



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SELECTED
FOR ASPEN INSTITUTE'S EXCELLENCE IN STATE
PUBLIC HEALTH LAW PROGRAM**

HONOLULU -- The Hawaii State Department of Health (DOH) has been selected to participate in the Excellence in State Public Health Law (ESPHL) program, managed by the Aspen Institute's Justice and Society Program to help states build capacity to address critical health issues. Hawaii was one of eight teams selected nationwide.

The DOH project will focus on delivery of oral health services for high-risk children to improve health equity in Hawaii. Efforts will be led by Director of Health Loretta Fuddy, ACSW, MPH, and DOH Planning Office Chief Lorrin Kim.

The one-year program, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, represents the first time that the Aspen Institute has partnered with state health officials. Upon completion, participants will be honored in June 2014 as Fellows in State Public Health Law Excellence.

"The department is grateful to the Aspen Institute and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for this opportunity to rebuild Hawaii's public dental health infrastructure," Kim said. "Hawaii received a failing grade for children's dental health in 2010 and 2011 from a national health policy review panel, meeting only one of eight benchmarks. The Hawaii team, consisting of key members of the state Legislature and spanning four executive agencies, is determined to take the state from worst to first, beginning with this year-long project."

(more)

The ESPHL program will bring together teams of policy makers across governmental agencies in the eight states for a year-long series of retreats and training to deepen their capacity to work together to address public health issues.

Other states selected to participate in the program are Arkansas, Connecticut, Louisiana, Minnesota, Rhode Island, Virginia and Washington. For each state, the State Health Officer or high-level designee will lead a team of health leaders from both houses of the state legislature, the Governor's staff, and other agencies critical to addressing a health issue that the state identified as a priority.

For more information on DOH's ESPHL project, please contact DOH Planning Office Chief Lorrin Kim.

For more information about the Excellence in State Public Health Law Program, visit www.aspeninstitute.org/esphl.

The Aspen Institute is an educational and policy studies organization with the mission to foster leadership based on enduring values and to provide a nonpartisan venue for dealing with critical issues. The institute is based in Washington, DC; Aspen, Colorado; and on the Wye River on Maryland's Eastern Shore. It also has offices in New York City and an international network of partners. For more information, visit www.aspeninstitute.org.

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