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A. Committee Reports:

1. *The Northern Illinois Public Health Information Network (NIPHIN), also known as the Public Information Officer (PIO) Committee*, meets monthly, alternating in-person meetings with conference calls. Health department members include:

David Hass, Chair (DuPage); Tim Hadac, Sheri Brazley, Sherri Tonozzi (Chicago); Kitty Loewy (Cook); Michael Isaacson, Tom Schlueter (Kane); Tedmond Joyce (Kendall); Leslie Piotrowski, Tiffany Bronk (Lake); Debra Quackenbush (McHenry); Vic Reato (Will); Sue Fuller (Winnebago)

- Current PIO projects include:

- o Discussion of recommendations resulting from the recent online survey and focus group discussion about communications/media strategy completed by the national Consortium for Risk and Crisis Communications (CRCC).
- o Participation in a daylong message mapping training session with CRCC.
- o Participation in meetings and conference calls regarding regional triggers for food safety and product recalls.
- o Training scheduled in January, 2007, to increase knowledge and use of the Chicago HAN.
- o Next regular meeting Dec. 19 in Oak Park. Leslie Piotrowski of Lake is the new 2007 public information committee chair, replacing Dave Hass of DuPage.

2. *The Emergency Response Coordinator (ERC) Committee* normally meets the 3rd Friday of each month at 10:30am CDPH West Side Center for Disease Control. Meetings have been sporadic over the last several months due to many exercise requirements and other activities on the part of the committee members. Committee participants include:

Suzet McKinney, Co-Chair (CDPH); Mike Isaacson, Co-Chair (Kane); Christina Welter (NIPHC); Gina Massuda and Keith Winn (Cook), Beverly Parota (DuPage), Alex Song and Kristen Mawk (Evanston), Ted Joyce (Kendall), Bonnie Cohen and Ron Grant (Lake), Keri Zaleski and Sherri Gallas (McHenry), Christopher Shields (Oak Park), Deon Pillard (Will), Dan Reilly and Charlie Elliott (Winnebago); Jonece Tyler (IDPH)

- Most recent activities/meetings:

- o Our biggest accomplishment has been guiding and completing the PPHR process and obtaining certification.
- o March 2006: Emergency Communication Exercise
- o April 2006: Monthly meeting. Topic = Pandemic Flu and Funding Issues (discussion of IDPH concurrence process, general update on pandemic flu, regional funding for pandemic flu, LHD pandemic influenza tabletop exercises, emergency communication drill debriefing, development of new ERC committee work groups -- training, legal, GIS, and Q & I).
- o April 2006: Submission of Project Public Health Ready application.
- o June 2006: Monthly meeting. Topic = Regional and State Communications Mechanisms (guest speaker Tom Mefferd, Illinois Terrorism Task Force Communications Committee chair. Presentation given on ITTF communications strategy, reviewed the communication systems and infrastructure in place for 5-levels of emergency situations ranging from level 5 as a routine emergency to a level 1 as a national emergency).
- o July - August 2006: Conducted pandemic influenza tabletops throughout the region.
- o September 2006: Monthly meeting. Topic = Volunteer Management and Pandemic Influenza Planning (guest speaker Diane Logsdon, Greater Chicago Chapter of the American Red Cross. Presentation given on State of IL Volunteer Management/Support Team Initiative (IEMA/ITTF Committee on Volunteers and Donations initiative), discussed spontaneous volunteer planning, national strategies supporting the volunteer management initiative, statewide volunteer planning and management activities, and implementation of the program at the local level).

3. *The Environmental Health (EH) Committee* is involved in environmental planning to address regional concerns and help enhance capacities of local health departments to improve environmental needs. The committee is made up of the following members:

Steve Curatti, Chair (Kendall); Joel McCullough, MD (Chicago); Thomas Varchmin (Cook); Tad Koeune (DuPage); Gene Shostrom (Grundy); Fred Carlson (Kane); John Bevis (Kankakee); Anthony Smithson (Lake); Patti Nomm (McHenry); Mike Vollmer (Will); Larry Swacina (Winnebago)

- Recent activities include:

- o Represented on an ad hoc committee alongside IDPH to discuss/draft a code addressing tattooing and body piercing;
- o Represented on an ad hoc committee alongside IDPH and IEPA to address surface discharging private sewage disposal systems as they pertain to the Federal Clean Water Act and the IEPA's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program;
- o Working with the various NIPHC committees to evaluate and possible hone current LHD practice/protocols with respect to food-related recalls, particularly those potentially affecting our region;
- o Evaluating and addressing inconsistencies between LHDs with respect to information disseminated (by LHDs) during a boil water order;
- o Taking an active role in ensuring passage of the sunset extension of the LEHP Act.

B. Illinois Hospital Assessment

U.S. approves \$1.8 billion boost in Illinois health care spending
November 21, 2006

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. -- The federal government has approved a plan to generate \$1.8 billion extra for health care spending in Illinois over three years through a tax on hospitals, officials said Tuesday.

U.S. House Speaker Dennis Hastert said the Department of Health and Human Services OK'd Illinois' hospital assessment plan -- adopted by the Legislature and Gov. Rod Blagojevich more than a year ago -- aimed at boosting federal Medicaid funding in Illinois.

The money raised by the hospital tax would go into the state's Medicaid fund, making the state eligible for more federal matching money.

Officials expect it to generate \$600 million more a year -- \$470 million would go to hospitals and \$130 million could be used to reimburse nursing homes for some of their Medicaid costs, as well as paying other expenses.

"The new provider payments will mean more resources for Illinois hospitals and nursing homes, greater job security for the health care providers who work at these institutions, but most importantly, it will mean better health care for the tens of thousands of Illinois residents who depend on Medicaid to meet their health care needs," Hastert, R-Plano, said in a prepared statement.

The Illinois Hospital Association cheered the action, saying in a statement better reimbursement rates to hospitals will allow them to continue providing expensive lifesaving services, keep up with new technology and recruit top-notch nurses and doctors.

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C. The Illinois Accreditation Project

The Illinois Accreditation project is a RWJ-funded pilot project that will test how Illinois would adopt the nationally recognized Accreditation program for local health agencies. The initial purpose of the Illinois Accreditation Project was to design an accreditation framework that would transition the Illinois local public health certification program into a more performance-based program. The Illinois Public Health Institute is convening stakeholder input forums with the health associations in the state (including NIPHC). The purpose of the meetings is to review the draft products (measures/evidence, transition plan, operational/governance structure) of the Task Force that Patrick Lenihan and Lee Lewis served on last year, and get feedback and input and begin to develop more knowledge and understanding during continuation of the grant. The stakeholder input forum with NIPHC and IPHI will be held on Mon., Jan. 8, 2007 at the CDPH Board Room from 10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.