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Academy News

DELAWARE MINI MEDICAL SCHOOL
Wednesdays, 6:30 - 8:00 PM

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|---------|---|
| MAY 13 | PUBLIC HEALTH EPIDEMIOLOGY KATE SMITH, MD, MPH |
| MAY 20 | EAR, NOSE, THROAT AND ALLERGY AMANDA CANNAVAN, PA-C |
| JUN 3 | KIDNEYS AND THE PRACTICE OF NEPHROLOGY WILLIAM DARRIS, DO |
| JUN 10 | PHYSICAL THERAPY AND MORE COLIN BURKE, PT, DPT |
| JUN 17 | OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY, PRIMARY CARE FOR WOMEN MANDY FEARL, MD |
| JUN 24 | PRIMARY CARE IN HOSPITAL AND CLINIC SETTINGS REGINA WEINER, MD, MPH, AND ERIN KAVANAGH, MD |
| JUN TBD | BACKUP SESSION - ONLY IF NEEDED |

Logos: DELAWARE ACADEMY OF MEDICINE & PUBLIC HEALTH, SUSSEX COUNTY HEALTH COALITION

Delaware Mini Medical School: Late Spring Series

Registration is now open for the Late Spring 2026 Delaware Mini Medical School, a six-week educational series held Wednesday evenings from May 13 through June 24 (6:30–8:00 pm).

The program features expert-led sessions on a range of health topics, including public health, women’s health, and primary care. Designed to engage the community, the series offers participants an inside look at different areas of medicine and healthcare practice.

DELA Who What? Where?

Episode 3:
Spotlight: the Delaware Journal of Public Health "AI and Big Data" Issue

New Episode: The Delaware Journal of Public Health "AI and Big Data" Issue

Hosted by Kate Smith, MD, MPH, this episode features Yixiang Deng, PhD, University of Delaware faculty member and co-Guest Editor of the *Delaware Journal of Public Health's* 2026 "AI and Big Data" issue alongside Weisong Shi, PhD.

The conversation explores how artificial intelligence and data science are reshaping public health, including disease surveillance, health systems, and research innovation, and highlights the growing role of AI in data-driven decision-making.

Register Here

Listen Here

96th Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony Recap

Last night at the Hyatt Place Wilmington Riverfront, we gathered to celebrate leadership, partnership, and progress in maternal and infant health across Delaware. The Lewis B. Flinn President's Award was presented to **Dr. David A. Paul** in recognition of his decades-long leadership in reducing infant mortality and preterm birth in Delaware. As Governor-appointed chair of the Delaware Healthy Mother & Infant Consortium from 2005–2023, Dr. Paul helped guide statewide efforts that contributed to a dramatic decline in infant mortality, alongside his long clinical career in neonatology and his ongoing work in medical education and advocacy.



The Executive Director's Public Health Recognition Award honored the **Delaware Healthy Mother & Infant Consortium (DHMIC)** for its sustained impact since its creation in 2006 following the Infant Mortality Task Force's recommendations. DHMIC has played a central role in coordinating statewide strategies to reduce infant deaths and address persistent racial disparities, advancing a vision that maternal and infant health reflects the health of the broader community.

The evening also featured a keynote address from **DHSS Secretary Christen Linke Young**, a nationally recognized health policy leader who has served in senior roles at the White House, CMS, and state health agencies. She reflected on federal and state efforts to expand coverage, strengthen maternal health systems, and address pressing public health challenges including mental health and substance use. Her remarks underscored the importance of coordinated policy action and sustained investment in improving outcomes for Delawareans.



DYMA Events Recap

DYMA Scholars engaged in two enriching learning experiences this month focused on both the ethical foundations of public health and pathways into medical careers. In an Ethics in Public Health session led by Academy Executive Director Kate Smith, MD, MPH, students explored complex topics such as balancing the common good with individual rights, the legacy of unethical medical practices, and how those histories continue to shape trust, equity, and decision-making in public health today. The discussion emphasized what ethical action looks like in practice and the importance of advancing health equity and human rights.



Ethics in Public Health

Kate Smith, MD, MPH
Executive Director



Scholars also participated in an information session on the University of Delaware's Medical Scholars Program, including the 4+4 accelerated pathway to a medical degree. Speakers shared what drew them to the program, outlined its structure and application process, and offered insight into what prospective applicants can expect. The session

Delaware News

Delaware Medical School Plans Draw Multiple Bids From Major Regional Universities

Delaware's effort to establish its first medical school is moving forward with multiple competitive proposals from established institutions, including Thomas Jefferson University and the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. The bids come after the state secured nearly \$160 million in federal Rural Health Transformation funding to expand rural health care capacity and address physician shortages. The proposed school is expected to enroll at least 40 students by 2028 and leverage existing clinical training sites across Delaware, particularly in rural communities. While Jefferson already maintains strong clinical ties in the state, PCOM and other applicants are also proposing partnerships aimed at expanding physician training pipelines. A consulting firm and a Puerto Rico-based medical school also submitted proposals as Delaware evaluates how best to build and operate the new program.

