring 100 and 18 scoring 96 to 99. Several facilities improved their scores dramatically. We have had a very positive response from the general public and have the list posted at: <http://www.co.hood-river.or.us/> For a copy of the brochure see: [Hood River Brochure](#) For more information, contact Hood River County Environmental Health, 541-387-6885.

PH: In the News

Southern Oregon Schools Face Serious Nursing Shortage (Medford, OR.) – Oregon ranks 49th out of 50 when it comes to the ratio of school nurses to students, according to statistics compiled by the National Association of School Nurses. (Courtesy KDRV, Medford, OR.)

Area Agencies Brace for Budget Cuts (Ontario, OR) – Local social service agencies are hoping for the best and bracing for the worst as they wait for legislative action in Oregon on state agency budgets that fund local social service programs, from mental health to local health and senior services. (Courtesy Argus Observer, Ontario, OR.)

Declining Oral Health Hits Home for Everyone (Curry County) – An Oregon Department of Human Services report says that a majority of people – regardless of income, race, age or gender – suffer from oral disease in what has been coined “Oregon’s Silent Epidemic.” (Courtesy South County Spotlight, Curry County, OR.)

U.S. Doctors pay to hear Oregon town’s vaccine views (Ashland, OR.) – There are so many parents in this free-spirited, unconventional small town who won’t get their kids vaccinated that federal researchers are paying money just to hear their side of things. (Courtesy the Associated Press, Oregon.)

Partner Links

[Oregon Department of Education](#)
January 2009 News

[History of Migrant Health](#)
[Honoring the Hands](#)

Public Health across the State: Community Outreach & Education



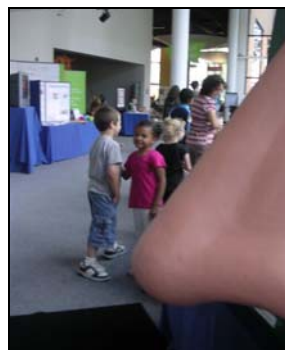
Tawana Nichols, Oregon Medical Marijuana Program testifies before the Governor’s Council on Alcohol and Drugs, 2008. (Photo courtesy Office of Community Health and Health Planning.)



Public Health Emergency Preparedness sponsors a Mass Fatalities State Plan Seminar and Tabletop Exercise, one of many various types of education events throughout the year. (Photo courtesy PHEP.)



Oregon WIC Listens has unexpected side effects for Clatsop County WIC staff Tory Sutherland (left) with Yami Garcia. (Photo courtesy Oregon WIC.)



OPHSI estimated that approximately 14,510 children and families visited the Oregon Public Health Division outreach event in August 2008. (Photo courtesy OPHD Community Outreach & Education.)

Oregon Medical Marijuana Program

In August 2008, Oregon Medical Marijuana Program (OMMP) manager Tawana Nichols gave a presentation to the Governor’s Council on Alcohol and Drugs, providing program statistics and clearing up various misconceptions about the role of the OMMP in relation to the use of marijuana as medicine. The OMMP has also reached out to several state law enforcement agencies and District Attorneys, providing them with powerpoint presentations to help educate law enforcement officers and attorneys on the Oregon Revised Statutes and Administrative Rules related to the Oregon Medical Marijuana Act as well as to identify the changes of SB 161. She also attended the 7th annual Oregon Medical Cannabis Awards in late 2008 where she recognized lawyers, physicians, and advocates committed to preserving and protecting Oregon’s medical marijuana law.

For more information, contact Tawana Nichols, OMMP, 971-673-1339

Public Health Emergency Preparedness

Among numerous outreach and education events throughout the year, Public Health Emergency Preparedness, Oregon Public Health Division, in collaboration with the Northwest Center for Public Health Practice, sponsored a three-day Oregon public health Workforce Development Conference in 2008. Tracks included Intermediate Epidemiology Concepts, attended by 41 staff; Leadership, Development Skills, Styles and Attitudes, attending by 54 staff; Program Planning and Evaluation, attended by 55 staff; and Building Effective Teams and Cross Agency Collaboration, attended by 57 staff. The conference was well received and will be provided again in 2009. For more information, contact the DHS Learning Center.

Oregon WIC is Listening

The Oregon WIC program is halfway through a statewide launch of a new participant-centered counseling approach called *Oregon WIC Listens*, inspired by a national initiative to make WIC counseling and nutrition education more effective. This evidence-based approach puts WIC families in the driver’s seat as they determine what behavior changes will work best for them.

