



Maine Network of Healthy Communities

Membership Requirements

Member organizations of MNHC will:

1. Have a stated mission to develop community-based coalitions for the purpose of establishing a participatory community health planning process. Network member coalitions will assess the overall functioning of the community's health and social support systems and organize community assets to improve the health and quality of life of local residents. (Note: MNHC members do not become members of the MNHC Corporation, which has no members.)

Network members focus their efforts on comprehensive community health and define health broadly. Members define health as using one of the following inclusive definitions:

"A healthy city (community) is one that is continually creating and improving those physical and social environments, and expanding those community resources which enable people to support each other in performing all the functions of life and in developing themselves to their maximum potential."

--from Trevor Hancock and Len Duhl

"Health is more than the absence of disease. It is an optimum state of well being: mental, physical, emotional and spiritual. Health is wholeness. It includes a sense of belonging to community and experiencing control over one's circumstances and fate."

--from Healthy People in Healthy Communities' Dialogue Guide

2. Have a coalition board comprised of membership representing a variety of community sectors, such as health, economics, environment, education, church, and social services. Membership should be inclusive and representative of the socio/economic sectors of the community.
3. Incorporate the views of community sectors with assessment, planning and implementation activities to develop long-term solutions to complex and interrelated issues.
4. Build relationships with other communities across the state. Work with other coalitions to develop coordinated regional and statewide public health strategies.

5. Designate a member of their local coalition as an official voting member of the Board of Directors MNHC, who will attend all Board of Directors meetings or send an alternate.
6. Designate a member of their local coalition to serve on a workgroup or subcommittee of MNHC.

New Membership Process

1. The addition of new members is a collaborative process, shared by all existing MNHC members. Each MNHC member must meet all the criteria and must fully understand the reason for the criteria. When a community coalition requests to become a member and completes the MNHC New Member Application Form, existing MNHC members and members of the MNHC Executive Committee will review the applicant's mission, organizational structure, and membership to determine if it meets the above stated criteria 1- 4. The MNHC Board will vote to accept or deny membership. The Board will make every effort to expedite its decision regarding new membership. The President of the Board may call a special meeting of the Board, or the Board may meet via conference call or email communication.

If the coalition meets criteria 1-4, the new coalition will be given the MNHC Membership Document, to complete and to be filed with the NMHC President. If the coalition does not meet the criteria, the MNHC President will inform the coalition of the criteria that need to be met. Existing MNHC members are encouraged to coach and advise potential new members in order to expand the MNHC membership.

2. The new coalition will be informed of the next MNHC Board meeting by the MNHC President and asked to send the designated representative to the meeting. Executive Committee members or existing MNHC members will be asked to volunteer to serve as a mentor and MNHC orientation guide for each new member. The orientation process will be collaborative and informal.