



Maine Network of Healthy Communities

MNHC 2003 Annual Report

MNHC Mission Statement

The Maine Network of Healthy Communities is a statewide network of community partnerships committed to building the capacity of people, communities and institutions in order to enhance economic, social, environmental, physical and emotional health in Maine.

MNHC Project Overview

MNHC is in the second year of its four-year grant from the Maine Center for Public Health. The goals of the grant are to assist MNHC in organizational development and to promote mentoring opportunities among local coalition leaders and MNHC members.

- ✓ MNHC has completed the initial organizational development steps required for it to function in Maine as a non-profit association advocating the interests of its members and has turned to expanding its membership. Fairfield Healthy Communities and Schoodic Healthy Communities joined in 2003.
- ✓ MNHC has established the MNHC Mentor Program, and two mentoring relationships have been initiated. Two MNHC members are now mentoring the coalition leaders of Fairfield Healthy Communities and Schoodic Healthy Communities. MNHC is promoting the Mentor Program in such places as the Bureau of Health's Summer Institute. The Mentor Program is open to coalition leaders throughout Maine, including Healthy Community Coalitions, Tobacco Settlement Grantees, and PATCH groups.
- ✓ MNHC expanded its services to members through the MNHC Shareware Project, which is funded by a grant from The Bingham Program. (See below.)
- ✓ MNHC is working toward establishing its voice among community health organizations in Maine as representing the interests of local community health coalitions throughout the state. MNHC participated in the Maine Turning Point Steering Committee, and served on the Maine Public Health Association's Legislative Committee, the Community Health Program (Bureau of Health) Stakeholder Group, and the Maine Center for Public Health's Board of Directors.

- ✓ MNHC continues to seek opportunities for wider visibility among legislators, the community development community, and the public health community. For example, MNHC hosted a reception for legislators at the Hall of Flags on February 3, which Governor Baldacci declared by proclamation “Healthy Communities Day” throughout the State of Maine. In his proclamation, he urged all citizens to “join their efforts in improving the health and quality of life of Maine citizens.”
- ✓ MNHC now publishes *The Networker*, a quarterly newsletter, which is mailed to MNHC members, stakeholders, and members of the state Senate and House of Representatives. MNHC is a member of the Maine Public Health Association and provided 5 free memberships to MNHC Board members.

MNHC Shareware Project

The MNHC Shareware Project, a two-year project funded by the Bingham Program, began in 2002 and will be designed to allow member coalitions to share reports, data and indicators on line. The project began with a demonstration of web-based shareware options currently available through organizations such as the Association for Community Health Improvement on the internet. The MNHC Board approved features that staff will seek to include in the MNHC Shareware Project. The proposed features are: a searchable database of indicators, a searchable library of member reports, coalition board minutes, and other coalition documents, specialized data management that could, for example, assist members in developing and administering surveys, a set of common indicators tracked by all participating members, a glossary of terms, different levels of access for different categories of users of the shareware, coalition budget and financial information, a discussion board, and links to related sites. Next steps are to identify available software options for implementing the list of proposed features incrementally, and to link the shareware to the MNHC website, which will be online in the summer. MNHC is also developing a set of common indicators to be used by member coalitions to track their experience and community organization and change process.

MNHC Members Receive MCPH Mini Grants

Two MNHC members received mini grants from the Maine Center for Public Health in 2003.



Healthy Community Coalition, Greater Franklin County received funds for the distribution of car booster seats in the community, and to call attention to Maine’s new law requiring child restraint systems for child passengers under age 8. Information about the new law

and where low cost/free seats were available was provided in community flyers, information to

parents in grades K-2 through school nurses, press releases, a radio show called HealthBeat, and informally through word of mouth to key contacts in day care centers and Head Start. The coalition distributed 134 booster seats at 7 main events throughout the service area. The parent, child and the vehicle the child rides in were present when the seats were distributed. Correct seat belt use, passenger placement and a check of any other car seat in the vehicle was done. If it appeared that a child was exposed to tobacco smoke, smoking cessation information and the State's 1-800-QUIT phone number was discussed and provided to the parent. In addition, school nurses were educated about the new law and were given seats for use when they transport school children.

Greater Waterville PATCH received a grant to fund the "Use the Stairs Project," to purchase 28 "Point of Decision" prompts for use at worksites in the Kennebec Valley Region. These signs were installed at elevators used frequently by employees, encouraging them to use the stairs. The Center for Disease Control's *The Guide to Community Prevention Services* identifies use of "Point of Decision" prompts as a best practice recommended informational approach to increasing physical activity. It is also a best practice recommended environmental and policy approach to increasing physical activity.

**Improve Your Waistline.
Use the Stairs!**

**Taking the Stairs Improves
Health and Fitness!**

**Your Heart Needs Exercise.
Use the Stairs!**

MNHC Budget July 1, 2002-June 30, 2003

MNHC budgeted a total of \$43,000 in fiscal year 2003 for personnel, supplies, communications, travel for staff and MNHC mentors, and computer consultants for the MNHC Shareware Project. Total expenditures were \$39,806.91. Approximately 91% of the expenditures were for personnel expenses, and 9% were for supplies, communications and travel. No funds were expended on computer consultants in fiscal year 2003. Approximately 3% of personnel expenditures and 2% of supplies, communications and travel were paid by The Bingham Program grant. The remainder was paid by the Maine Center for Public Health grant.

MNHC Activities July 2002 – June 2003

Activity	Status
Establish consulting subcontract for organizational capacity building	Completed (Webb Management Services)
Establish and manage website and listserv	Private listserv (for MNHC Board members, alternates and staff) has been established. Public listserv for the general public has been established. Consultant for website development has been hired; completion anticipated in July 2003.
Staff coordination of MNHC Board meetings	Ongoing
Staff completion of special assignments by MNHC Board	Ongoing
Staff manage MNHC communications and correspondence; assemble, file and distribute budget and grant reports	Ongoing
Develop mentoring program guidelines	Application form, memorandum of agreement and criteria for participating complete
Recruit mentors	Initiated recruitment and established asset map of mentor skills
Orient and train mentors	Completed on March 4, 2003
Identify trainees	Criteria developed
Provide mentoring activities	Begin rolling application process March 5, 2003
Evaluate mentoring program	Scheduled to begin March 20, 2004
Re-design program	After receipt of evaluations in 2004

MNHC Board of Directors

Susan Crippen, President	North Country Healthy Communities (Greenville)
Patricia Duguay, Vice President	River Valley Healthy Community Coalition (Rumford)
Leah Binder, Secretary/Treasurer	Healthy Community Coalition, Greater Franklin County
Mary Jane Bush, Past President	Bucksport Community Health Advisory Committee
Diane Brandon	Community Wellness Coalition (York)
Joanne Joy	Southern Kennebec Healthy Communities
Audrey York	Vital Pathways (Houlton)
Andrew Kane	Greater Waterville PATCH
Gladys Richardson	Healthy Futures (Winthrop)
Kim Hutchinson	Healthy Island Project/Stonington-Deer Isle
Madeleine Martin	Penobscot Nation Health Department
Rachel Charette	St. John Valley PATCH
Carrie Limeburner	Voices in Action: Healthy Comm. of Sebecook Valley
Denise Delorie	Fairfield Healthy Communities
Paula Perry	Schoodic Healthy Communities
(vacant)	Partnership for Healthy Communities (Bangor)

All members of MNHC are represented on the Board of Directors.