

NEWS RELEASE

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**April 2-8 is National Public Health Week:
North Dakota Department of Health Celebrates Public Health Efforts That Create a
Healthier North Dakota**

BISMARCK, N.D. – April 2-8, 2018 is National Public Health Week and the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) and local public health units are highlighting how public and private partnerships protect and promote health equity for all North Dakotans regardless of where they are born, grow, live and age.

“Working together allows us to be able to problem solve more efficiently and effectively,” said Kelly Nagel, NDDoH Local Public Health Liaison. “The health of North Dakota residents, families and communities is better for it.”

The BABY & ME - Tobacco Free Program improves health outcomes for women and infants. The program is a face-to-face and incentive-based smoking cessation program for pregnant women. Research shows that babies born to non-smoking women are:

- More likely to be born at a healthy weight
- Less likely to be born too early
- More likely to come home from the hospital stay with their mothers
- Less likely to die of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

Quitting smoking greatly reduces the health risks to the mother and baby and by assisting pregnant women in quitting, gives their children a better chance of never starting.

In addition, the NDDoH collaborates with statewide partners to address health inequities:

- The Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota Refugee Health Mentor Program educates and assists New Americans and their families in accessing and understanding the local health care system.

- The American Indian Public Health Resource Center's North Dakota Tribal Opioid Project partnered with the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians to increase access to opioid treatment programs.
- The Syringe Exchange Programs at Custer District Health Unit and Fargo Cass Public Health are important disease prevention tools that reduce the transmission of HIV and viral hepatitis associated with IV opioid usage. The program provides education, testing, resources, and referrals for individuals with a substance use disorder.

For more information on health equity, view the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation County Health Rankings report at countyhealthrankings.org or contact Kelly Nagel, NDDoH, at 701.328.4596.

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