WHO WE ARE

The mission of the Wyoming Public Health Association is to promote a healthy Wyoming.

The means in which we fulfill our mission are by creating a forum for discussion of public health issues, enhancing health consciousness through leadership in public health activities, and promoting the professional growth of its members.

Past

Since 1989, the Wyoming Public Health Association (WPHA) has worked to ensure the public’s health in Wyoming. We have promoted and protected the public’s health through program development; we have provided over 1500 contact hours of continuing education and professional development through our annual conference, and we have advocated on behalf of good state and local public health policy and legislation.

We strive to ensure the highest quality public health workforce. We build a strong collective voice for sound public health policies, and we work to ensure access to health care, protect funding for core public health services, eliminate health disparities and address other critical issues. Our core values are health, equity, diversity, dignity, empowerment, integrity, and knowledge for individuals and communities. We are “Promoting a Healthy Wyoming”.

Today

Wyoming is a large and diverse state with only one four-year university and limited opportunities for continuing professional development.

WPHA successfully unites researchers, academia, health service providers, health advocates, administrators, teachers, private or public organizations and foundations from across the state to provide a unique, multidisciplinary environment of professional exchange, study, and action, in public health practice and the public health policy process. WPHA is the state’s largest and most diverse public health organization and is best poised to provide critical public health and allied health workforce development.

WPHA represents nearly 135 members from 40 organizations in 21 of 23 Wyoming counties. The Wyoming public health workforce includes: Public health physicians and nurses, Health educators and nutritionists, Emergency responders, Environmental health specialists, restaurant inspectors, and sanitarians, Occupational health and safety professionals, Scientists, researchers and academics, Social workers, Epidemiologists and disease intervention specialists, and Public health veterinarians.

Academic members include University of Wyoming, Casper College, Laramie County Community College, Walden University, and University of Colorado College of Health Sciences, and many other organizations including hospitals, local health departments, non-profit organizations, other associations and state agencies.

Future

In the years ahead we plan to:

- Partner with other leading health organizations to advocate for prevention of tobacco use and obesity.
- Continue to provide professional education and career development to prevent the predicted shortage of public health workers.
- Grow our membership so we represent and serve all public health workers in Wyoming.
- Expand the reach and impact of grassroots advocates for sound public health policy, focusing on access to care, prevention, and community planning that makes health a priority.
- Increase our education outreach to the public to improve health and prevent disease for all Wyomingites.
The Wyoming Public Health Association (WPHA) held its Annual Education Conference (AEC) in Casper, Wyoming at the Ramada Plaza Riverside on October 17th and 18th. While a little smaller than some previous WPHA conferences, approximately fifty people attended the conference which focused on county and community health.

The conference kicked-off with a plenary presentation by Karin Hohman from Strategic Health Concepts of Denver CO on the “Nine Habits of Effective Coalitions.” Ms. Hohman discussed the “habits” that community coalitions need to cultivate in order to be successful and effective.

This was followed by a luncheon Keynote address by Kate Konkle of the University of Wisconsin County Health Rankings program. Ms. Konkle discussed the process used in ranking counties on several health-related metrics and also provided information about online tools such as the “County Health Roadmaps.”

The final plenary was presented by Kip Farnum and Mike Miller from Campbell County School District #1 concerning the exciting work being done in Gillette on Health Students – Healthy Schools, a program dedicated to providing education, skills, and access to all children in Campbell County to lead a healthy and active life.

Other presentations included a Tobacco Policy presentation from Jason Mincer of the American Cancer Society. A policy development breakout was presented by Kate Stratton-Schulz, who is an independent policy expert who has worked with the Wyoming Department of Health on numerous projects. Dr. Dan O’Leary presented on the Emergency Preparedness survey that was given to county preparedness coordinators earlier in the year. Finally, Julie Newlin of the Wyoming Communicable Disease Prevention Program presented information on condom availability and HIV/STD prevention in Wyoming communities.

WPHA would like to thank the County Health Rankings program, Corison Correctional Healthcare, The Wyoming Behavioral Institute, AdBay, Qiagen, and the Wyoming Guardianship Program for helping to sponsor the 2013 AEC.

AWARDS AND NEW BOARD MEMBERS

WPHA was pleased to announce that Melanie Pearce, the County Health Nurse Manager for Teton County, and is currently working on her Doctor of Nursing Practice at Rush University, won the Memorial Student Scholarship for Outstanding Student in Public Health at the 2013 Conference in Casper.

Melanie was nominated by Linette Johnson, who is one of the State Nurse Supervisors. Additionally, WPHA would like to announce the new Executive Board Members for 2014.

Toni Reeves is the new President-elect. Meaghan McClellan is the new Secretary.

Reggie McClinton and Amy Spieker will both assume the duties of Director at Large for 2014.

We would also like to give a big THANK YOU to the following board members who will be leaving the board in 2014.

Dr. Rich Harris - Past President
Lucy Williamson - Secretary
Alex Bowler - Director at Large
Canyon Hardesty - Director at large
If you have information about an upcoming event that you would like to share with other WPHA members, please send the information to jgrandpre@hotmail.com.

The 2014 WPHA Conference will be held in conjunction with the Colorado Public Health in the Rockies Conference in Ft. Collins, Colorado on September 17-19, 2014.

The conference will take place at the newly remodeled Ft. Collins Marriott and we will provide registration information as soon as it is available.

WPHA has a new home on the internet! The new site can be found at www.WyomingPHA.org and came online in August.

“While there have been some hiccups and issues with the new site, especially around conference registration, we hope that the new site will be more user-friendly and responsive to changes in the association” said Rob Johnston current WPHA President.

The website was produced and is maintained by Adbay and provides all the information that the old site did, though in a new format.

Members will have to complete a free registration form to gain access to the new website. Once there you can access information about WPHA, find news about public health in Wyoming and elsewhere, see what happened at the Annual Conference, or read about and nominate someone for one of the association awards.

There is also a Resources tab with links to other public health entities such as APHA, the CDC, the Wyoming Department of Health, and the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps.

You can also renew your WPHA Membership and find contact information for the WPHA Board members.

Please take a look at the new website and remember that if you have any news or events you would like on the site just send the information to Rob Johnston or Joe Grandpre.
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Promoting a Healthy Wyoming!

Contact Information
To learn more about WPHA or to become a member please contact one of our Executive Board Members.

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WPHA is an affiliate of the American Public Health Association (APHA), the oldest and most diverse organization of public health professionals in the world. Since 1872, APHA has worked to protect all Americans and their communities from preventable, serious health threats and to assure community-based health promotion and disease prevention activities and preventive health services are universally accessible in the United States. APHA has been a leading advocate for federal health funding and policy, has improved the national visibility of public health issues, and has provided education and informational services to strengthen the public health professions.

WyomingPHA.org

Laughter is the best medicine

“If heat makes objects expand, then I’m not overweight — I’m just a victim of global warming!”