

State of Illinois
Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Department of Public Health
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Reaching Illinois Women

Fiscal Year 2006 Accomplishments

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Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich

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Reaching Illinois women is at the core of every activity conducted by the Illinois Department of Public Health's Office of Women's Health (OWH). The office was established in 1997 to accomplish a three-fold mission: 1) to improve the health of Illinois women and girls by initiating, facilitating and coordinating women's health awareness, education and programming throughout the state; 2) to encourage healthier lifestyles among women; and 3) to promote equitable public policy on health issues that affect women today and in the future.

In fiscal year 2006, the OWH spent approximately \$11.9 million, including \$6.2 million in federal and \$5.7 million in state funding. The funding made it possible for the OWH to reach nearly 40,000 women across Illinois through specialized community health services, information and education, research, partnerships, new laws and policies.

Reaching Women Through Community Health Services

Women in every county have access to the Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Program (IBCCP), due to a federal award of \$5.3 million and \$2 million in state funding. The OWH contracts with 26 lead agencies that work with more than 2,300 providers to offer free mammograms, breast exams, Pap tests and pelvic exams to low-income women between the ages of 35 and 64 who have no health insurance, as well as, younger women who have an abnormal finding. The implementation of the state's Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act in July 2001 allowed women enrolled in the program who are diagnosed with breast or cervical cancer to receive treatment benefits through the Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (IDHFS).

In May 2006, Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich announced the expansion of the IBCCP. The expansion changes the income threshold from 200 percent to 250 percent of the federal poverty level. The expansion also allows providers outside of the IBCCP to refer clients for treatment through the Illinois Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Act; thus, women who meet IBCCP eligibility criteria may receive free treatment even if they were not previously enrolled in the program.

A program that builds on the IBCCP is the WISEWOMAN (Well-Integrated Screening and Evaluation for Women Across the Nation) Program, funded by a \$1 million renewable grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In fiscal years 2004 and 2005, four demonstration sites became operational. The research program screens existing clients in IBCCP for cardiovascular risk, and then determines the success of the intervention option, which is a 12-week physical activity and nutrition curriculum.

Fiscal Year 2006 Major Accomplishments

- Nearly 17,300 women, 48 percent of whom are minorities, received free screenings through IBCCP. The screenings identified 164 new breast cancers, 12 cervical cancers and 174 pre-cancerous cervical conditions. A total of 292 women were referred to IDHFS for treatment, and 273 were found eligible for enrollment in Medicaid under that agency's treatment program. Since the Treatment Act took effect Aug. 1, 2001, 1,211 women have been approved for services. Currently, there are 415 women identified through the IBCCP who are receiving treatment under this program. As a result of the Governor's expansion announced in May 2006, the IBCCP is expected to screen more than 21,000 women in FY07, and more than 800 women are projected to receive treatment.
- During fiscal year 2006, the Department's Center for Minority Health Services' Illinois Communities of Color Breast and Cervical Cancer Initiative provided women with more than 19,600 screenings and reached more than 263,300 women with educational information. This initiative includes Stand Against Cancer and the Hispanic Breast and Cervical Cancer Program. These programs work in collaboration with community- and faith-based organizations and local health departments to provide outreach, education, and screenings, and to support a comprehensive provider network that provides appropriate follow-up services. For fiscal year 2007, Gov. Blagojevich allocated \$4.2 million for the Illinois Communities of Color Breast and Cervical Cancer Initiative.
- The Cervical Cancer Elimination Task Force, created in 2004 by legislation signed by Gov. Blagojevich, submitted an annual report to the Governor and General Assembly on April 1, 2006. When additional information became available about the human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, the task force met several times to develop a recommendation about the use of the HPV vaccine. This recommendation was published in October 2006 as an addendum to the annual report. The recommendation mirrored the National Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' recommendation that the vaccine be given to females ages 11 to 12, and at the discretion of doctors, be administered as early as age 9. They also recommend that women ages 13 to 26 who have not been vaccinated receive "catch up" vaccinations. In its addendum, the task force stated that mandating the vaccination for all female school children in Illinois was premature; however, the task force will continue to revisit this issue. At this time, the task force is promoting the development of a statewide communications plan to increase awareness of cervical cancer prevention. Secondly, the task force seeks to ensure that Illinois develops an HPV vaccine policy guaranteeing access to all, including consideration of legislation mandating the vaccine once issues of access and availability are fully explored. The next task force report will be issued April 1, 2008.
- The IBCCP collaborated with Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, Northwestern University's Robert H. Lurie Cancer Center and the University of

Illinois at Rockford School of Medicine to provide conferences and other professional education opportunities for 750 providers and nurses.

