



Optimal Health for All Iowans



# *Swatches*

## Connecting Rural Iowa

August 2017

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### **President's Message**

Kate Walton, IRHA Board President

Everyone reading this right now knows health care is in a place of great transition both at the state and national level. There's uncertainty over the viability of the individual insurance market in Iowa, unresolved issues with the managed care companies tasked with administering the state's Medicaid program and the future of the Affordable Care Act is still unknown. Against this backdrop the Iowa Rural Health Association is pleased to once again collaborate with the University of Iowa Health Sciences Policy Council to sponsor the 10th Annual Rebalancing Health Care in the Heartland Conference.

The conference will take place on Thursday, November 9th at the Holiday Inn on Merle Hay Road in Des Moines from 8:00am - 4:00pm. Join us as we bring together national health policy experts, local providers, and elected officials and candidates to discuss the future of health policy in Iowa and the United States. Topics covered will range from the latest information on the plans to "repeal and replace" the Affordable Care Act to the impact of the opioid epidemic on Iowa providers, educators and citizens as well as a panel on dental access.

We look forward to providing participants with the most up to date information and insight on the ever changing health care landscape as well as a unique opportunity to network and interact with members of our broader health care community. We hope to see you there!



***Transforming Health Care During Uncertain  
Times***

**Thursday, November 9, 2017**  
Holiday Inn - Merle Hay, Des Moines

Your continued support through membership allows IRHA to continue the work to attain Optimal Health for All Iowans.

Benefits of being an IRHA member:

1. Health advocacy with a rural perspective
2. Access to resources through the IRHA and NRHA websites and email distribution lists
3. Networking opportunities with professionals from diverse disciplines
4. Input opportunities for State and Federal Policy issues
5. Discounted rates for Annual Conference
6. Opportunities for leadership development

**Thank you for your continued support of IRHA!**

Registration is now open for the Annual Conference.

[Online Registration](#)

[Printable Registration Form](#)

If you are interested in sponsoring or exhibiting at the conference, [click here](#) for more information.

As presenters are confirmed, details will be added to the [IRHA website](#).

Please feel free to share this information with other who may be interested in participating.

**We look forward to seeing you on November 9!**

**Celebrate National Rural Health Day  
November 16th!**



National Rural Health Day was launched in 2010 as an opportunity to celebrate the "Power of Rural", bring attention to the unique healthcare needs of rural America, and highlight rural stakeholders who address those needs. The National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health (NOSORH) has put together a virtual toolkit to help communities celebrate National Rural Health Day.

Each year NOSORH recognizes Community Stars in a publication that honors individuals who are dedicated to serving the people who call rural America home. Consider nominating someone from your community who is dedicated to rural and makes a difference every day!

To help raise awareness about National Rural Health Day and Celebrate the Power of Rural, use the hashtag #powerofrural to show how you celebrate rural every day!

\* [National Rural Health Day Toolkit](#)

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## **Double Up Food Bucks Program**

The Iowa Healthiest State Initiative and several communities across Iowa have been working diligently to bring the Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB) Program to our state. According to the [Iowa Healthiest State Website](#), Iowa ranks 50th in the nation for fruit and vegetable consumption, and over 380,000 Iowans rely on food assistance programs.

The goal of the DUFB program is to assist in generating opportunities for low-resource Iowans to access healthy fruits and vegetables. This program also incorporates community economic development potentials by also linking with local farmers markets in supporting communities, which in turns keeps funds in our communities and supports our local farmers. There are currently nine counties in the state offering DUFB, and we hope to continue growing the effort!

There are many ways to get involved, including:

- \* Volunteering at markets
- \* Signing up as a DUFB vendor
- \* Signing up as DUFB Market
- \* General interest and shopping at our local farmers markets

The Iowa State [Community Food Systems](#) program and the [Community Design Lab](#) recently had the opportunity to collaborate with Iowa Healthiest State, [Iowa State Extension SNAP-ED programs](#), [Dubuque Farmers Market](#), [Global Greens Farmers Market](#), numerous farmers, and consumers to create an Iowa DUFB video. You can catch the footage here:

<https://youtu.be/IcN7iU8h90M>

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## **Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety & Health Conference in Pella, Iowa on November 14-15, 2017**

In an era of constantly changing technology, weather and policies, "Best Practices for New Horizons" is the theme of the 2017 Midwest Rural Agricultural Safety & Health (MRASH) Conference. The conference brings together farm families, safety and health professionals, researchers, policy makers, health providers, emergency responders, students, agribusiness representatives and many others, all with the goal to keep people safe and healthy on the farm.

