



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Grand Forks Public Health

TESTIMONY ON SENATE APPROPRIATIONS – HUMAN RESOURCES DIVISION
Department of Health & Human Services budget - Division of Public Health
March 17, 2025

Chairperson Dever and members of the committee:

Grand Forks Public Health (GFPH) welcomes local state aid dollars every biennium. GFPH serves Grand Forks County located in Districts 17, 18, 20, 42, and 43. Dedicated local state aid funds with public health priority have diverse uses; here, I'd like to highlight three of those uses.

Connection to NDIIS. Over a decade ago, the healthcare industry moved from paper charting to electronic health records. This advancement has allowed timely care for patients and clients as protected information-sharing supports continuity of care and reduced redundancy. ND Health & Human Services maintains the North Dakota Immunization Information System (NDIIS) which serves ND residents by consolidating vaccine information from multiple providers, generating an official certificate of immunization. Local public health units who provide vaccination use an electronic medical record that connects to NDIIS to ensure up-to-date information as well as generate a billing function to ease efficiencies. Local state aid dollars support the continued subscription fees and maintenance of these electronic health records.

Regional Environmental Health. In addition to serving Grand Forks County, GFPH provides environmental health services to the NE region by conducting response to nuisance complaints and education around on-site sewage treatment systems. This offloads work from ND HHS and ND DEQ as we all are challenged by workforce issues. Continued dedicated funding is important to maintain these efforts in rural parts where this expertise may not be readily available.

Furthering state health priorities. GFPH uses local state aid funding to supplement ND HHS grant work when grant awards have been level funded for years, despite the sharp rise in inflation. Costs and salaries continue to increase and these funds allow the prioritized grant work to continue locally.

Public health does not make progress alone and these funds are vital to the continuity of the critical technological connections and work occurring in communities across North Dakota. Please accept my written testimony on maintaining dedicated local state aid dollars for local public health units.

Respectfully,

Tess Wall, MBA, RN
Director
Grand Forks Public Health