- Medical advisors for IBCCP met with staff twice during the year to advise and counsel on outstanding breast and cervical issues that are pertinent to the program. Protocols and guidelines were reviewed to ensure the program follows the most current guidelines. A recent advisement recommended the approval of a program policy that states if a woman has had three negative Pap tests in a five-year period she could then be screened every three years thereafter.
- The IBCCP uses the state's Cornerstone data system to track its clients. Cornerstone training programs are offered to the 26 lead agencies four times per year, twice in Chicago and twice in Springfield.
- The IBCCP Policy and Procedure Manual was completely revised during the year. New policies from CDC were included, as well as a journal article related to the most current guidelines for the diagnosis and follow-up of women with breast or cervical cancer. All forms used by the lead agencies were revised and included in the manual. A two-day training session for all agency personnel was held to reinforce the revisions.
- The Illinois WISEWOMAN Program is a cardiovascular research program for low-income, uninsured women between the ages of 40-64 in the select IBCCP Lead Agencies of DuPage, Fulton and Stephenson county health departments, and St. Mary's Hospital in Centralia, Ill., and the newly added demonstration site, Mercy Hospital in Chicago. These five sites cover 21 counties across the state of Illinois.
- The staff at the DuPage County Health Department completed the two-year rescreens for the pilot participants in January 2006. Of the 58 pilot participants that received a baseline screening in December 2003, 28 participants returned for the two-year rescreening. The conclusion of the pilot two-year rescreening period signifies the completion of the pilot implementation and no further Illinois WISEWOMAN Program services will be offered to the pilot participants.
- Prior to the conclusion of the pilot intervention, the Illinois WISEWOMAN Program incorporated significant revisions to the piloted intervention curriculum materials, the facilitators' approach, and the follow-up timeline. The changes to the curriculum were based upon participant and facilitator evaluations and the Illinois WISEWOMAN Program team's input from the piloted sessions.
- During FY06, the Illinois WISEWOMAN Program held two enrollment and screening cycles. The recruitment cycles consist of a baseline screening, a medical referral to a health care provider if needed, the randomization process, and the 12-week intervention sessions. The Illinois WISEWOMAN Program

provided free cholesterol, blood pressure and blood glucose screenings to 390 newly-enrolled WISEWOMAN participants.

- The Illinois WISEWOMAN Program Pharmaceutical Assistance Program, which helps program participants find access to free medication, has 20 participants.
- Illinois WISEWOMAN Program staff recruited five additional medical providers to serve as Illinois WISEWOMAN Program medical advisors, which brings the total number of medical advisors to nine.

Reaching Women Through Information and Education

The OWH offered a variety of information and education programs, including the Women's Health Initiative (WHI) grant program. In fiscal year 2006, the program awarded \$1.6 million in state funding to 77 agencies, including local health departments, schools and other not-for-profit and community agencies. Approximately 30 percent of the grantees primarily target minority populations, meaning that a majority of their participants are African American, Hispanic, Asian or European.

Specific WHI grant programs are: 1) Heart Smart for Women, a 12-week community-based program designed to change behavior while promoting the benefits of exercise and better nutrition; 2) Heart Smart for Teens, a nine-week curriculum geared toward school-age girls; 3) Building Better Bones, which provides women with education, risk assessment and bone density screening for osteoporosis; 4) Understanding Menopause, a program to help women understand perimenopause and menopause and related health issues; and 5) the Eating Disorder Professional Education program, which helps adults who work with young women and girls to understand and recognize disordered eating patterns and to refer those at risk.

The office also awarded separate mini-grants, totaling \$15,000, to five local health departments that conducted the Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program.

