

Public Comments

Healthy Iowans: Iowa's Health Improvement Plan 2012-2016

Public comments on the Healthy Iowans draft plan were collected from March 22 to April 13, 2012. For the sake of efficiency and clarity, original comments received have been paraphrased. In cases where multiple individuals made the same or similar comments, only one comment appears. For recommendations that were incorporated into the health improvement plan, page numbers are provided in the "Response" column. Please refer to the full plan, dated May 2012.

Access to Quality Health Services	Comment	Response
Availability and Quality of the Health Care Workforce	Change "Long-Term Care Access Advisory Council" to "Health and Long-Term Care Access Advisory Council."	Recommendation has been incorporated. See pages 9 and 12.
Health Care Quality	What is meant by "direct care professionals" in the "Measures of Progress"?	A definition of direct care professionals has been added. See page 10.
Health Care Quality	Is EMS included under "safety net and rural providers" in the Health Information Network under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve"?	No, however the goal of the Health Information Network is to eventually include all providers, including EMS. See page 12.
Health Care Quality	Include a new measure of progress and a strategy under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve" regarding EMS system standards.	Recommendations have been incorporated. See page 13.
Health Care Quality	General comment regarding health care quality in Iowa about the need for the state to develop a strategy to fill the gap of non-board certified personnel who staff emergency rooms and other critical units.	Comment forwarded to the IDPH Bureau of Emergency Medical Services.

Transportation	Under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve," is it correct to assume that "Promote the non-emergency medical transportation services that are available for Medicaid members through training, presentations, and other channels," includes education on the appropriate use of 9-1-1?	This strategy is to promote the availability of non-medical emergency transportation services. We do not, however, want to discourage anyone from using the 9-1-1 emergency call number if anyone is unsure about an emergency.
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Acute Disease	Comment	Response
Immunizations and Infectious Disease	The 13- to 17-year-old age group needs more attention, especially in regard to bacterial meningitis.	The Healthy Iowans plan addresses this age group.
Immunizations and Infectious Disease	Under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve," only one of the six strategies for Immunization and Infectious Disease is measurable.	The Healthy Iowans plan reflects measures and strategies submitted by contributing organizations to address Iowa's critical health needs. As a part of annual revisions to the plan, the Healthy Iowans workgroup will continue to work toward making more of the strategies measurable.
Immunizations and Infectious Disease	The strategy, "Reduce by 50% indigenous cases of vaccine-preventable diseases" should not rest solely on the shoulders of the Iowa Immunization Coalition.	Recommendation has been incorporated. The Iowa Department of Public Health has been added as a lead organization. See page 15.

Addictive Behaviors	Comment	Response
Alcohol and Binge Drinking	The University of Iowa would like to work with the Iowa Department of Public Health on this topic.	Comment forwarded to the IDPH Division of Behavioral Health.
Drugs	Include three new measures of progress and two new strategies under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve" regarding over-the-counter-drugs, prescription drug abuse, marijuana, methamphetamine, synthetic drugs.	Recommendations have been incorporated. See pages 17, 18 and 19.

Chronic Disease	Comment	Response
Cancer	The plan needs to address childhood leukemia.	The Healthy Iowans plan incorporates goals and strategies from numerous health planning efforts. The Iowa Cancer Plan addresses a broad array of cancer issues, including childhood cancers. Please refer to "Other Plans Relating to Chronic Disease."
Cancer	Include mortality goals for cancer similar to those for Heart Disease and Stroke.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 21.
Cancer	Add the following measure of progress: A decrease in the age-adjusted incidence of all cancers from 475.1 to 465.6 per 100,000.	Recommendation has been incorporated using data from the Iowa Health Registry. See page 22.
Cancer	Under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve," replace physical activity in schools and knowledge of risk factors with three new strategies related to coalition building, screening guidelines, and provider outreach regarding quality of life for cancer survivors.	Recommendations have been incorporated. See page 24.
Cancer	Placing lung cancer as one of our top priorities will help decrease smoking, too.	The Healthy Iowans plan incorporates goals and strategies from numerous health planning efforts. The Iowa Cancer Plan addresses a broad array of cancer issues, including lung cancer. Please refer to "Other Plans Relating to Chronic Disease."
Diabetes	The contributor to the two strategies under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve" regarding Medicaid members requested revisions to the strategies.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See 25.

