



Public Health
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Idaho Public Health Districts

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November 2015

Public health funding requests aim to reduce prescription drug abuse and tobacco use in Idaho



Prescription drug abuse is the United States' fastest growing drug problem. In Idaho, the problem is evident; our state is routinely in the top five per capita in the United States for hydrocodone use. Also startling is our state's tobacco

use, particularly among youth — 12 percent of Idaho's high school students regularly smoke. Idaho's Local Health Districts (LHDs) hope to have an impact on these serious issues affecting the health of our state with the help of Millennium Funding — money that would allow LHDs to continue their work to reduce tobacco use, and for the first time, become an active partner in reducing prescription pain medicine abuse.

For the 2017 Fiscal Year, the state's health districts have requested \$230,000 in Idaho Millennium Funds for a pilot program to increase the use of the Idaho Prescription Monitoring Program among medical providers. This online program provides information to prescribers about a patient's prescription drug activity, allowing a medical provider to identify what drugs have been prescribed by other providers, and when.

Regular use of the Idaho Prescription Drug Monitoring Program is a major gap in the overall effort to reduce prescription drug abuse in Idaho. While 6,866 providers have registered for the program, a task required annually by Idaho Code, only an average of 177 prescribers had actively utilized the Prescription Monitoring Program within a six-month period (March-August 2015).

Local Health Districts want to improve prescriber use numbers, and if funded, propose to work with Idaho State University's College of Pharmacy and other community partners by identifying barriers to using the program, educating prescribers on the programs' functions and benefits, and evaluating the success of these efforts.

Idaho's public health districts have solid relationships with primary care providers throughout our state, and through this partnership with the Idaho Board of Pharmacy and Idaho State University, believe the project will make a difference in improving the health of our communities.

Decreasing Tobacco Use

From the number of lives tobacco-related diseases take each year, to the trends of continued use among Idaho's residents, statistics about tobacco use indicate there is more work to be done. Idaho's LHDs want to continue their efforts of tobacco cessation throughout the state and have requested \$750,000 in funding for FY17 through the Idaho Millennium Fund for tobacco cessation programs.

In Idaho, 16 percent of adults smoke and 12 percent of ninth through twelfth graders are current smokers.

The dollars would be spread throughout the seven districts, with a goal of impacting at least 39 of the state's 44 counties. The funds would specifically target youth and pregnant women, but would be available to anyone who wants to become tobacco-free through cessation classes.

In-person classes fill a void in many communities. The classes are offered statewide for free and are based on best practice methods. Past Millennium Funding for tobacco cessation classes has proven effective: of the 2,127 people starting a health district tobacco cessation program in FY 2015, 1,220 (57%) people completed the program. Idaho's Local Health Districts want to continue their work to lower tobacco use, and in turn, lower rates of tobacco-related disease throughout the state.

The Millennium Fund Committee makes recommendations for funding requests to Idaho's Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee. Funding request outcomes are anticipated in spring 2016.

HEALTHY PEOPLE IN HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

PANHANDLE HEALTH DISTRICT (1)	PUBLIC HEALTH - IDAHO NORTH CENTRAL DISTRICT (2)	SOUTHWEST DISTRICT HEALTH (3)	CENTRAL DISTRICT HEALTH (4)	SOUTH CENTRAL PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT (5)	SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO PUBLIC HEALTH (6)	EASTERN IDAHO PUBLIC HEALTH (7)
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