

# MOLLY HOWELL

IMMUNIZATION DIRECTOR - DoH  
DISEASE CONTROL DIVISION  
BISMARCK



## WHAT ROLES HAVE YOU SERVED IN WHILE WORKING FOR THE STATE OF ND?

I started with the state in 2003 as the immunization surveillance coordinator and led investigations for vaccine preventable diseases. In 2006, I became the immunization director and have been serving in this role ever since.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE DISEASE CONTROL DIVISION, AND WHAT KIND OF SERVICES DOES IT PROVIDE?

Our division works to protect the health of North Dakotans by preventing and mitigating vaccine-preventable diseases through immunization, by managing immunization resources and immunization information systems, and by identifying and promoting evidence-based public health best practices.

## WHAT ARE SOME OF THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR POSITION?

A lot of my work surrounds disease surveillance and increasing immunization coverage rates in North Dakota for all age groups. I also oversee the federal Vaccines for Children program, which provides vaccines for children who are on Medicaid, are uninsured or under-insured, or are American Indian. My job is constantly changing, and I think the ability to witness a direct impact in disease rates declining as a result of immunizations is one of the most rewarding parts of my practice.

## WHAT ARE SOME ACTIVITIES OR HOBBIES THAT YOU ENJOY OUTSIDE OF WORK?

In the summer, I play on a sand volleyball team mostly made up of DoH employees that's a lot of fun. I also enjoy curling, playing tennis, and spending time with my husband and three-year-old.

## HOW DO YOU THINK THE INTEGRATION OF DOH AND DHS WILL ENHANCE SERVICES FOR NORTH DAKOTANS?

One area where I think our agencies have an opportunity to collaborate is in setting health goals for Medicaid recipients. I think that with DoH providing the best health practices combined with DHS's expertise of working with vulnerable populations, we will be able to reach more of our goals.

**"Working together, I think we can be more efficient and reduce health disparities throughout the state."**

BETTER

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