Fiscal Year 2006 Accomplishments

- **Total Community Grants**
More than 10,000 women participated in the educational sessions made possible by Women's Health Initiative grant and mini-grant programs offered through the office. Forty percent of grant participants were minority women.
- **Heart Smart for Women Grants**
Nearly 2,200 women participated in a 12-week curriculum to reduce cardiovascular risk; more than 60 percent of the participants reported a behavioral change at the conclusion of the series, meaning they had improved their nutrition and/or level of physical activity. In addition, 80 percent of participants reported improved knowledge.
- **Heart Smart for Teen Grants**

More than 3,000 teen girls completed a nine-week curriculum to help promote healthy lifestyles; nearly 70 percent reported improved knowledge and 50 percent reported a change in behavior.

- **Building Better Bones Grants**

Nearly 3,500 women were educated about osteoporosis through sessions held at community and workplace locations. More than 3,400 women were screened for osteoporosis; 1,600 women were identified as moderate or high risk for the disease and were referred to their physician. At a three-month follow-up, approximately 78 percent of moderate- or high-risk women participating in osteoporosis education programs reported a lifestyle change, received treatment or both to reduce their risk of osteoporosis and osteoporotic fractures.

- **Menopause Grants**

Nearly 1,229 women completed a series focusing on menopause and 76 percent reported improved knowledge. In a three-month follow-up survey, 65 percent of the participants reported a behavior change, defined as improved nutrition, improved level of physical activity, beginning hormone replacement therapy or taking dietary supplements, including calcium and soy intake.

- **Eating Disorders Grants**

A total of 338 providers, including health care professionals and educators, attended sessions focusing on eating disorders. Of the 183 attendees who completed the pre- and post-tests, 92 percent reported an increase in knowledge.

- **Mini-Grants**

1. In FY2006, the OWH collaborated with the Office of Health Promotion to fund five local health departments (Edgar, Effingham, Egyptian, Fayette, and Ford-Iroquois) \$3,000 each to implement the Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program. This program, offered by certified instructors in partnership with their local Arthritis Foundation Chapter, is conducted two to three times a week for eight weeks or as an on-going class. The program has four elements: 1) exercise, 2) arthritis, 3) movement activities, and 4) relaxation exercises. Ten certified instructors were trained to teach the classes. The grantees conducted 11 classes reaching 147 women with 45 percent of participants completing the class.

- **Publications**

Quarterly newsletters covered the topics of osteoporosis, special populations and eating disorders. Two quizzes (“Healthy Lifestyle Quiz for Women” and “Healthy Lifestyle Quiz for Women and Girls”) were issued. The OWH distributed numerous brochures covering topics such as osteoporosis, menopause, mental health, eating disorders, nutrition, smoking, alcohol and other drugs, violence, and physical activity. A “Women’s Health Programs” brochure, describing the OWH, its programs and funding opportunities also was published. All publications are

available in both English and Spanish and are posted on the Department's Web site: <www.idph.state.il.us>.

- **Other Workshops/Trainings**

1. In partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)/Region V and the Cook County Commission on Women's Issues, the office coordinated a heart health seminar featuring Dr. Joan Brill at the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago

Special Projects/Events

1. On December 7-8, 2005, more than 300 women health advocates gathered at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Rosemont for the seventh annual Women's Health Conference. The two-day conference, sponsored by IDPH, covered everything from chronic stress, heart health, domestic violence and cultural sensitivity to issues related to HPV and cervical cancer, physical activity, adolescent health, Alzheimer's disease and the latest information on stem cell research. Participants included local health department staff, health professionals and community agencies.
2. First Lady Patti Blagojevich, IDPH, and the American Heart Association teamed up in February to celebrate Women's Healthy Heart Month by encouraging women to take steps to help prevent heart disease, the leading cause of death among women. The event at the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago was held in conjunction with National Wear Red Day and included cooking demonstrations by Chef Jay Hugh McEvoy and fitness demonstrations by the East Bank Club.
3. National Women's Health Week is a nationwide observance that is annually recognized the week following Mother's Day. The purpose of the week observed May 14-20, 2006, is to raise awareness about manageable steps that women can take to improve their health. As part of the 2006 observance, the Department's OWH joined with the DHHS Region V OWH in providing \$500 sponsorship grants to 24 local health departments that conducted health awareness and screening activities.
4. Gov. Blagojevich named the Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center of Mattoon and the Madison County Health Department in Wood River as recipients of the People are Today's Heroes (PATH) Award for their exemplary implementation of programs that educate hundreds of women and girls about cardiovascular disease, nutrition and exercise.

The Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center was honored for their implementation of the Heart Smart for Women program, and the Madison County Health

Department was honored for its success related to the Heart Smart for Teens program.

5. The OWH served on the Fitness Day Committee and hosted an office exhibit at Fitness Day held May 17, 2006. Fitness Day is a health awareness initiative staffed by the Office of Health Promotion to reinforce the health benefits of physical activity for IDPH staff. The day-long event is highlighted with healthy snacks, stress reduction demonstrations, and a mile walk to and from Washington Park.
6. OWH staff assisted with the coordination of the Governor's Pandemic Influenza Summit held March 17, 2006, in Rosemont, Illinois. It was in response to the growing concern over the impact of influenza in Illinois. The summit demonstrated the cooperation between federal, state and local governments in planning for a response to a potential influenza outbreak in Illinois.
7. The OWH served on the committee that coordinated the Health Disparities Conference held May 31, 2006. The Health Disparities Conference was an opportunity for community-based organizations and healthcare practitioners to share practical tools that can help target and address the needs of minority populations.
8. The OWH staffed the IDPH Health Education exhibit at the 2006 Illinois State Fair located in Springfield and the 2006 DuQuoin State Fair located in DuQuoin. The OWH also staffed exhibits at the First Lady's Tent and the Governor's Tent to distribute information on programs impacting Women's Health and, especially, the IBCCP's expansion of the Treatment Act.

Presentations/Displays

The office presented sessions at a variety of health gatherings and exhibited at several health events and conferences that were attended by thousands of people.

Women's Health-Line

More than 2,300 contacts were made to the Department's Women's Health-Line; those contacts resulted in 1,992 referrals and the distribution of 223,555 pieces of educational materials.

Reaching Women Through Research

Administered by the office, the Penny Severns Breast, Cervical and Ovarian Cancer Research Fund (ovarian was added to the fund in fiscal year 2006) provides one-year and multi-year grants to support institutional research projects related to investigating causes, prevention and treatment for breast, cervical and ovarian cancer. Fellowship grants are awarded to individuals with post-doctoral training. The fund is made possible by

contributions made through the Illinois state income tax form. In addition, the fund receives \$200,000 annually from the state's general revenue fund (GRF).

Fiscal Year 2006 Accomplishments

- With \$227,400 in contributions from Illinois taxpayers and \$200,000 from the state, the office funded 11 grants totaling \$588,000. Two of the new grants were fellowship awards totaling \$102,000. The grants were awarded to: Northwestern University (1), Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (1), Southern Illinois University School of Medicine (1), University of Chicago (5), University of Illinois at Chicago (2), and University of Illinois College of Medicine at Rockford (1).
- In FY2006, the General Assembly appropriated \$100,000 in GRF to support ovarian cancer research. The legislation authorized adding ovarian cancer to the fund's name. Fellowship grants totaling \$100,000 were awarded to University of Chicago (1) and Northwestern University (2).

Reaching Women Through Partnerships

The office is a clearinghouse for women's health services, education and information. In this capacity, the office is continually strengthening partnerships with other state agencies, local health departments, the private sector, educational institutions, and local organizations and advocacy groups.

Fiscal Year 2006 Accomplishments

- In 2006, the OWH partnered with the IDHFS to fund Perinatal Depression Crisis Intervention Services. The OWH provided \$20,000 over two years (FY2006 and 2007) to expand the Perinatal Depression Crisis Hotline and development of statewide referral resources.
- The Illinois Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program initiated a meeting of all IDPH programs that focus on heart disease and stroke or related risk factors. This group was named the Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Coordination Committee and the OWH participates to share insight gained from the implementation of the Illinois WISEWOMAN Program, Heart Smart for Women, and Heart Smart for Teens. The committee plans to meet twice a year to share updates and collaborate on projects.
- Staff from the IBCCP met with representatives from the Illinois Foundation for Quality Health Care (IFQHC) to discuss Medicare reimbursement for screening mammography. Information was exchanged regarding the impact of low

reimbursement for screening mammograms on medical providers who accept payment using the Medicare rates.