Delaware Cancer Death Rates Continue Steady Decline, New State Report Shows

New data from the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) show continued declines in cancer mortality across the state, with death rates dropping an average of 1.5% per year between 2008 and 2022. The findings, presented to the Delaware Cancer Consortium, include updated cancer incidence and mortality data from 2018–2022 along with long-term trends dating back to 2008, reflecting progress in prevention, early detection, and treatment. The report finds that the most commonly diagnosed cancers in Delaware are breast, prostate, lung and bronchus, and colorectal cancer, while the leading causes of cancer death remain lung and bronchus, breast, prostate, colorectal, and pancreatic cancers. Mortality rates have declined among non-Hispanic White and non-Hispanic Black males, but have remained stable for females and Hispanic populations. Delaware now ranks 15th nationally for cancer mortality, a significant improvement from its ranking in the 1990s, though its overall cancer incidence rate remains above the national average.

Oregon's Hospital Pricing Caps Offer Clues as Delaware Debates Primary Care Reform Bill

As Delaware considers **Senate Bill 1**, which would cap certain provider reimbursements at 250% of Medicare and increase insurer spending on primary care, lawmakers are looking to Oregon's similar reference-based pricing system for insight. Oregon implemented its **policy** in 2017, setting a lower cap at 200% of Medicare for its state employee health plan and reporting more than \$112 million in savings within a few years. Studies and state officials say Oregon's approach produced cost savings with only modest impacts on hospital revenues, though some providers faced financial strain and long-term effects remain under review. Supporters of Delaware's proposal argue it could help control rising health care costs and improve access to primary care, while opponents warn it could pressure hospital finances.

What else we are reading:

- [Statewide Review of Water Infrastructure in Manufactured Home Communities](#)
- [Cape Henlopen Schools Swept Into Federal Reversal of Transgender Student Protections](#)
- [DeIDOT on National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week](#)
- [DE Detects First Case of Chronic Wasting Disease in Wild Deer Population](#)
- [DSB Releases Map of Eligible Opportunity Zone Census Tracts for 2.0 Program](#)

- [DHMIC Summit Marks 20 Years of Progress on Maternal & Infant Health](#)
- [DE Lawmakers Advance Bills Limiting State Role in Federal Immigration Enforcement](#)
- [ChristianaCare CEO Janice Nevin to Retire, Jenn Schwartz Named Successor](#)
- [Nemours Opens Institute for Maternal Fetal Health, Expanding Advanced Prenatal and Surgical Care in Delaware Valley](#)
- [Ethylene Oxide Leak Near Delaware Memorial Bridge Triggers Investigation](#)

National News

25th Annual Virtual IHA Health Literacy Conference

Registration is open for a free virtual health literacy conference featuring expert-led plenary sessions, live discussions, on-demand content, and interactive networking opportunities. Attendees can participate in lightning talks, poster sessions, roundtables, and one-on-one networking, with optional paid add-ons including workshops, a policy preconference, and continuing education credits. Registration for add-ons closes May 8, 2026, while general conference registration remains open throughout the event. A highlighted Day 2 panel discussion will explore how cross-sector partnerships, featuring speakers **Peggy Geisler** and **Kristy Handley** of the **Sussex County Health Coalition**, are using health literacy to build career pathways and strengthen workforce development in community health.

Nearly Half of U.S. Children Exposed to Unhealthy Air, New Report Finds

A new “State of the Air” report from the American Lung Association finds that 33.5 million children (nearly half of all kids in the U.S.) are breathing unhealthy levels of air pollution. Because their lungs are still developing and they breathe more air relative to their size, children are especially vulnerable to long-term health impacts, including increased risk of lung disease. While air quality has improved over the past several decades, the report notes that 152 million Americans still live in areas with unhealthy pollution levels. It also highlights fossil fuel-powered data centers as an emerging contributor to local air pollution, underscoring ongoing challenges despite decades of progress.

Study Finds Hundreds of Thousands of U.S. Children Face Food Insecurity Despite Ineligibility for SNAP

A new JAMA Pediatrics study using 2024 national survey data from more than 33 million children finds that about 2% of children experiencing food insecurity live in households above the typical SNAP eligibility threshold of 200% of the federal poverty level. This equates to roughly 658,000 children whose families are struggling to access federal food assistance. The study found higher rates of food insecurity among Black, Hispanic or Latino, Spanish-speaking, and publicly insured families, with many affected households earning just above eligibility limits. Researchers argue that current income thresholds may exclude vulnerable families and suggest expanding SNAP eligibility, though they note recent federal policy changes are more likely to tighten access rather than broaden it.

