

NCPHA E-Newsletter

December 2014

Newsletter from the NC Public Health Association and the NCPHA Public Awareness Committee

From the President

– Lisa Harrison, NCPHA President



The NC Public Health Association (NCPHA) is the leading professional association for people dedicated to promoting and protecting the health and environment of all North Carolinians. We are proud of what we do and who we serve – public health in North Carolina continues a more than 100-year tradition of excellence, service, partnership, and focus on population health. Public health in North Carolina has always embodied the “triple aim” health care everywhere today strives for: high quality care, low cost, and better population health outcomes: *This is public health!*

The public health profession encompasses a wide variety of occupational focus areas and backgrounds – the common thread is that the entire workforce in NC is committed to and passionate about protecting and promoting the public’s health. NCPHA offers a voice to everyone working in public health and also prioritizes the essential service of ensuring a competent public and personal health care workforce. We offer continuing education credits each year to those in nursing, environmental health, social work, health education, epidemiology, medicine, laboratory services, administrative and leadership roles, management support, information technology,

communication, nutrition, dentistry, and a place for all students and researchers of public health regardless of specialty area.

Each year NCPHA hosts educational conferences for learning and enjoying, while earning continuing education credits at the same time. The Spring and Fall Educational Conferences have long been a highlight of NCPHA membership. The Fall conference is a time when public health professionals throughout NC come together for meetings, presentations, discussions, workshops, poster sessions, trade shows, and much more. Wilmington, New Bern, Charlotte, and Asheville have all been the backdrop for NCPHA past conferences. Plan to join us in May, 2015 in New Bern, NC, and in September, 2015, in Winston-Salem, NC.

NCPHA membership options include: Regular Member, Student Member, Life Member (those who have been a member for 25 years are considered life members and benefit from additional privileges), Retired Member, Organizational Member (including 6 NEW members per year), and a range of affordable options. Please consider joining or re-joining NCPHA this year. Now is the perfect time to add your voice to a chorus of other public health advocates. Come join us and help public health lead a new era of population health improvement in NC.

This is public health!
Lisa Harrison
President, NCPHA

**THIS IS PUBLIC
HEALTH.**

thisispublichealth.org

NCPHA Advocacy Committee

The NCPHA Advocacy Committee has begun meeting to develop the 2015 Advocacy Agenda for the organization. Peg O'Connell will serve as chair of the committee again this year and is working with representatives of each section to seek key policy priorities for consideration in 2015. Policy priorities are issues that will be considered by the General Assembly of the Administration in the coming year. This issues can include budget and funding items, changes to public health policy or infrastructure, actions that could impact the environment, and issues pertaining to disease prevention and health promotion—among other things.

Section representatives have been asked to convene their section members, either by phone or email, to determine their key priorities. Sections are then asked to forward their top 2-3 priorities by January 7, and a master list will be proposed to the Advocacy Committee. Members of each section are urged to contact their section representatives with ideas for issues for NCPHA to consider.

After each section determines its priorities, a master list will be created and circulated among the Advocacy Committee members for a vote and creation of a recom-

mended list of priorities for approval by the NCPHA Governing Council by the end of January. The Advocacy Committee will suggest if NCPHA should SUPPORT an issue, OPPOSE an issue, or monitor/track an issue. Depending on the list of policy priorities, it may be appropriate that NCPHA take a leadership role on certain issues.

Once the list of recommendations is approved or amended by Governing Council, an NCPHA Advocacy Agenda will be disseminated to all NCPHA membership, partners, media and policymakers in the early days of the 2015 legislative session.

In addition, the NCPHA Advocacy Committee will host and “Advocacy Agenda” sharing session with other public health partners in February so that organizations who are working on similar issues may find opportunities for collaboration and partnership.

Anyone with questions or ideas on the development of the 2015 advocacy agenda for NCPHA should contact Peg O'Connell at 919-208-5226 or poconnell@fuquaysolutions.com.

2015 State Health Director's Conference



The 2015 State Health Director's Conference will take place January 22-23, 2015 at the North Raleigh Hilton. Hosted by the North Carolina Division of Public Health Director (Penny Slade-Sawyer) and State Health Director (Dr. Robin Cummings), the theme for this year's conference is “Serving the Next Generation.” This annual conference is attended by state and local public health staff from all disciplines, as well as members of public health partner organizations throughout our state. The conference is an excellent opportunity to learn, network, and hear nationally recognized public health experts.

