Issues and Alerts

Seasonal Flu Vaccinations Set Record in 2009–10—More Americans were vaccinated against seasonal flu during the 2009–10 season (40% of eligible population) than during the previous flu season (33% of eligible population). The greatest gain was in children aged 6 months to 17 years. (Apr 29 CDC Online Newsroom; Apr 30 MMWR) ■ H1N1 (Swine) Influenza Update—H1N1 Flu activity is low nationwide; however small numbers of 2009 H1N1 viruses continue to be reported. Read H1N1 Influenza: The Year in Review for the milestones related to H1N1 from 2009 through 2010. ■ High-Impact Strategies Needed to Reduce Smoking—CDC data from the Tobacco Control State Highlights 2010 suggest smoking rates have remained constant for 5 years and that a combination of education and media campaigns, smoke-free air laws, and higher cigarette prices could reduce the percentage of adult smokers from its current 20% level. (Apr 23 CDC Online Newsroom; Apr 22 CNN) ■ President Signs Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act—On March 23, President Obama signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, enacting comprehensive health reform legislation, and ushering in an array of changes to our health system. (HR3590 via Thomas Web Site) ■ US Cancer Costs Double—The cost of treating cancer climbed from $25 billion to more than $48 billion over the last 18 years, according to a CDC study published in the journal Cancer. (May 10 Business Week; May 10 US News and World Report) ■ Transportation Policies Can Affect Health—CDC has identified transportation policies that can positively affect health and supports strategies that can provide a balanced portfolio of transportation choices that supports health and reduces health care costs. (CDC Web Site) ■ Overall E. coli Illnesses Decline—Preliminary CDC data showed the incidence of infections from E. coli O157:H7 declined in 2009 to its lowest level since 1994; however, infections from salmonella and other pathogens remained above the goals set by the government. (Apr 15 Washington Post; Apr 16 MMWR) ■ E. coli Outbreak Hits 3 States—A team of CDC employees is working with local health departments to track an E. coli outbreak that has been linked to lettuce in Ohio, Michigan, and New York. (May 15 CNN; May 2 NBC 4 Columbus) ■ Senator Grassley Seeks Advisors’ Conflict of Interest Disclosures—In an April 22nd letter, Senator Charles Grassley requested information on how CDC ensured its scientific advisors federal advisory committees fully disclosed financial conflicts of interest. (Apr 23 Reuters; Apr 24 AP) ■ Almost Half of Americans Have Heart Health Risks—Nearly half of all adult Americans have high cholesterol, high blood pressure or diabetes, all conditions that increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, (Apr 26 LA Times; Apr 26 NCHS Data Brief No. 36.)

Director’s Highlights

CDC’s Fills Additional Senior Leadership Positions—Senior leadership positions recently announced at CDC include Ursula Bauer, PhD, MPH, Director of the National Center
for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; Kevin M. DeCock, MD, FRCP (UK), DTM&H, Director of the Center for Global Health; Harold W. Jaffe, MD, MA, Associate Director for Science; Carmen Villar, MSW, Chief of Staff. ■ Diane Caves Honored, Remembered — CDC employee Diane Caves died in Haiti during the January 12 earthquake in Haiti. She was honored in a memorial service hosted by Dr. Frieden on March 1. Surgeon General Dr. Regina Benjamin spoke, delivering to Caves' family the personal condolence of President Barack Obama. (Mar 1 CBSAtlanta.com; Feb 13 Atlanta Journal Constitution and Photo Gallery; and numerous other sources) ■ CDC Director Frieden Makes Changes at CDC — Dr. Frieden explains the sense of urgency motivating him as CDC’s director and his reasons for making organizational changes. (Mar 15 New York Times)

Advisory Committee to the Director Updates

The Advisory Committee to the Director welcomed five new members at its April 2010 meeting: Dileep Bal, MD, MS, MPH, District Health Officer, Island of Kauai, Hawaii; Tom Farley, MD, MPH, New York City Health Commissioner; David Fleming, MD, MD Director and Health Officer for Public Health–Seattle–King County, WA; Alan Greenberg, MD, MPH, Professor and Chair of the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics at George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services; Kelly Henning, Director, International Health Programs, Bloomberg Foundation, New York, NY; Sara Rosenbaum, JD, Chair of the Department of Health Policy and Harold and Jane Hirsh Professor of Health Law and Policy, George Washington University. ■ The next Advisory Committee to the Director meeting is scheduled for October 28, 2010, at CDC in Atlanta.

Our Members

Eduardo Sanchez is quoted in an article about the lack of healthy foods in poor neighborhoods in an article about legislative and policy approaches to improving diet. (Apr 8 Cleveland Plain Dealer) ■ Nisha Botchwey recently was nominated and selected as one of 12 Rockefeller-Penn Fellows for 2010. ■ Kenneth Mandl is co-leading a project funded by a federal grant to develop an “iTunes App Store” for health. (Apr 8 Mass High Tech) ■ Cass Wheeler addressed American generosity after Haiti earthquake in a recent interview. (Apr 13 USA Today)

FYI: Resources

- CDC Calendar of Events (URL: http://www.cdc.gov/about/newsEvents/events.htm)
- CDC.gov Widgets and Gadgets (URL: http://www.cdc.gov/Widgets)
- Body Mass Index (URL: http://www.cdc.gov/healthyweight/assessing/bmi/)
- Advisory Committee to the Director (URL: http://www.cdc.gov/about/advisory/advCharter.htm)
- White House Agenda for Health Care (URL: http://www.whitehouse.gov/agenda/healthcare)