

Ingham County Board of Health

Administration, PO Box 30161, Lansing, Michigan 48909-7661 Telephone: (517) 887-4475

Priority Focus Areas for 2016 – 2018

Approved November 2015

Members of the Board of Health

Chairperson Molly Polverento, M.S.Ed., CPH, *Chairperson Pro Tem* Martha Adams, *Vice Chairperson* Christina Dokter, Ph.D., Carol Callaghan, Denise Chrysler, J.D., Denae Friedheim, Nigel Paneth, M.D., M.P.H., Maurice Reizen, M.D., M.S.P.H., Saturnino Rodriguez, Ph.D., and Garry Rowe, R.S.

Background

The Ingham County Board of Health (BOH) is charged by the Ingham County Board of Commissioners (BOC) to represent the interests of the people of Ingham County in the consideration of issues related to public health. The BOH is an Advisory Board to both the BOC and the Ingham County Health Department (ICHD). Their role is to raise issues of concern in the community to the ICHD and BOC, to advocate for policies which can improve the health of Ingham County residents, and to use the expertise of BOH members to further the goals of the BOC, ICHD, and BOH.

In carrying out this charge, the BOH endeavors to communicate with the BOC on its work and to assist the BOC in the formulation of its health priorities. The BOH also reviews and develops recommendations on specific health concerns, at the request of the BOC or the Health Department. Specific actions that might be taken by the BOH include: participating in a press conference (in collaboration with the ICHD and the BOC) to provide information to the public on the topic; recognizing organizations and individuals that advance BOH priorities; writing letters to elected representatives; and testimony to the BOC.

In 2012, the BOH engaged in a dialogue to identify its priority areas for the next two years, including a review of the 2006 BOH Priority Areas and the 2009 BOH Work plan. The result of this work was the 2012-2014 Priority Areas, which was approved by the BOH membership. The approved Priority Areas guided the work of the Board through 2014, when it was determined that they should be reviewed and updated. The BOH worked throughout 2015 to update its Priority Areas and to align them with the structure of the ICHD to facilitate action related to BOH goals.

For each priority area, the board engaged in the following to determine BOH goals:

- Reviewed available information on the issue
- Reviewed what is currently being done by the ICHD to address the issue
- Met with ICHD leadership to identify gaps in current activities related to the issue
- Considered possible actions the BOH could take

PRIORITY AREAS

The BOH has updated its priority focus areas for its work over 2016 – 2018 to align with the Divisions within ICHD. The priority areas and the rationale for their selection are presented below. For all priority areas, the BOH will seek to work collaboratively with ICHD staff and leaders to share information on the identified topics and on opportunities to promote policies or programs that will make a positive difference in Ingham County. For all priority areas, the BOH will be guided by the principles of Health Equity and Health in All Policies. All positions taken by the BOH will be based on community data and will incorporate evidence-based public health practices.

- **MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH**

The Board of Health will examine the factors that influence the health and wellbeing of the moms and kids of Ingham County, such as access to comprehensive prenatal care and pediatric care and the availability of services to support healthy choices by mothers for themselves, their partners, and their children.

Goal 1: Support ICHD efforts to reduce barriers to early and appropriate prenatal care

Activities: 1) Review current ICHD data regarding the percentage of pregnant women not receiving adequate prenatal care, 2) Review current community efforts to facilitate access to appropriate prenatal care, 3) Support ICHD in identifying evidence-based interventions to help increase access and use of prenatal care, and 4) Identify community partners to help implement evidence-based interventions.

Goal 2: Advocate for policies and programs to reduce preventable perinatal deaths

Activities: 1) Advocate for needed resources (including staff) to implement a Fetal-Infant Mortality review process, and 2) Help ICHD disseminate findings of Fetal-Infant Mortality review to the community.

Goal 3: Support ICHD efforts to improve maternal and infant immunization rates

Activities: 1) Regularly review immunization data from ICHD to identify populations in need, 2) Promote ICHD immunization activities and resources to community partners, and 3) Identify key community messengers who can aid in disseminating information from ICHD to encourage maternal and infant immunizations.

- **HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION**

The Board of Health will look learn more about community and ICHD programs aimed at improving the overall health of Ingham County and preventing chronic diseases in our community. These include efforts to increase access to healthy foods and physical activity, as well as access to appropriate and timely health care.

Goal 1: The BOH will promote ICHD health literacy events to their community connections.

Activities: 1) Each BOH member will distribute at least 10 flyers for each event throughout the community; 2) Each BOH member will share information about events through social media accounts and/or emailing their local networks

Goal 2: The BOH will assist ICHD staff in efforts to increase knowledge about local healthy food resources

Activities: 1) The BOH will complete GIS mapping project on healthy food access in Ingham County; 2) The BOH will advise the ICHD on application of GIS project findings to healthy food access activities; and 3) The BOH will help disseminate information prepared by ICHD related to healthy food resources to community networks.

- **ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH**

The Bureau of Environmental Health is mandated by the Michigan Public Health Code to prevent disease and protect human health through the prevention and control of environmental health hazards. The Board of Health will explore these issues through collaborative work with the Environmental Health staff.

Goal 1: Promote education and culture change to reduce smoking in multiple family dwellings.

Activities: 1) With ICHD staff identify existing education and outreach literature, 2) Provide model language for rental/lease agreements, 3) Monitor legislation about tobacco control and e-cigarettes, and 4) Advocate for policies which promote smoking reduction in multiple family dwellings.

Goal 2: Incorporate Health-in-All policies & climate change issues for the elderly.

Activities: 1) Research what other counties and cities are doing, and 2) Report back with 3 to 5 policy statements

Goal 3: Support ICHD in establishing hazardous waste collection that is available year-round

Activities: 1) Determine the right number and the strategic locations for waste collection, 2) Identify community partners, 3) Investigate how other cities are doing it, 4) Find sources of financial support collection activities, and 5) Advocate for BOH's support for the program

- **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE PREVENTION**

Communicable diseases remain a concern in Ingham County and are a focus for the ICHD. The BOH will work with ICHD to examine how we can support efforts to reduce communicable disease rates and provide better care for individuals in Ingham County.

Goal 1: Advocate for changes in policies which create barriers to STI and HIV/AIDS screening and treatment

Activities: 1) With ICHD staff, Identify existing policies which discourage testing and treatment, 2) Meet with Ingham County legislators to inform them of barriers, 3) Work with Ingham County legislative staff to monitor legislation related to STI and HIV/AIDS testing and treatment, and 4) Advocate for policies which facilitate testing and treatment.

Goal 2: Promote ICHD adolescent and adult vaccination activities

Activities: 1) Help connect the ICHD to community partners who can promote adolescent and adult vaccinations, and 2) Disseminate educational materials from ICHD to non-traditional partners to promote vaccinations.