



December 2016

Ola Lokahi

Creating a Healthy Hawaii Together

The mission of the Department of Health is to protect and improve the health and environment for all people in Hawaii. We believe that an optimal state of physical, mental, social and environmental well-being is a right and responsibility of all of Hawaii's people.

A Message from Virginia Pressler, MD, Director of Health

Rising to the Challenge: A Year of Outstanding Teamwork



Aloha!

Advancing sound policies and implementing practices to improve and protect the health of the people of

Hawaii are responsibilities we take very seriously at the Hawaii State Department of Health.

Hawaii's people counted on us, the Department of Health, to find solutions to a number of different challenges this past year, and as a state agency, we demonstrated our collective ability to rise to each of those challenges. There is a lot we can be proud of as a department. It has been personally and professionally gratifying to work with such a great team at the Department of Health.

In keeping with our mission, in 2016 we made tremendous progress to

help Hawaii communities understand that it is both their right and responsibility to achieve an optimal state of physical, mental, social and environmental health. Here is a recap of some, but certainly not all of the many highlights of 2016. Thank you for making a difference and improving the lives of the people of Hawaii this past year.

Physical Health



Fight the Bite Campaign

Mosquito-borne illnesses topped the news headlines as we entered

2016. We battled dengue fever starting in the summer of 2015, and then seamlessly worked on preventing Zika without skipping a beat. There is a lot at stake. Mosquitoes continue to pose a potential threat to the health of travelers, pregnant women and their newborns, those who live in rural areas, and our visitor industry.

The Hawaii Department of Health deployed a team to rapidly get up to speed at the Zika summit earlier this year, and secured more than \$4 million in federal funds from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. An updated "Fight the Bite" campaign combined public health education and mosquito eradication strategies to keep Hawaii free of diseases spread by mosquitos such as dengue fever, Zika virus, West Nile virus, and chikungunya.

Rethink Your Drink

The department launched another major public health campaign

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this past year. In September, the Hawaii State Department of Health expanded its nationally recognized Rethink Your Drink campaign with new television and radio ads urging teenagers to swap unhealthy sugary drinks for water.



The attention-grabbing ads highlight the health consequences of drinking sweetened teas and coffee drinks, a category of sugary drinks that has been growing in popularity among Hawaii youth, so that they choose a healthier future.

Hepatitis A Outbreak

Oahu residents were bewildered by the increasing number Hepatitis A cases over a six-week period, which started in early July and continued through mid-August. Our Disease Outbreak Control Division and our Sanitation Branch relentlessly followed every lead and conducted thorough investigations, determined to find the culprit.

The community breathed a collective sigh of relief when the Department of Health team successfully identified a strong connection between the Hepatitis A cases and frozen imported scallops that were distributed to a popular sushi chain. Although it was an intense, chal-

lenging period, it underscored the expertise and capabilities of the Department of Health.

Medical Marijuana

Medical marijuana dispensaries remained at the forefront of our agenda throughout 2016. This past year, the Department of Health selected eight applicants to receive medical marijuana dispensary licenses: three on Oahu; two each for Hawaii Island and Maui; and one for Kauai.

In addition, the Department of Health contracted with BioTech Medical Software Inc., dba BioTrack-THC to provide a 24/7 access to a web-based system for real-time data of medical marijuana inventory, sales, and other information required of dispensary licensees statewide. This was an important milestone in the implementation of the dispensaries. In 2017, we expect to see the first dispensaries open for business, while ensuring patient safety, product safety, and public safety remain priorities.



The medical marijuana patient registry, administered in a separate program under the Department of Health, also made tremendous strides this past year. The program decreased patient wait time from 6-8 weeks to 1-2 weeks. This was a critically important milestone as

valid medical marijuana cards are required to acquire medical marijuana and the dispensaries are expected to increase demand for accessibility.



Comprehensive Tobacco Control Policies

At the recommendation of the Department of Health, a suite of tobacco control bills was enacted by Gov. David Ige this past year to prohibit tobacco purchase and possession by persons under age 21; prohibit smoking at all state parks and beaches; and add electronic smoking devices to clean air laws that already apply to traditional cigarettes.

Hawaii currently has one of the lowest smoking rates in the nation, but there is still room for improvement. Our state policies and laws have helped to raise the standard for healthier, tobacco-free living over the past decade since the passage of the state's Clean Indoor Air Act in 2006.

Alcohol Abuse Screening

Maternal and child health are priorities for the Department of Health, which successfully secured more than \$8 million dollars in competitive federal and private grants to provide substance abuse screening, referral, and treatment for high-risk

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residents, with a particular focus on pregnant women. Data show that approximately 8 percent of Hawaii mothers drink alcohol during their last three months of pregnancy, a nearly two-fold increase from an earlier study. Substance abuse may cause Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, a preventable condition that affects a child's emotional, physical, and intellectual development.



Hawai'i Smiles

Hawaii Smiles

The Department of Health also brought attention to the oral health of children this past year. In October, the results of a statewide survey of 3,000 children from 67 public elementary schools provided a baseline assessment of children's teeth.

