

The DPH Bulletin

From the Delaware Division of Public Health

April 2019



DHMIC names Community Champions

Mom's House Wilmington received the Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium's Community Champion Award for outstanding group. Pictured from left are: Division of Public Health Director Dr. Karyl Rattay; LaHoma Rodriguez, Development Director, Mom's House Wilmington; Dr. Agnes Richardson, DHMIC's Health Equity Committee Chair; and Anthony S. (T.J.) Voell, President of the Board of Directors, Mom's House Wilmington. At upper right is Cecilia Lopez of La Red Health Center. She received the Champion Award for outstanding individual.

The Delaware Healthy Mother and Infant Consortium (DHMIC) presented its 2019 Community Champion awards at its April 9 summit in Wilmington. Mom's House Wilmington was named outstanding group. The non-profit empowers single mothers and fathers to further their education by providing free day care while the parent works and returns to school. They boast a 100 percent graduation rate.

Cecilia Lopez, a Promotora for La Red Health Center in Georgetown, was honored as the outstanding individual. She transports mothers with special medical needs to Maternal Fetal Medicine appointments in Dover and Wilmington. She is an interpreter, a Certified Child Safety Seat Technician, and teaches parents how to set up cribs.

Delaware's infant mortality rate steadily declined from 9.3 deaths per 1,000 live births (2005) to 7.3 deaths per 1,000 live births (2017). The mortality rate among black Delaware infants is 12.5 deaths per 1,000 live births and among white infants it is 5.1 deaths. To achieve a sustainable reduction in the state's infant mortality rate, the DHMIC addresses the social determinants of health, including poverty, hunger, and low-paying jobs that predispose many women of childbearing age to poor birth outcomes.

DPH asks dentists and oral surgeons to encourage healthy pain management

To lower the rate of opioid prescriptions from dental providers, the Division of Public Health (DPH) is encouraging safe and healthy pain management through the distribution of toolkits to dental offices. Included is a provider letter and fact sheet, a patient brochure, and posters. The campaign drives home the message that "all pain is not the same." The American Dental Association strongly recommends considering non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) such as Motrin or Aleve, instead of opioid medications, to manage acute pain.

Dentists are among the leading prescribers of opioid medications, particularly for surgical tooth extractions. In fact, dentists and oral surgeons are commonly in a position to prescribe adolescents their first opioid prescription after the removal of the third molars, also known as "wisdom teeth." The highest number of dental-related opioid prescriptions are for teenagers ages 14 to 17, followed closely by young adults ages 18 to 24.

"Dental professionals have a unique opportunity to help curtail the opioid epidemic by suggesting opioid alternatives for pain management when possible, counseling patients on the risks of opioid use, and educating on proper disposal procedures," said Dr. Nick Conte, Director of the DPH Bureau of Oral Health and Dental Services (BOHDS).



DPH Director Dr. Karyl Rattay, right, chats with Lauren Sleitweiler, a William Penn High School senior, at the fifth annual Rare Disease Day Student Research Event. It was held February 28 at the A.I. duPont Hospital for Children. Lauren and Kayla Day (not pictured) researched Juvenile Onset Recurrent Respiratory Papillomatosis. Photo courtesy of Nemours Medical Photography.



DELAWARE HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES
Division of Public Health