What else we are reading:

- [Bay Area Emerges as Rotavirus Hotspot, Wastewater Data Shows Elevated Levels](#)
- [Trump Orders \\$50M to Expand Psychedelic Mental Health Therapies & Speed Review](#)
- [Omaha's Lead Crisis Exposes Gaps in Childhood Testing Amid Largest U.S. Cleanup Site](#)
- [Microplastics in Nearly All Human Brain Samples; Confusion Over Gov't Claims](#)
- [Public Trust in Doctors Hits Decades Low](#)
- [Health Groups Sue EPA Over Soot Standards and Rollback of Mercury Pollution Limits](#)
- [Trump Removes Entire National Science Board, Concerns Over NSF Independence](#)

- [Georgetown University to Launch World Cup Disease Surveillance Hub to Monitor Global Health Risks](#)
- [RFK Jr. Delays \\$600M in Vaccine Funding for Low-Income Countries](#)

Global News

War Disruptions in Strait of Hormuz Trigger Widespread Shortages of Food, Medicine, and Fuel

Shipping disruptions tied to the Iran war are halting the flow of critical supplies across the Middle East, Africa, and Asia, leaving humanitarian organizations struggling to deliver food, **medications**, fuel, and fertilizers. Aid groups report dwindling stocks of essentials like antibiotics, IV fluids, and malnutrition treatments, with some shipments stranded in transit. The shortages are already contributing to rising disease risks, including **increases in infections** such as influenza and shigellosis. Experts warn the situation could worsen significantly, particularly in vulnerable countries with limited resilience, while attacks on key infrastructure like desalination plants raise urgent concerns about access to safe drinking water.

Wildlife Trade Raises Risk of Human Disease Spillover, Landmark Study Finds

A major new study in *Science* finds that mammals involved in the wildlife trade are significantly more likely to carry and transmit diseases to humans, offering some of the strongest evidence yet of zoonotic risk. Analyzing over 2,000 species across 40 years of data, researchers found that 41% of traded mammals harbor at least one human pathogen, compared to just 6.4% of non-traded species, making traded animals about 1.5 times more likely to spread disease. The elevated risk is driven by close, often unsanitary contact in markets, which facilitates cross-species transmission, with new shared pathogens emerging over time. While improved hygiene and surveillance could reduce risks, **experts warn** that outright bans may drive the trade underground and worsen the threat.

Maternal RSV Vaccination Cuts Infant Hospitalizations by Over 80%, Large England Study Finds

A major real-world **study of nearly 290,000 infants** in England found that vaccinating pregnant women against RSV reduces hospitalizations in young babies by at least 80%. The research, conducted after the 2024 rollout of maternal RSV immunizations, showed an 81.3% reduction in RSV-related hospital admissions overall when vaccination occurred at least two weeks before birth, with protection rising to 85% when given four weeks prior. Researchers found timing was critical, with reduced effectiveness when vaccination occurred closer to delivery. The study, the largest of its kind, also confirmed strong protection in preterm infants when administered within the recommended window. Experts say the findings highlight a powerful tool for preventing severe infant respiratory illness and could have significant global implications, particularly in regions where RSV causes high rates of hospitalization and death.

What else we are reading:

- [UN Expert Warns Mexico Facing “Toxic Crisis” as U.S. Waste and Pollution Mount](#)
- [Mysterious Illness Kills Five in Burundi as Officials Rule Out Ebola and Marburg](#)
- [Police Guard Killed in Attack on Polio Vax Team as Pakistan Launches Nationwide Drive](#)
- [Zambia’s HIV Program Success Raises Questions as U.S. Pushes New Direct Aid](#)
- [Russia Urged to Expand Annual HIV Testing as Infections Continue to Rise](#)
- [Study: Severe Malaria in Early Childhood Linked to Long-Term Cognitive Impairment](#)
- [Algeria Eliminates Trachoma, Becomes 29th Country to End Blinding Disease](#)

- [Study Finds Pesticide Mixtures May Raise Cancer Risk by Up to 150%](#)
- [New Imaging Tool Could Transform Endometriosis Diagnosis, Cutting Years-Long Delays](#)
- [Portable DNA Test Could Transform TB Diagn More Accessible Screening](#)

Additional Resources

Delaware Health and Social Services - [Public Health Information Portal](#)
 Trust for America's Health: Wellness and Prevention Digest - [Subscribe](#)

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