



Ohio Department of Health  
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## News Release

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John R. Kasich / Governor  
Theodore E. Wymyslo, M.D. / Director



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Media Contact: Office of Public Affairs, 614.644.8562**

### **State Health Department Teams with WebMD to Enhance Public Health Alerting System**

COLUMBUS--The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) today announced it has teamed with Medscape of WebMD, a leading online-source of information for healthcare professionals, to communicate urgent public health messages to its physicians, pharmacists and nurse members in Ohio.

“We are constantly exploring new and innovative ways to reach more Ohioans with critical health news and information,” said Dr. Ted Wymyslo, ODH director. “This unique public-private partnership gives us another important tool in that effort,” Wymyslo said.

The Ohio Department of Health is part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) national Health Alert Network (HAN) system. The infrastructure of the HAN system supports the immediate dissemination of vital health information at the state and local levels. The messaging system directly transmits health alerts, advisories, and updates to local health departments, hospitals and public health partners.

Medscape will support these efforts by directly distributing health information including infectious disease outbreaks, environmental and product safety advisories, preparedness planning and response information, and public health developments among other alerts, to its network of registered clinical members throughout Ohio.

“Our goal is to support Ohio on both a state and local level in its efforts to ensure physicians receive the most critical health alerts,” said Robert Marotta, senior vice president & chief regulatory counsel of WebMD. “As a leading source of health information and news for physicians, Medscape can quickly reach healthcare providers in our state, enabling the Ohio Department of Health to further expand the breadth of its critical communications.”

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Upon receipt of medical alerts and updates, the Ohio Department of Health will supply information to Medscape for distribution to its local network of Ohio-based healthcare providers. Registered Medscape members will receive the latest information via email alert.

*Note: According to data provided by Medscape, approximately 50 percent of Physicians, 75 percent of physician assistants, 30 percent of Pharmacists and 25 percent of Nurses licensed to practice in Ohio are members of Medscape.*

For additional information about the CDC national Health Alert Network visit [www.bt.cdc.gov/han](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/han)

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