The cost for the conference is \$125/person. For more information, hotel information, and registration, go to: ncpha.memberclicks.net/state-health-director-s-conf.

The 2015 State Health Director's Conference theme will focus on public health efforts around *infants, children, and youth*. Featured sessions include:

- **Infant Mortality:** Joxel Garcia, MD, MBA, Director for the District of Columbia Department of Health
- **Cancer Prevention and Control:** Kurt Ribisl, PhD, Professor of Health Behavior at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health and the Program Leader for Cancer Prevention and Control at the UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center
- **Pediatric Asthma:** Joseph Inglefield, MD, Past President NC Pediatric Asthma Society
- **Child Fatality Prevention Task Force**
- **Youth Suicide Prevention**
- **Teen Pregnancy Prevention**



Holiday Safety & Mental Health Tips

The holidays are an exciting time of year for kids, and to help ensure they have a safe holiday season, here are some tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). For the complete list, go to their [website](#).

Trees

- When purchasing an artificial tree, look for the label “Fire Resistant.”
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness. A fresh tree is green, needles are hard to pull from branches and needles do not break when bent between your fingers. The trunk butt of a fresh tree is sticky with resin, and when tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.
- When setting up a tree at home, place it away from fireplaces, radiators, or portable heaters. Place the tree out of the way of traffic and do not block doorways.

Lights

- Check all tree lights (even if you’ve just purchased them) before hanging them on your tree. Make sure all the bulbs work and that there are no frayed wires, broken sockets or loose connections.
- Never use electric lights on a metallic tree. The tree can become charged with electricity from faulty lights, and a person touching a branch could be [electrocuted](#).
- Some light stands may contain lead in the bulb sockets and wire coating, sometimes in high amounts. Make sure your lights are [out of reach of young children](#) who might try to mouth them, and wash your hands after handling them.

Decorations

- Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose tinsel or artificial icicles of plastic or non-lead metals.
- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Always use non-flammable holders, and place candles where they will not be knocked over.
- In homes with small children, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable. Keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children to prevent them from [swallowing](#) or inhaling small pieces. Avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a young child to eat them.

Food Safety

- [Bacteria](#) are often present in raw foods. Fully cook meats and poultry, and thoroughly wash raw [vegetables and fruits](#).
- Be sure to keep hot liquids and food away from the edges of counters and tables, where they can be easily knocked over by a young child’s exploring hands. Be sure that young children cannot access [microwave ovens](#).

Fireplaces

- Before lighting any [fire](#), remove all greens, boughs, papers, and other decorations from fireplace area. Check to see that the flue is open.
- Use care with “fire salts,” which produce colored flames when thrown on wood fires. They contain heavy metals that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation and vomiting if eaten. Keep them away from children.
- Do not burn gift wrap paper in the fireplace. A flash fire may result as wrappings ignite suddenly and burn intensely.
- If a glass-fronted gas fireplace is used, keep children and others well away from it with a screen or gate. The glass doors can get hot enough to cause serious burns and stay hot long after the fire is out.

Holiday Mental Health Tips

- [Take care of yourself](#). Just like they say on the airplane, “In the event of an emergency, put your own oxygen mask on first, and then help children travelling with you to put theirs on.” Children respond to the emotional tone of their important adults, so managing your emotions successfully can help your children handle theirs better, too.
- [Give to others](#). Make a new holiday tradition to share your time with families who have less than you do, for example, if your child is old enough, encourage him or her to join you in volunteering to serve a holiday meal at your [local food bank or shelter](#). Help your child write a letter to members of the armed forces stationed abroad who can’t be home with their own family during the holidays.
- [Don’t feel pressured to “over-spend.”](#) Think about making one or two gifts instead of buying everything. Help your child make a gift for his or her other parent, grandparents, or other important adults and friends. Chances are, those gifts will be the most treasured ones and will teach your child many important lessons that purchasing presents can’t.
- [Most important of all, enjoy the Holidays for what they are - time to enjoy with your family.](#) So, be a family, do things together like sledding or playing board games, and spend time visiting with relatives, neighbors and friends.



