

# THE ADVOCATE

WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE HEALTH HAPPEN.



Oregon Public Health Association

SUMMER 2010

## Population health is the focus of the Oregon Health Improvement Plan

*Submitted by Andrew Epstein*

The Oregon Health Improvement Plan Committee was formed in February 2010 and functions under the direction of the Oregon Health Policy Board, a nine-member governor-appointed Board. The Board provides guidance to the Oregon Health Authority (OHA), a new state agency created by the 2009 legislature as part of a reorganization of the Oregon Department of Human Services ([www.oregon.gov/oha](http://www.oregon.gov/oha)).

OHA will improve the lifelong health of all Oregonians; increase the quality, reliability and availability of care for all Oregonians; and lower or contain the costs of care so it's affordable to everyone.

The Health Improvement Plan Committee has been charged with creating an action plan to improve the lifelong health of all Oregonians, where they live, work, learn and play. It's about preventing chronic diseases, avoiding obesity and making healthy choices. It's about promoting and supporting population health through policy, systems and



environmental approaches at the statewide and community levels.

The Health Improvement Plan Committee is currently gathering input from stakeholders and community members throughout the state. A final plan is due to the Board in October. To find out more about the plan, view meeting materials, and obtain meeting dates and locations, please visit the Health Improvement Plan Web site at: [www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/hpcdp/hip/index.shtml](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/hpcdp/hip/index.shtml)

On the Web site you may also sign up for e-subscribe which will enable you to receive updates whenever new information is posted.

**OPHA Annual Meeting**  
**October 18-19, 2010**  
**Corvallis, Oregon**

Call for  
proposals through June 30.  
Submit online.

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[www.oregonpublichealth.org](http://www.oregonpublichealth.org)

## SECTION UPDATES

### OPHA Nursing Section advocates for home visitation programs

The OPHA Nursing Section successfully advocated support for national health care reform that will fund proven, evidence-based nurse home visitation programs. In January 2010, as national health care reform options were being discussed, the Nursing Section sent an action alert to OPHA members. The alert encouraged members to contact their representatives in Congress and urge them to support two key provisions related to home visitation programs. Evidence shows these programs produce substantial and lasting improvements to pregnancy and birth outcomes, child health and development, and the economic self-sufficiency of families.

The original House version of the health care reform legislation included two key provisions related to home visitation programs. The first was a grant program for states. The second was a nurse home visitation Medicaid option to simplify existing Medicaid coverage of this service. When the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act was signed into law in March, it did not include the change to Medicaid but it did include the state grant program. The Home Visitation Grant Program has designated \$1.5 billion that will be available to states starting this fiscal year.

To obtain a grant, states must assess both their need for such programs and their capacity to provide them. Funded programs will be required to provide evidence that they meet specific benchmarks during the five-year grant period. Benchmarks include measures of maternal and child health and development, school readiness and economic sufficiency. Additional measures include reductions in child abuse and neglect, juvenile delinquency, and health and educational disparities.

“The legislation is a dream come true,” said

a public health nurse in Oregon. “I have dedicated my career to maternal child health home visiting services and it’s extremely exciting to see that the benefits of this work are being recognized at the federal level.”

Thank you to all of the OPHA members who contributed to this advocacy effort. The Nursing Section will monitor the finalization of the grant program and keep OPHA members informed about its implementation in Oregon. Contact Dianna Pickett, Nursing Section Chair at [dianna.l.pickett@state.or.us](mailto:dianna.l.pickett@state.or.us) with questions about the grant program or other Nursing Section initiatives.

### President’s corner

Last issue of the Advocate I addressed the problem that we are living longer with a higher prevalence of chronic diseases which result in higher health costs. I offered the



hope that Congress would adopt a plan for reform, and invited OPHA members to suggest preventive strategies that OPHA should advocate. I’ve received no suggestions, but Congress did pass a health reform bill, likely to be one of the most transforming effects on our health care system many of us are likely to see in our lifetime. That legislation has the capability to incorporate more preventive activities into both individual health care and public health systems as it rolls out over the next four years, provided it is implemented as now written.