In 2008, the following WIC sites and counties were trained in this participant-centered approach: Clatsop, Washington, Lane, Curry, Coos, Douglas, Jackson, Josephine, Baker, Umatilla/Morrow Head Start, Confederated Tribes of Umatilla, Union, Wallowa, Grant, Malheur, and Harney. The rest of the Oregon WIC sites will be completely trained in 2009. This new counseling approach helps WIC advance its mission of improving lifelong health and nutrition of Oregon families. See: www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/wic/orwl.shtml

Public Health Division Community Outreach & Education: Displays, Events, Conferences 2008

Coordination of public health outreach through the Oregon Public Health Division reached more than 24,860 persons statewide in 2008 who attended events, conferences, or displays where the Oregon Public Health Division was represented. Displays were used in 27 different venues throughout the state last year, including those instances where program staff checked out the exhibit for their own specific program uses. Approximately 12,417 public health materials were distributed at various events and conferences as a part of this outreach. An electronic survey was also taken to obtain input from those attending these events where Public Health was represented. Approximately 86% of respondents surveyed indicated that they learned something new about public health from the OPHD display/presentations.

For more information contact OPHD Community Outreach & Education Coordinator Trish Neiwirth, 971-673-0206

PH Calendar

JANUARY 2009

Arthritis Trainings

The Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program and Aquatic Program trainings will be held January – June in Portland, Eugene, Salem, Baker City, and Ashland. The training certifies instructors to lead exercises that increase joint flexibility and range of motion. Scholarships are available. To register, contact April Rautio, 971-673-2283, april.l.rautio@state.or.us

FEBRUARY 2009

21st Century Public Health Practices and Priorities

A view from an urban health director, David Fleming, MD, Director and Health Officer, Public Health – Seattle and King County, Feb. 17, noon – 1 p.m. This is part of Hot Topics in Preparedness, an online forum sponsored by the Northwest Center for Public Health Practice. Registration is required.

MARCH 2009

Living Well Forum

The Living Well Annual Forum is March 5, 2009 in Bend, OR. Living Well with Chronic Conditions is a peer-led evidence-based health promotion program for people with chronic conditions and the annual forum brings together organizations interested in or offering these programs in local communities. The forum is for individuals and organizations currently involved in the chronic disease self-management program and for those that are interested in the program. Contact Cara Biddlecom, 971-673-2284, cara.m.biddlecom@state.or.us

Facing Ethical Challenges

Dealing with outcomes – stories from the field, presented by Harvey Kayman, MD, MPH, Public Health Medical Officer III, California Department of Public Health, March 17, noon – 1 p.m. This is part of Hot Topics in Preparedness, an online forum sponsored by the Northwest Center for Public Health Practice. Registration is required.

Oregon Office of Multicultural Health Community Outreach Highlights, cont. from pg. 1

OMH has also made significant progress in the implementation of its Health Care Interpreter (HCI) Certification program. During the reporting period, OMH has accomplished the following:

- Created a HCI registry with a state-certified licensing software;
- Working with a vendor to develop exams in Vietnamese and Russian to test oral proficiency;
- Researched the business and legal case for the need of qualified and certified medical interpreters;
- Updated the Health Care Interpreter Council;
- Developed HCI registry application form, informational pamphlet, posters and other materials.

OMH provided mini-grants to non-traditional community-based organizations in the Portland-metropolitan area that serve racial and ethnic communities. The original intent was to focus on statewide outreach; however, due to limited staff resources, strategies were shifted to support urban-area organizations. All mini-grant awardees were required to submit a final report of their project, sample materials produced with grant monies, and demographic sheet summary of events participants. A summary of each organization activities are as follows:

- **Oregon Somali Family Education Center:** Provided coordination of Somali community members residing in Washington County, participating in a health needs assessment focus group. Ten men and ten woman participants provided demographic information about their health concerns, barriers to health access, insurance status, employment and other information.
- **White Rose Education Fund:** The fund presented their 2008 National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Art Contest to which there were more than 300 participants. This event increased the participant's awareness of the impact of HIV/Aids in the African American/Black community; promoted understanding of how to reduce risks; and increased access to HIV/AIDS prevention, education, and testing and care services in Portland's tri-county area. Many people spoke of how surprised they were of the impact of HIV/AIDS in their neighborhood.
- **Korean American Senior Citizens Society of Oregon:** Roughly 100 Korean senior citizens convened at the annual community event that included health and wellness activities. The event also addressed isolation, cultural and language barriers, and transportation issues that can affect immigrant, limited-English proficient individuals. The organization also translated OMH's demographic survey into Korean as a resource to be used by others.

For more information, contact Deon Johnson, Acting Administrator, or Alexis M. Asihene, Office of Multicultural Health & Services, 971-673-1283

Continuing Education Hours Available for Public Health Courses

Start the new year by doing something special for yourself! Further your professional development in Epidemiology, Communicable Disease and Outbreak investigations. Earn Continuing Education contact hours (CEs) with two new online courses. Learn new skills and refresh your current skills. The courses are free and available anytime anywhere. You receive a certificate of completion. Courses are open to all public health professionals and partners.

How do I Register?

Log onto the DHS Learning Center (LC) at <https://dhslearn.hr.state.or.us>



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