

The future of public health in Nevada

Reno Gazette-Journal / RGJ.COM

Tuesday, September 13, 2011

Later this week, the Nevada Public Health Association will host its 2011 annual conference. The theme of this year's conference is "The future of public health in Nevada."

Featured speakers include State Health Officer Tracey Green, Nevada State Medical Association Executive Director Larry Matheis, Carson City Health and Human Services Director Marena Works, and the new Director of the UNR School of Community Health Sciences, Trudy Larson.

The NPHA annual conference is the principal statewide gathering of the public health community in Nevada. Participants include public health professionals from county health departments and the state health division, as well as faculty and students from the state's two schools of public health.

While small, but growing in number, the membership of NPHA is drawn from a broad, statewide spectrum of agencies and organizations committed to improving population health and achieving equity in health status for all Nevadans.

Public health in Nevada has been uniquely challenged by reductions in resources and continually changing priorities, including another round of severe cuts to health promotion and disease prevention programs made by state lawmakers earlier this spring. Agencies and advocates must now look to models of public health that produce greater efficiencies and productivity, so we are able to effectively "do more with less."

This year's conference features a timely agenda addressing these challenges. Plenary sessions will focus on the future of public health policy in Nevada and efforts to strengthen population health in Nevada through the regionalization of public health services by counties and local agencies. The conference will conclude with town hall forum on current efforts in Nevada to make higher education campuses tobacco free.

The conference provides an opportunity for attendees to learn from the best and brightest public health practitioners in Nevada on new approaches, programs, and research to advance the public's health in our neighborhoods, communities, and state. The conference will also showcase the latest public health research and policy analysis from university-based researchers Reno, Las Vegas, and at the School of Medicine.

What does the future hold for public health in Nevada? Join the public health community as we begin to craft answers to this timely question at this year's annual conference on September 15 to 16 at the Joe Crowley Student Union on the University of Nevada, Reno campus.

For more information on the Nevada Public Health Association and its upcoming annual conference, please visit [www.nphaonline.org](http://www.nphaonline.org).

John Packham, PhD is Director of Health Policy Research at the University of Nevada School of Medicine and President Elect of the Nevada Public Health Association.