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## Introducing Best Bones Forever!

A fresh and fun bone health campaign for girls

*Submitted by Talia T. Thomson for the DHHS Office on Women's Health*

Osteoporosis is a pediatric disease with geriatric consequences. In terms of bone health, the stage is set early on: girls build close to 90% of their bone mass by age 18. Once they reach adulthood, it becomes increasingly difficult for them to make it up. Unfortunately, most adolescent girls do not get the calcium, vitamin D and physical activity they need to grow strong, healthy bones.

That's why the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office on Women's Health (OWH) launched Best Bones Forever!, a national bone health campaign for girls ages 9-14. Best Bones Forever! focuses on friendship and fun, and encourages girls to "grow strong together, stay strong forever."



The new campaign empowers girls and their BFFs (best friend forever) to build strong bones by choosing snacks and foods with calcium and vitamin D, and getting an hour of physical activity a day.

Campaign materials such as journals, posters, magnets, tattoos, book covers and a Web site ([www.bestbonesforever.gov](http://www.bestbonesforever.gov)) get girls excited about growing healthy bones! Parents can get important bone health information from a brochure in both English and Spanish, and a Web site ([www.bestbonesforever.gov/parents](http://www.bestbonesforever.gov/parents)).

Help make an impact by encouraging girls and their parents to make bone health a priority. If you are interested in ordering our free Best Bones Forever! materials, contact Talia at [OWH@hagerssharp.com](mailto:OWH@hagerssharp.com).

## President's corner

*Continued from page 2*

All of us need to pay attention to the opportunities as they become available to be sure the provisions of this new law are implemented in such a way that they are evidence-based, sustainable and socially just. That said, health care costs will likely still remain an unacceptable drain on our gross national product. We need some additional strategies to attain some relief from the economic drain of preventable diseases.

Placing a higher national priority on prevention research is another strategy that may now be possible given the impetus generated by the new health care reform law. Already federal funding agencies are setting up extramural funding for more prevention research, as well as wider implementation. The new research strategy may take longer to accomplish an effect, both in reduced morbidity and cost savings, but it is necessary if we are ever to reduce the toll from chronic diseases.

Some of the actions we can take through our legislature can provide important leverage points to reduce those exposures, habits and choices in our population that predispose to higher medical costs and higher disease prevalence. Now is the time to have a conversation about what those legislative actions might be.

Please provide your suggestions for positions OPHA should support, as we work for a healthier population and economy. Send your ideas to me, care of The Advocate, at [editor@oregonpublichealth.org](mailto:editor@oregonpublichealth.org).

## Upcoming Events

Get the complete listing on the OPHA [Events Web page](#).

**Date:** October 18-19, 2010

**Event:** OPHA Annual Conference

**Location:** La Sells Stewart Center, Corvallis, OR

**Details:** Planning is underway for OPHA's annual meeting and conference. If you have questions about submitting an abstract for consideration, or would like information on sponsoring the conference, please contact committee chairs [Charlie Fautin](#) and [S. Marie Harvey](#).

Call for proposals open through June 30. [Submit proposal online](#).

**Date:** November 6-10, 2010

**Event:** American Public Health Association Annual Meeting

**Location:** Denver, CO

**Details:** The APHA Annual Meeting & Exposition is the premier national Public Health Educational Forum! Learn from the experts in the field, hear about cutting edge research and exceptional best practices, discover the latest public health products and services, and share your public health experience with your peers. The theme for 2010 is "Social Justice: A Public Health Imperative."

For more information: [www.apha.org/meetings](http://www.apha.org/meetings)



# THE ADVOCATE

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## Submissions

We invite you to send stories, news and graphics by submission deadlines:

ISSUE	DEADLINE	PUBLICATION
Fall	Aug 21	September
Winter	Nov 21	December
Spring	Feb 21	March
Summer	May 21	June

*Authors' views and editorial content in this newsletter are not necessarily endorsed by OPHA.*



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