



## The Alaska Arthritis Program

If you're an Alaskan with arthritis, you're not alone. An estimated 107,000 Alaskans, or 23% of the adult population, have doctor-diagnosed arthritis<sup>1</sup>. Another 88,000 have chronic joint symptoms indicative of possible arthritis. The rate of arthritis is expected to increase 46% in the next 25 years in Alaska<sup>2</sup>.

Arthritis is a common and debilitating chronic disease, usually causing pain, stiffness and swelling in and around the joints. There are over 100 types of arthritis, including osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, gout, bursitis and fibromyalgia. Arthritis can limit a person's ability to remain physically active, work and complete the basic tasks of daily life. Arthritis is the number one cause of disability, costing Alaska \$275 million each year in medical expenses and lost wages<sup>3</sup>.

The goal of the Alaska Arthritis

*Please see [Alaska Arthritis Program](#), pg. 2*

State of Alaska, Sarah Palin, Governor

Department of Health and Social Services

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## Health Policy and Environmental Toolkit

Public policies that support health promotion objectives are tremendously effective in helping people live healthier lives. But many publicly employed health workers feel that their jobs limit their advocacy activities, especially those associated with local, state and federal legislation. The Directors of Health Promotion and Education (DHPE) is a national organization that works to "strengthen ... the professional practice of health promotion and public health education nationally and within State health departments." DHPE has produced resources to support public health employees in effective policy change efforts.

The **Health Policy and Environmental Toolkit** is available on-line. It has lots of information on the role and success of health policy change, effective communication with policy makers, and defining education versus advocacy versus lobbying. It also contains case studies and specialized competencies for the public health workforce. The URL for the toolkit is [www.dhpe.org/PolicyTools.htm](http://www.dhpe.org/PolicyTools.htm) or, to learn more about this organization and the toolkit, contact Jayne Andreen at [jayne.andreen@alaska.gov](mailto:jayne.andreen@alaska.gov).



Beverly Wooley welcomes the first K-12 Tobacco Prevention Grantees

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**Alaska Arthritis Program** *continued from pg. 1*

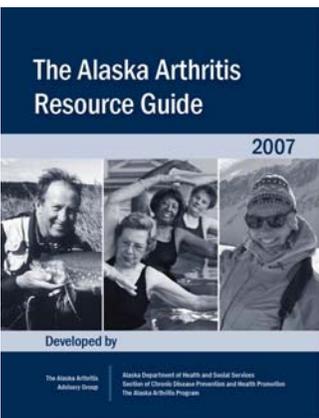
Program is to decrease the burden of arthritis and related



diseases and improve the quality of life among Alaskans living with these diseases. The Alaska

Arthritis Program collaborates with communities and partners to educate the public and health professionals about arthritis, to implement science-based strategies and interventions, and to advocate for the prevention and control of arthritis. Two examples of such partners are the Arthritis Foundation Pacific Northwest Chapter and the Alaska Arthritis Advisory Group. These partners have been very active this past year, working to expand intervention programs and arthritis education efforts around the state.

The Alaska Arthritis Program works with the Arthritis Foundation Pacific Northwest Chapter to provide evidence-based exercise programs that have been proven to be effective for people with arthritis. From June 2006



to June 2007, at least 20 new Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program and Arthritis Foundation Aquatic Program classes were conducted around Alaska. The Arthritis Foundation trained 58 new exercise leaders at four leader workshops in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Juneau and Barrow in an effort to expand the reach of these programs throughout the state.

The Alaska Arthritis Advisory Group consists of 20 agencies and individuals interested in arthritis and has been assisting the Arthritis Program for over five years.

They have recently released the *2007 Alaska Arthritis Resource Guide*, which contains a variety of national, state and local arthritis-related information and resources. This guide is available in hard copy, thanks to a grant from the Arthritis Foundation, and can also be accessed on the Alaska Arthritis Program website ([www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/arthritis](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/arthritis)).

The Alaska Arthritis Advisory Group has also been working to update the *2002 Alaska Arthritis and Osteoporosis Plan*. The group met for an all day face-to-face meeting in May 2007 and streamlined the goals and objectives for a new state plan. They are currently developing work groups around priority goals and objectives, and identifying strategies and activities for the next five years that will help decrease the burden of arthritis and improve the quality of life for Alaskans living with arthritis.

<sup>1</sup> AK DHSS. AK BRFSS - 2005, 2006.

<sup>2</sup> CDC. Projected State-Specific Increases in Self-Reported Doctor-Diagnosed Arthritis and Arthritis-Attributable Activity Limitations — United States, 2005–2030. *MMWR* 2007; 56: 423-425, 608-610.

<sup>3</sup> CDC. National and State Medical Expenditures and Lost Earnings Attributable to Arthritis and Other Rheumatic Conditions --- United States, 2003. *MMWR* 2007; 56 (01): 4-7.

