

**Northern Illinois Public
Health Consortium, Inc.**
1240 N. Highland Avenue
Aurora, IL 60506

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: April 4, 2005
Contact: Michael Isaacson
(630) 208-3140

Local Health Departments Announce ‘Project Public Health Ready’ *Public Health Week announcement highlights the new face of public health*

Mary Lou England, RN, MS
President
Executive Director
Kane County
Health Department

John L. Wilhelm, M.D., MPH
Secretary
Commissioner
Chicago Department of
Public Health

Stephen Martin, Ph.D., MPH
Director
Cook County Department
of Public Health

Leland Lewis, MBA
Director
DuPage County
Health Department

Dale W. Galassie, MA, MS
Executive Director
Lake County
Health Department

Patrick McNulty
Administrator
McHenry County
Health Department

James E. Zelko, RS
Director
Will County
Health Department

J. Maichle Bacon, MPH, RS
Administrative Director
Winnebago County
Health Department

Nine northeastern Illinois health departments are announcing their participation in Project Public Health Ready, a program that will serve as the model for the rest of the country in regional emergency preparedness. The announcement is being made during the observance of National Public Health Week, April 4-10.

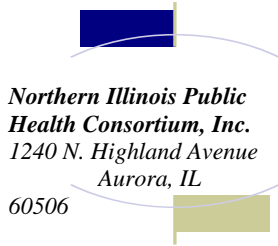
“Each health department in northeastern Illinois has its own emergency preparedness program in place, but now we are placing more emphasis on a regional approach and response to an emergency,” said Mary Lou England, President of the Northern Illinois Public Health Consortium (NIPHC), an organization representing local public health officials. “Project Public Health Ready reflects what we like to call, the new face of public health. Since September 11, public health has become part of the first responder community-- similar to fire service, law enforcement and other emergency professionals who play an important role in protecting the health and safety of our communities.”

A regional approach to emergency preparedness would ensure that in the event of a large scale disease outbreak, bioterrorism incident or serious weather related event, the health departments could coordinate services across the region by providing support, public information, antibiotics, vaccines and other emergency supplies to the affected areas.

“Infectious disease outbreaks or natural disasters do not respect boundaries so it is important that health departments in the region be prepared to work together to respond to incidents that affect multiple counties,” Mrs. England said.

Public Health Ready is a partnership program developed by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Columbia University Center for Health Policy. Through the project, health officials are committed to training, planning and exercising their

-more-



agency’s workforce. As the lead model of the project, the northeastern Illinois region will be sharing its vision of preparedness with other areas in the country.

“National Public Health Week is the ideal time to announce this collaboration since it is a week that highlights the contributions of public health to the health and safety of the nation,” said Mrs. England.

Health departments participating in the Project include the Chicago Department of Public Health, Cook County Department of Public Health, the Lake County Health Department/Community Health Center, McHenry County Department of Health, DuPage County Health Department, Kane County Health Department, Will County Health Department, Winnebago County Health Department and Kendall County Department of Health. For more information on Project Public Health Ready, contact the Northern Illinois Public Health Consortium, at 630-208-3140 or the National Organization of County and City Officials at www.naccho.org.

###

Mary Lou England, RN, MS
President
Executive Director
Kane County
Health Department

John L. Wilhelm, M.D., MPH
Secretary
Commissioner
Chicago Department of
Public Health

Stephen Martin, Ph.D. , MPH
Director
Cook County Department
of Public Health

Leland Lewis, MBA
Director
DuPage County
Health Department

Dale W. Galassie, MA, MS
Executive Director
Lake County
Health Department

Patrick McNulty
Administrator
McHenry County
Health Department

James E. Zelko, RS
Director
Will County
Health Department

J. Maichle Bacon, MPH, RS
Administrative Director
Winnebago County
Health Department