Diabetes	Correct the error of identifying Child Health Specialty Clinics as a lead organization for health literacy-based interventions.	Error has been corrected. See page 26.
Heart Disease and Stroke	Add "compliance" to "low-density lipoprotein" in the second Medicaid Enterprise strategy.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 25.
Neurological Disorders	Move Alzheimer's disease from Mental Health and Mental Disorders to the Chronic Disease topic area.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 23.
Neurological Disorders	Under "What Our State is Doing to Improve," add a strategy related to knowing the ten signs of Alzheimer's disease.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 26.
Respiratory Conditions	The lead organizations for the fourth, fifth and sixth strategies in this section have been incorrectly identified.	Errors have been corrected. See page 27.

Environmental Health	Comment	Response
Healthy Homes	A number of commenters called for addressing radon in the plan. Suggestions included radon testing as part of every real estate transaction, a tax credit for testing, testing schools, more inexpensive testing, subsidized programs, legislation requiring testing, and educating Iowans on exposure risk.	A strategy has been added to develop an understanding of the quality of radon data and a plan to communicate and address health risks. See page 30.
Healthy Homes	Under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve," the strategy regarding establishing a database for identified metals should include language regarding Iowa data being compared with baseline data from CDC.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 30.
Water Quality	Arsenic and the measure of progress on arsenic are appropriate.	Comment acknowledged.

Water Quality	Under "Measures of Progress," clarify the number of wells to be tested and specify that they are private drinking water wells.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 28.
Water Quality	Under "What Our State Is Doing To Improve," add the Iowa Department of Public Health as a lead organization to the first strategy.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 30.

Healthy Living	Comment	Response
Healthy Growth and Development	Under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve," add Child Health Specialty Clinics as a lead organization to the sixth strategy.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 35.
Healthy Growth and Development	Under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve," add "at least" to the strategy of reaching out to six communities with breastfeeding trainings.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 36.
Nutrition and Food	Recommend adding awareness/prevention and treatment of eating disorders as a critical need.	Eating disorders did not emerge during the assessment process as a critical need.
Oral Health	Under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve," the fluoridated water strategy is inaccurate in terms of the national standards, the type of water systems, and percentage of Iowans who received fluoridated water.	Errors have been corrected. See page 37.
Physical Activity	Physical activity in the schools needs to be addressed.	The Healthy Iowans plan incorporates goals and strategies from numerous health planning efforts. The Iowans Fit For Life plan addresses physical activity in schools. Please refer to "Other Plans Relating to Healthy Living."
Vision and Hearing	Under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve," add Iowa Optometric Association to the second strategy.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 38.

Injury and Violence	Comment	Response
Falls	General comment regarding reluctance on the part of patients to be screened or evaluated for fall risk.	Comment forwarded to the IDPH Office of Disability, Injury and Violence Prevention.
Motor Vehicle Injuries and Deaths	The plan recognizes the need to reduce deaths and injuries from all types of vehicles (OHVs, scooters, mopeds, ATVs), an under-recognized problem. A program to reduce ATV riding on the road is needed. We also need a task force to deal with helmet use.	Comment forwarded to the IDPH Office of Disability, Injury and Violence Prevention.
Occupational Health and Safety	Under "Measures of Progress," correct the data source for the second measure.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 40.
Occupational Health and Safety	Under "What Our State Is Doing to Improve," the Center for Agricultural Safety and Health, not ISU Extension, should be listed as a lead organization for the fourth and fifth strategies.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 43.

Mental Health and Mental Disorders	Comment	Response
Mental and Emotional Well-Being	General comment about the need to measure access to mental health care providers.	The Healthy Iowans plan reflects measures and strategies submitted by contributing organizations to address Iowa's critical health needs. As a part of annual revisions to the plan, additional strategies may be added, including those that relate to mental health care access.

Mental Illnesses	Under "What Our State is Doing to Improve," add a strategy related to diverting people with mental illness from incarceration.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 46.
Mental Illnesses	Under "What Our State is Doing to Improve," add a strategy related to diverting people with pathological gambling from incarceration.	Recommendation has been incorporated. See page 47.

Other Comments	Comment	Response
	In the Acknowledgments section, the link that pertains to the Department of Education is incorrect.	Error has been corrected. See page 8.
	Staffing and numbers of certified pre-hospital emergency providers during the daytime hours especially in Iowa's rural areas are a critical concern.	The Healthy Iowans plan reflects measures and strategies submitted by contributing organizations to address Iowa's critical health needs. As a part of annual revisions to the plan, additional strategies may be added, including those that relate to hospital staffing.
	General question about how strategies will be evaluated.	Contributing organizations will be evaluating their own efforts during the course of the 5-year health improvement plan. Healthy Iowans will capture these results in annual updates.
	General question about the format of the Healthy Iowans plan and its use as a resource guide.	The intent of the Healthy Iowans plan is to serve as a resource guide. To that end, links to related health planning resources have been provided at the end of most topic areas.