On November 14, the program will explore ways to integrate farm safety and health into best farm management practices with a keynote by nationally recognized farm management consultant, Dick Wittman. In the afternoon, presenters will share their research and outreach efforts in many aspects of farm safety and health. A poster session and reception that evening allows additional projects to be shared and provides an opportunity to network with individuals from many diverse backgrounds.

Farmers get a chance to have their say the second day of the conference through farmer panels. Small work groups will focus on creating effective safety and health messages under the guidance of Linda Laine from Central College. Mark Grey, Director of the Iowa Center for Immigrant Leadership and Integration and Michele Devlin, Director of the Iowa Center on Health Disparities will share lessons on immigrant farm worker health and safety. The afternoon will feature two in-depth workshops, one on effective strategies for farm-related emergencies and one on how AgrAbility efforts can help farmers with disabilities farm successfully

Conference participants can register for one or both days. More information is available online at [www.i-cash.org/2017-mrash](http://www.i-cash.org/2017-mrash). Registrations can also be made by calling the University of Iowa Center for Conferences at 319-335-4141. The conference is co-sponsored by the Great Plains Center for Agricultural Health (GPCAH) and Iowa's Center for Agricultural Safety and Health (I-CASH).

## Healthy Cass County



Healthy Cass County is a community-focused network to promote the health and well-being of Cass County residents. This group of individuals, representing over 25 local organizations, has been supporting the health of Cass

County residents for more than 10 years. Our purpose is to spread health information and initiate programs throughout the county.

We invite our Healthy Cass County partners around the table to discuss health and wellbeing initiatives countywide. Along with our larger coalition meeting, we have five steering committees that meet in smaller teams to accomplish goals aligned with our Community Health Improvement Plan. Our steering committees include Tobacco & Nicotine Strategies, Infrastructure & Communication, Emergency Preparedness, Obesity and Promoting Healthy Lifestyles. The network has led and/or supported events such as: Walking School Bus, Produce in the Park, Healthiest State Walks, Health Fairs, Youth Tobacco Prevention programs, Local Foods Tours, Farm to School initiatives and more!



### **Congratulations to Dallas County Public Health**

Dallas County Public Health was honored with the Model Practice Award at the 2017 Annual Conference of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO). The award celebrates local health departments for developing programs that demonstrate exemplary and replicable best practices in response to a critical local public health need. Dallas County's Health Navigation Program was one of 41 local health department programs to receive NACCHO's prestigious Model Practice Award.

"Health starts long before we need medical care--health starts in our homes, schools, workplaces, neighborhoods and communities. Many factors throughout life can create stress, cause illness, and limit opportunities for success at school, the workplace and for healthy living. The Health Navigation program addresses these factors by serving as an extension of the medical care you may receive in the hospital or clinic, but our focus is more on transportation, food, housing, employment, mental

health services, and other community resources," explains Kelli Vellinga, Executive Director of Dallas County Public Health.

The Health Navigation Program is free and available to all residents of Dallas County. "Health Navigators are experts in community resources, and provide individuals and caregivers with skills, resources, and tools to assert a more active role in their care and ensure their needs are met through connections to local resources," says Vellinga.

Clients can refer themselves to the Health Navigation Program, or they may be referred by a health care provider or other community partner. When the Navigators receive a referral, they meet one-on-one with the client and their family in their home or alternative location. The Navigators assess the family's unique situation and needs, and walk alongside the family to help those overcome barriers and access resources and social supports to enable them to lead healthy lives.

To reach the Health Navigator, call 515-993-3750; 515-465-2483; or 1-800-811-7565.

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