- A partnership with Maximus Inc. was created to consider reimbursement rates paid by IBCCP for case management services. The agency is striving to encourage consistency across all agencies. Six lead agencies, some with consortia counties, were reviewed in depth and analyzed for their management style and efficiency. The results of the findings are under review and consideration with further planning and implementation expected within the year.
- Ongoing partnerships with the Stand Against Cancer initiative, as well as the Lesbian Community Cancer Project, the Heartwood Center for Body Mind Spirit, and various statewide minority and ethnic groups, make it possible to reach a wide range of community organizations and faith-based groups that provide services and support to women at the grassroots level.
- Partnerships with area agencies on aging, the American Heart Association, the Conference of Women Legislators and the Cook County Commission on Women's Issues help to bring increased visibility to the needs of women across the age span.
- Government partnerships focusing on disease prevention and health promotion have involved DHHS and CDC. State government entities involved in these promotional efforts include the offices within IDPH, IDHFS, and the Illinois departments of Human Services and Aging. Partnerships focused on breast and cervical cancer, cardiovascular disease, fitness, osteoporosis, menopause, eating disorders, diabetes, postpartum depression, tobacco use, and overall disease prevention and health promotion.
- The OWH participates in the Illinois Disability and Health Initiative, which has a partnership with individuals with a disability, disability advocates, health service providers, state and local health agencies, and health advocacy groups. Partners play a vital role in guiding the project's activities, including to: 1) develop a state plan that focuses on the improvement of health of persons with a disability, 2) plan interventions to reduce the health risk of persons with a disability, and 3) develop and disseminate health promotion messages to reduce the personal and health risk factors among persons with a disability. Partnership members are invited to participate in all activities and interventions throughout the year. IDPH staff distributes grant updates to partners quarterly. There are two annual partnership meetings.
- The Illinois Arthritis Initiative Partnership consists of more than 70 members, representing more than 55 agencies, organizations, and academic institutions. The partnership, which includes the OWH, played an extensive role in the development of the first Illinois Arthritis Action Plan, published in 2002. Updates to sections of the plan have been completed in collaboration with members.

Partnership members are invited to participate in all activities and interventions throughout the year. IDPH staff distributes grant updates to partners quarterly. There are two annual partnership meetings.

Reaching Women Through New Laws and Policies

The following laws took effect in FY06. Each directly affects and impacts the lives of Illinois women.

- **Ticket for the Cure.** Public Act 94-0120, which took effect Jan. 1, 2006, created the nation's first lottery ticket dedicated to helping fund breast cancer early detection, education, research, and patient services throughout Illinois. Net revenues from the game are deposited into the Ticket for the Cure Fund for appropriation by the General Assembly to IDPH for the purpose of making grants to not-for-profit institutes and organizations. (see New Funding)
- **Mammograms.** Public Act 94-0121, which took effect June 6, 2005, required coverage of mammograms for women younger than 40 years of age with a family history of breast cancer or risk factors. The mammograms will be done at the age and intervals deemed medically necessary by a woman's health care provider.
- **Ovarian Cancer Surveillance Test.** Public Act 94-0122, which took effect Jan. 1, 2006, required insurance companies to cover surveillance tests for ovarian cancer for insured females who are at risk for ovarian cancer.
- **Breast, Cervical and Ovarian Cancer.** Public Act 94-0119, which took effect Jan. 1, 2006, expanded and renamed the Penny Seaverns Breast and Cervical Cancer Research Fund to include ovarian cancer research.

New Funding

In the FY07 state budget, \$3.9 million appropriation authority was added to support the Ticket for the Cure Fund. On January 9, 2006, a new lottery game called Ticket for the Cure - the nation's first lottery ticket dedicated to helping fund breast cancer early detection, education, research, and patient services throughout the state - was launched. Net revenue from the sale of Ticket for the Cure tickets are deposited into an interest bearing account in the State Treasury called the Ticket for the Cure Fund. The Illinois General Assembly will appropriate this money solely to IDPH, which will award grants to public and private entities in Illinois for the purpose of funding breast cancer research, education and services for breast cancer patients and their families. All grants funded by Ticket for the Cure revenue will be reviewed and approved by a special advisory board called the Ticket for the Cure Board.