



MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Janine M. Sheedy
jsheedy@mchc.com
312-906-6175

Illinois Poison Center Submits Official Closure Notice

State's only poison center to close in less than 90 days without sustainable funding source

Chicago- On Monday, April 1, the Illinois Poison Center (IPC), in accordance with 77 Ill. Adm. Code 215, provided its 90 days' notice to the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) that in the event sustainable funding for the IPC cannot be secured, **the state's only and the nation's oldest poison center will close on Tuesday, July 1, 2014.**

Due to decreases in public investment, the IPC can no longer remain operational without a dedicated funding source, leaving Illinois to be the only state in the nation without poison center services. Legislation led by State Senator Don Harmon and Representative Camille Lilly to save the IPC has passed through the Senate and House of Representatives committees and is on second reading.

The IPC has sustained an annual loss of \$1.5 million in public funding over the period of 2009-2013. In response to these funding losses, the IPC has decreased public education and outreach by 70 percent and call center staff by over 25 percent. Despite these operational reductions, the IPC has functioned at a net loss of approximately \$500,000 annually for the past two years, and is forecasting the same deficit for 2014.

The closure of the IPC will greatly harm public safety across the state and result in substantial increases in health care costs for Illinois. For every \$1 invested in the IPC, there is a more than \$13 savings in reduced health care and lost productivity, resulting in an annual return on the state's investment of \$52 million. In 2013 alone, the IPC prevented an estimated 35,000 emergency department visits and saved approximately 20,000 ambulance runs. The IPC's 24-hour, toll-free helpline cares for nearly 82,000 poison-related cases throughout Illinois annually, with nearly 49 percent of these cases involving children ages five and under.

Please [click here](#) for additional information on the IPC's funding efforts in Springfield. IPC Medical Director Dr. Michael Wahl and Operations Director Dr. Carol DesLauriers are available for interviews on the IPC's funding campaign. In addition, below please find a list of spokespeople available to provide commentary on the IPC's importance:

Attorney General Lisa Madigan

Press Contact, Maura Possley
(312) 814-3118
mpossley@atg.state.il.us

IDPH Director Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck

Press Contact, Melaney Arnold
(217) 558-0500
melaney.arnold@illinois.gov

Representative Camille Lilly

Press Contact, Katy Langenfeld
(217) 782-1014
klangenfeld@hds.ilga.gov

State Senator Don Harmon

Press Contact, Ian Watts
(217) 782.0571
IWatts@senatedem.ilga.gov

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The Illinois Poison Center is a non-profit health service that provides the people of Illinois with comprehensive and trusted information and treatment advice on potentially harmful substances via a free, confidential 24-hour hotline staffed by specially trained doctors, nurses and pharmacists.



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