NCPHA Award Winners

2014 Scholarship Winners:

| | |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| Brittney Surles | Child of a Member |
| Deigo Amorocho | Child of a Member |
| Melissa Day | Child of a Member |
| Aimee Stockton | Associate/Certificate |
| Barbara Ross | Graduate/Undergraduate |
| Billie Walker | Graduate/Undergraduate |
| Susan Hales | Graduate/Undergraduate |
| Grayson Price | Graduate/Undergraduate |
| Jason Williams | Graduate/Undergraduate |
| Linda Swarts | Graduate/Undergraduate |
| Tina Norris | Graduate/Undergraduate |
| Sherry Yarbrough | Robert Parker Leadership |
| Jennifer Mauch | Women's and Children's Health |



2014 All Star Winners:

Amanda Bartolomeo, Orange County
Jane Murray, Iredell County
David Ortiz, Cumberland County
Giang Le, Wake County Human Services
Karen Villines, Davidson County
Katrina White, Rockingham County
Leah Thorndyke, Johnston County
Mary Fournier, Carteret County
Regina Pettaway, Wake County Human Services
Sheila Frye, Wake County Human Services



2014 Major Awards:

Citation of Merit

Priscilla Guild, Citizens for Public Health

Norton Group Award

Holly Springs Baptist Church Health Care Committee

Partners in PH Distinguished Service Group Award

Johnston County Schools Round Table

Distinguished Service

Hazel Moore, Retired, NCIPH

Rankin Award

Jennifer Greene, Appalachian District HD



Dr. Ann Wolfe Mini-Grants:

Safe Kids Riverbend Coalition

Fresh Food Rx Program

Safe Sleep Initiative

SPiRiT (Special Projects Inspired by
Recreation and Innovative Teamwork)

Martin, Tyrell and Washington District HD

Durham County

Catawba County

Robeson County



NC GlaxoSmithKline Foundation Child Health Recognition Awards:

The Lifetime Achievement Award

Kevin Ryan, WCHS/Division of Public Health

Individual Award

Stephanie Carter, Madison County

Local Health Department

Robeson County

Gaston County

Catawba County

Public Health Staff Recognition Award

Jackie Morgan, Union County



2014 Dental Award Winners:

Dr. George G. Dudley Award

Dr. Gary Rozier

Becky Bowden Outstanding Dental Hygienist Award

Kelly Close

2014 Social Work Award Winners:

Outstanding Achievements in Public Health Social Work

Belinda Grant, Director of the Mount Zion Community Development, Inc.

Tracy Hamilton, Regional Social Worker

Laura Williard, OBCM/CC4C Supervisor-Iredell County

Tri-chairs for the 2014 Public Health Social Work Conference

"All People Matter"

Outstanding Achievements In Public Health Social Work - Advocacy

Kelly Spangler, Regional Social Worker

Outstanding Achievements in Public Health Social Work

Stephanie Carter, OBCM- Madison County, "Mommy Monday" and

Community Public Service in Public Health

Outstanding Contributions to Social Work-Chief Problem

Alfreda Gee, New Hanover County Solver and Asset to the community,

High Risk prenatal women and Health Department patients



2014 Wellness and Prevention Award Winners:

Jeanne Palmer Health Educator Excel Award

Sparkle Project Award

Bertlyn Bosley Award

Sara J. Smith, NCDHHS/Div. of Public Health

Summer Playground Day Camp, Robeson County

Robin High, Pitt County



Media Doesn't Take Holiday

In nearly a decade of working in public health, I've come to realize that next communicable disease event is just a phone call away. There's usually another phone call that comes soon after (and sometimes before)...from the media.

I'm reminded of an old adage that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. That can be similarly attributed in the realm of communications, where an ounce of preparedness is worth several pounds of food to keep the media at bay! If you don't feed them, they may be having you for their next meal, whether you like it or not.

Especially during this season, when often key staff may be taking some much needed time off, it's essential that the ball doesn't get dropped when your designated PIO is away. Does your PIO have backups? Yes, I said backups... with an "s." Not only do staff take time off, but they get sick too!

Ideally, backup communications staff should play an important role throughout the course of day-to-day operations, as this will help to ensure that backup staff are nimble by exercising their training regularly.

As much as we'd like it to, communications and the media don't take a holiday...and neither should you! By preparing not just now, but everyday, local health departments can be a shining star in the public's eye when the cameras and reporters show up.

Eric Nickens, Jr.,
Durham County Department of Public Health

Connect with Us!



With all the talk of "presents" this time of year, I want everyone to know that the North Carolina Public Health Association has a social media "presence" online. If you want to stay up-to-date on public health across the state, then take a minute and like our Facebook page and follow us on Twitter. If you are already connected then let your friends and followers know about us. Connect with us – now!

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from the Public Awareness Committee.

Joshua Swift

Connect with us!
facebook.com/ncpha
twitter.com/NCPHA



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