## CDPHP Directory

Acting Section Chief	Andrea Fenaughty	269-8025
Arthritis	Diane Peck	269-8447
Cancer Registry	Jim Whitecavage	269-8127
Comprehensive Cancer Control	Julia Thorsness	269-8092
Community Preventive Services	Jayne Andreen	465-5729
Diabetes	Barbara Stillwater	269-8035
Health Survey Lab	Rebecca Wells	465-8540
Heart Disease and Stroke	Lee Peterson	465-8670
Obesity	Karol Fink	269-3457
School Health	Patty Owen	465-2768
Social Marketing and Media	Paula Recchia	465-5663
Tobacco	Lisa Aquino	269-8089

or go to the CDPHP website: [www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/)



DPH Director Beverly Wooley with the first K-12 Tobacco Prevention Grantees at the 2007 School Wellness Institute.

## Introducing Lee Peterson, new Alaska Heart Disease/Stroke Program Manager

I've been a nurse since 1980. My nursing degrees come from St. Olaf College, the University of Minnesota, and Gonzaga. As a Family Nurse Practitioner, I have mainly worked with older adults. Prior to this job, I had worked for a decade as the Nurse Consultant for the Pioneers' Homes. So I have seen many, many people whose lives have been impacted by cardiovascular disease and stroke.

The Heart Disease and Stroke Program works to develop systems for early recognition and best-possible medical treatment of heart attack or stroke symptoms. Early treatment of symptoms can greatly decrease disability following a heart attack or stroke.

On a personal note, I have been very fortunate in my life to have had much time to travel. Over a decade ago, I bicycled from Fairbanks to Acapulco, Mexico. I was happy to have learned Spanish in school, and still enjoy the language very much. Another travel highlight of my life was going to Southwestern Africa in 1999. Beginning in 2004, I took a two year time-out. I traveled in both Mexico and Europe, and studied yoga.

In addition to yoga, I enjoy running, hiking, bicycling, boating, and fishing.

## Events

Thursday, **November 8**, 9:30 am  
*CDC Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity Teleconference*. For topic, contact [karol.fink@alaska.gov](mailto:karol.fink@alaska.gov)

Thursday, **November 15**. *Great American Smoke-Out* For more information, contact: JoAnne Zito-Brause, Media Project Coordinator, [joanne.zito-brause@alaska.gov](mailto:joanne.zito-brause@alaska.gov) or (907) 269-3498

Tuesday—Thursday, **November 27-29**  
*Tobacco Community Prevention Grantee Training*. For more information, contact: Gail Schiemann, Community Grants Manager, [gail.schiemann@alaska.gov](mailto:gail.schiemann@alaska.gov) or (907) 269-8895

Monday-Wednesday, **December 3-5**  
*Alaska Health Summit* will include presentations by several CDPHP staff.

Wednesday-Friday, **December 5-7**  
*Alaska Area Diabetes Conference*, will include a Living Well Alaska poster and co-presentations by Barbara Stillwater of the AK Diabetes Program.

Thursday, **December 13**, 9:30  
*CDC Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity Teleconference*. For topic, contact [karol.fink@alaska.gov](mailto:karol.fink@alaska.gov)

## New resources from CDPHP

Alaska Section of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Living Well Alaska. *Chronicle* No. 1, September, 2007.

<http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/pubs/assets/ChroniclesV1-1.pdf>

Living Well Alaska Action Plan bookmarks  
Contact Barbara Stillwater for more information:  
[barbara.stillwater@alaska.gov](mailto:barbara.stillwater@alaska.gov) or 269-8035

Boles, Myde. *Evaluation of the Alaska Quit Line: Final Report*. June 30, 2007  
[www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/tobacco/PDF/QuitlineReport.pdf](http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/tobacco/PDF/QuitlineReport.pdf)

Alaska Department of Health and Social Services. *Strategic Plan for Eliminating Tobacco-Related Disparities*. Anchorage, AK: State of Alaska, Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health, Section of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Tobacco Prevention and Control Program; 2007.  
[www.tobaccopreventionnetworks.org/atf/cf/%7B8E933A1E-91B6-4509-932B-3CE06BF55CA6%7D/TOBACCO%20DISPARITIESPLANALASKA.PDF](http://www.tobaccopreventionnetworks.org/atf/cf/%7B8E933A1E-91B6-4509-932B-3CE06BF55CA6%7D/TOBACCO%20DISPARITIESPLANALASKA.PDF)

**AHELP:** CDPHP sponsors the Alaska Health Education Library Project (AHELP) website at [www.ahelp.org](http://www.ahelp.org). This website includes an electronic calendar of events; CDPHP encourages entries about public health training and events occurring anywhere in Alaska!