Health Day at the Capitol:
Fostering collaboration and active roles in policy development

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The Kansas Public Health Association (KPHA) is the oldest and largest organization of public health professionals in the state, representing more than 600 members. KPHA brings together researchers, health service providers, administrators, teachers, and other health workers in a unique, multidisciplinary environment of professional exchange, study, and action.

INTRODUCTION

For the last three years, Kansas Public Health Association has organized and facilitated a multi-agency Health Day at the Capitol intended to foster partnerships and develop legislative relationships between health advocates, health leaders, and policy makers to address the core function of policy development.

METHODS

- collaborated with health policy student
- health fair (information, blood pressure checks, body fat analysis, cholesterol screenings)
- healthy snacks & prize drawings
- advocacy training KPHA members
- rally on the capitol steps
- legislative reception/lunch
- invitations to practitioners using several email list serves, electronic newsletters, & linked coalitions
- email & hand delivered invitations to legislators
- National Public Health Week proclamation from the governor

RESULTS

- Over 40 vendor/agencies participated 2006 & 2007
- Key health policy leaders addressed participants
- Advocates met with legislators & health policy staff
- KPHA members received training; new policy tools
- A new multi-agency health alliance formed

The Alliance for Health Advocates has 35 member organizations who meet weekly during the legislative session to track health legislation.

Current Legislation of Interest

Bills in Senate Committees

Committee	Bill No.	Bill Description	Current Action
	SB 244	health insurance; dependant coverage until age 25	referred to FII 02/23/07
Health Cares Strategies - Margaret Ciancciarulo 296-7386			
	SB 309	Kansas health insurer connector act	FINAL ACTION: PASSED 03/21/07
	SB 464	rules and regs for Kansas health policy authority; administrative appeals; reimbursement from third parties	FINAL ACTION: PASSED 02/22/07
Public Health and Welfare - Morgan Dreyer 296-7384			
	SB 181	hospitals rising costs; civil penalty	referred to PHW 01/26/07
	SB 201	information on persons at child care facilities or family day care homes	FINAL ACTION: PASSED 02/21/07
	SB 202	definition of childcare facility	FINAL ACTION: PASSED 02/21/07
	SB 222	creating prescription confidentiality act	hearing - 02/15/07
	SB 245	care and treatment act for alcohol and substance abuse	hearing - 02/15/07
	SB 267	prohibiting smoking in motor vehicle with children 8 and under	hearing - 02/07/07
	SB 354	regulation of drug and alcohol treatment facilities	FINAL ACTION: PASSED 03/14/07
	SB 2214	regulation of sedation permits by Kansas dental board	FINAL ACTION: PASSED 03/20/07
	HB 2218	license renewal of dentists and dental hygienists	FINAL ACTION: PASSED 03/14/07
Transportation - Maggie Breen 296-7385			
	SB 3	doubling speeding fines in school zones	FINAL ACTION: PASSED 02/06/07
	SB 77	unattended and unsupervised children in motor vehicles safety act	FINAL ACTION: PASSED 02/22/07
	SB 211	safety belts; primary enforcement for under age 18	FINAL ACTION: PASSED 02/22/07
	SB 223	primary safety belt law; penalty	referred to transportation 01/31/07
	SB 264	driver's license; age requirements	referred to transportation 02/27/07

CONCLUSION

Health fairs and rallies create opportunities for collaboration among public health practitioners, dialogue with legislators, and media attention to public health policy concerns. Advocacy training is needed to engage more practitioners to develop relationships with elected officials which will require creative strategies to meet practitioner needs. This event should continue.

ABOVE: Dr. Richter and an MPH student at the health day event
BELOW: Dr. Samuel Crumbine (first health officer in KS) reenactment

ABOVE: KS State Senator Susan Wagle addressed health day attendees
BELOW: KS State Senator Laura Kelly addressed health day attendees

BELOW: KS State Representatives who won the pedometer challenge posing with a cardboard cutout of Governor Sebelius: Raj Goyle (Wichita), Eber Phelps (Hays) and Mike Burgess (Topeka)

PARTICIPANTS IN HEALTH DAY AT THE CAPITOL—A BROAD-BASED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EFFORT

The Kansas Foundation for Medical Care, American Heart Association, Arthritis Foundation, Oral Health Kansas, Inc., Kansas Department on Aging, Johnson County Health Department, Shawnee County Health Agency, Shawnee County Medical Reserve Corp., Tobacco Use Prevention Program-KDHE, Sedgwick County Health Department, Barber County Health Department, Crawford County Health Department, Kansas State University, University of Kansas MPH Program, Washburn University students, Kansas Association of Community Mental Health Centers, Kansas Association for the Medically Underserved, Governor's Healthy Kansas Initiative, Kansas Health Consumer Coalition, Kansas Health Policy Authority, Parent Teacher Association, Kansas Association of Teachers of Physical Education Recreation and Dance, Poison Control, Planned Parenthood, Unicare; Kansas Department of Health and Environment with representation from these programs: Comprehensive Cancer Program, Diabetes Prevention and Control Program, Heart Disease & Stroke Prevention Program, Kansas Arthritis Program, Office of Minority Health, Office of Health Promotion, Public Health Emergency Management, Coordinated School Health Program–KDHE & Kansas Department of Education,