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# WISCONSIN PUBLIC HEALTH COUNCIL

*Assure safe and healthy people by monitoring progress on the state health plan,  
Healthiest Wisconsin 2020, and on the readiness for public health emergencies.*

DATE: March 20, 2013

TO: Ms. Karen McKeown, MSN, RN  
Administrator, Wisconsin Division of Public Health  
Chair, Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Health

FROM: Gary Gilmore, MPH, PhD, MCHES  
Chair, Wisconsin Public Health Council

Terri Kramolis, RN, MSHA  
Chair, State Health Plan Quality Improvement Committee  
Wisconsin Public Health Council

RE: In Support of Aligning Policies and Systems for Better Health

The Wisconsin Public Health Council believes that *it takes the work of many to improve the health of all*. The mission of the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Health is strongly aligned to the charge of the Wisconsin Public Health Council and the framework and focus area objectives contained in *Healthiest Wisconsin 2020: Everyone Living Better, Longer*.

Shared leadership and collaboration between state governmental agencies, and in this case state councils created by state statute or Executive Order, directly benefit the public's health by creating conditions in which people can be healthy where they live, work, learn and play. The Wisconsin Public Health Council extends our hand in partnership with the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Health to promote and protect the health of children, youth, and adults to prevent chronic diseases and improve quality of life through primary prevention efforts aimed at improved nutrition, increased physical activity and reduced overweight and obesity.

The Wisconsin Public Health Council, authorized under Wisconsin Statutes s. 15.19(13) and s. 250.07(1m), oversees the progress of *Healthiest Wisconsin 2020: Everyone Living Better, Longer*. Healthiest Wisconsin 2020 is Wisconsin's statewide public health agenda as required in Wisconsin Statutes, Section 250.07 (1) (a): <http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/hw2020/index.htm>.

Throughout 2012 and to the present, we have been assessing progress and advancing policy recommendations regarding three specific focus areas in the agenda. These areas are:

1. Adequate, appropriate and safe food and nutrition
2. Physical activity
3. Chronic disease prevention and management

As a result of our progress reviews, we attest that:

- Aligning policies and systems with shared missions creates durable networks, trust, and buy-in; increases access to information and ideas; models the way for communities; and improves opportunities for substantive results.
- Adequate, appropriate and safe nutrition, including breastfeeding, is a cornerstone for preventing chronic disease and promoting vibrant health.
- Physical activity is a preventive factor for many adverse health conditions, such as heart disease, stroke, high blood cholesterol, depression, and bone and joint diseases.
- A system of partnerships goes to the heart of the definition of public health in Wisconsin. Partnerships extend the reach and impact of services and programs, and increase support for important policies. They improve outcomes through shared leadership, shared accountability and shared resources.
- Lessening the impact of obesity and chronic diseases will require public and private organizations to implement population-level, evidence-based strategies in families, early care and education, schools, communities, worksites and health care, with an emphasis on the populations and geographies at greatest risk.
- A stable infrastructure at the state and local level is needed to provide leadership, training and technical assistance, communication, and resources, and to monitor and report progress to stakeholders and the public.

The Public Health Council stands ready to align our efforts and make coordination and collaboration between our two councils a reality. In the near term, please expect a call from Margaret Schmelzer, MS, RN, State Health Plan Director, and Ms. Terri Kramolis, member of the Public Health Council, to discuss this letter and identify ways to work together for the people of Wisconsin and the communities where we live, grow, work, learn and play.

Thank you.

Attachment:

Healthiest Wisconsin 2020 Brochure

Copy: Governor Scott Walker  
Kitty Rhoades, Secretary-Elect, Wisconsin Department of Health Services  
Members, Governor's Council on Physical Fitness and Health  
Members, Wisconsin Public Health Council  
Henry Anderson, MD, State Health Officer  
Sandra L. K. Breitborde, Deputy Administrator, Division of Public Health  
Kimberly Liedl, Council Staff, Office of the Governor  
Patricia Guhleman, MS, Director, Office of Policy and Practice Alignment  
Mary Pesik, RD, CD, Coordinator, Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Program  
Wisconsin Local Health Officers  
Regional Office Directors