The "Hawaii Smiles" statewide surveillance report, funded by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, with additional local funding from the HDS Foundation and the Kaiser Foundation, offered a positive roadmap to improve the oral health of Hawaii's children.



Mental Health

Hawaii State Hospital

One of the major milestones of the year was the legislature's approval to appropriate more than \$160 million for the construction of new, high-security facility at Hawaii State Hospital to provide better care for hospital patients, a safer work environment for hospital staff, and enhanced community security for Kaneohe and surrounding communities.

In February, the Department of Health conducted a pre-demolition ceremony for the Goddard Building, and this month, witnessed the complete demolition of the building. In collaboration with the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS), the Department of Health will use a Design/Build methodology to expedite construction of the new building by 2020.

CARF Accreditation

For the first time, the Department of Health's Adult Mental Health Division/Community Mental Health Centers (CMHC) and Clubhouses received system-wide accreditation from CARF International for demonstrating their commitment to quality

outcomes for Hawaii's mental health patients. This is an outstanding accomplishment for these programs and demonstrates a strong commitment to quality services.

CARF International, an independent, nonprofit accrediting organization, announced that the Department of Health, Adult Mental Health Division, Community Mental Health Center Branches have been accredited for a period of three years for their adult mental health programs relating to case management/services coordination, community integration (psychosocial rehabilitation), and outpatient treatment.

Youth Returning to Hawaii

The Department of Health received a competitive federal grant for \$8.1 million dollars over four years in September 2016 to reduce placements in out-of-state facilities. The program will help youth return home to Hawaii and prevent the need for others to leave Hawaii by providing "wraparound" planning processes integrated with evidence-based treatment. This will result in expanded interagency collaboration, increased individualized mental health services within the state, and more youths staying

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within their home communities for support.

Social Health

Developmental Disabilities

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities continued to make its voice heard through a coalition of self-advocates, family members, friends, service providers, and other advocates. The Department of Health's Development Disabilities Division will continue to serve as a champion for those with development disabilities into 2017, with an ongoing focus on job opportunities and integration in workplaces, houses of worship, schools, and other areas.

Environmental Health



Red Hill Administrative Order of Consent

The Hawaii State Department of Health, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Navy agreed to an Administrative Order on Consent (AOC) that requires the Navy to develop a plan to address the January 2014 fuel release from one

of its underground tanks at Red Hill in Moanalua.

In May, the Navy submitted a scope of work to address the investigation and remediation of contamination, modeling, and the groundwater monitoring network. In September, the EPA and Department of Health requested the Navy revise the document. The Navy then submitted a revised scope of work in November, and the scope of work and work plan were conditionally approved in early December.

Better Drinking Water

The Department of Health disbursed more than \$30 million dollars in federal funds and executed loan agreements to provide funding totaling more than \$55.5 million to support county water infrastructure projects. This was part of the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund infrastruc-

ture loan program, established by the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1996. A combination of a new financial plan-

ning model and implementation on the LEAN and Kaizen process improvement methodology, borrowed from the Japanese car manufacturing sector, helped to eliminate waste and improve efficiency.

New Recycling Center Search Tools

The Hawaii State Department of

Health launched two new search tools designed to help make it easier for Hawaii residents to redeem and recycle deposit beverage containers.



The tools help consumers statewide locate their nearest certified redemption center with street addresses and current hours of operation. The new mapping tools were developed with the assistance and expertise of the State of Hawaii Office of Planning, software company ESRI, and Code for Hawaii, the local brigade of the national nonprofit organization Code for America.

National Accolades

Hawaii Vital Records Ordering and Tracking System

The Center for Digital Government, a national organization, recognized the Hawaii State Department of Health for its effort to use technology to re-conceptualize, transform and digitize the way government agencies serve their customers.

The Hawaii Vital Records Ordering and Tracking System (vitrec.ehawaii.gov) won the 2016 Digital Govern-

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ment Achievement Award in the Driving Digital Government State Government category.



More than 70 percent of all orders for certified copies of vital records are now submitted online. Since the initial launch of the Vital Records Ordering and Tracking System in February 2015, the Department of

Health has reduced the average wait time for mail-delivery of orders of certified copies from 56 business days to nine days. Individuals with prepaid pick-up orders can be in and out of the office in as little as five minutes.

Death Records Matching System Saves Tax Payer Dollars

The Department of Health executed business agreements and protocols to legally share sensitive vital records information, specifically death records, with other state agencies to purge deceased beneficiaries from certain government programs, including the Employee Retirement System, county property tax collections, parking placards, and Medicaid. This eliminates inappropriate

payment or overpayments that total hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Looking to 2017

As we enter the New Year, I'm excited about the opportunities ahead of us to better serve Hawaii's people. Each of us is making a difference in the health and well-being of Hawaii's people and I appreciate all that you are doing to help families enjoy healthier lives. Let's make 2017 another great year!

