



Improving the Public's Health in New Hampshire

December 2007 Newsletter
Keeping You Informed!

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A Statewide Effort organized
by the New Hampshire
Department of Health and
Human Services, Division of
Public Health Services

[Public Health
Improvement Services
Council minutes and
membership list are
available on the DHHS
website](#)

About Our Newsletter

Improving the Public's Health in New Hampshire! Our newsletter is intended to keep stakeholders informed on key public health planning and performance improvement initiatives in New Hampshire.

The Public Health Improvement Services Council Update

HB 491 establishing the Public Health Improvement Services Council was signed into law on June 28, 2007. The council will sustain the oversight of the public health improvement efforts that began with the Public Health Improvement Action Plan Advisory Committee (PHIAP). The Council is fortunate to be chaired by Representative Trinka Russell and to have Senator John Gallus among its members. A membership list and minutes can be found on our website.

At the November meeting the council endorsed *A Call to Action*, a document drafted by the Mobilizing Community Partnerships PHIAP Work Group. *A Call to Action* recommends that there be support for broad-based collaborative partnerships rather than the creation of new single-issue coalitions. At future meetings the council will review suggested action steps related to this endorsement.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2008 from 2:00 – 4:00 PM in the Health and Human Services Building on Hazen Drive.

[Public Health Regionalization
Task Force membership list,
minutes and presentations
are available on the DHHS
website](#)

What's New with Public Health Regionalization?

The Division of Public Health Services is convening a Public Health Regionalization Initiative task force with the goal to develop a performance-based public health delivery system, which provides the 10 essential public health services throughout New Hampshire. The group meets monthly and posts all minutes, presentations, meeting dates and locations on the Improving the Public's Health in New Hampshire website. Meetings are open to interested parties.

At the November meeting it was proposed that there be a two-tiered system, comprised of primary and comprehensive public health agencies. The group worked to define key staff for a primary agency. The Division of Public Health Services also delineated what the state's role at the local or regional level would look like going forward.

Proposed staffing for a primary health entity and staff to be shared regionally emerged as shown below. Consensus on the absolute need for a public health nurse could not be reached after lengthy debate.

What is Public Health?

New Hampshire adopted the Institute of Medicine definition:

“What we as a society do collectively to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy.”

Proposed Staffing for a Regional Public Health System

Proposed Primary Public Health Agency Staff	Proposed Shared Regional Staff
Qualified Administrator	Epidemiologist
Support Staff	Financial Manager
Health Educator/Marketing	Emergency Preparedness Coordinator
Nurse (?)	IT Support
Environmental Health Specialist	Medical Consultant

Two Public Health Networks, Northern Strafford County Health and Safety Council and Cheshire Public Health Network, provided reactions to the plan and proposed what their regions might look like going forward.

At the December meeting, the Caring Community Network of the Twin Rivers reacted to the proposed regionalization plan and what it might mean for their region.

Task force members divided into groups and, using regions as case studies, attempted to answer a set of questions designed to begin to visualize regional maps and public health structures. Those questions were:

- Are there any natural regions that emerge?
- What might your region/area of the state look like on a map?
- How might your public health agency connect with a governmental organization?
- How might your public health agency be organized?
- Who should be involved in the conversation from the region(s) being discussed?
- What might be the points of tension?
- What additional information is needed to make recommendations for the regions going forward?
- What processes do you see going forward to determine regions?

Task force members found this to be a challenging but valuable exercise. They believe there would be merit in doing similar case studies for existing Public Health Network and All Health Hazard Regions in the state. This will be arranged. Various models of linking to governmental organizations will also be explored for future meetings.

Work group action plans and presentations are posted on the website

Visit Our Website!!!

Improving the Public's Health in New Hampshire
<http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/DHHS/DPHS/iphnh.htm>

What's Happening in the PHIAP Work Groups?

PHIAP work groups continue to meet and carry out vital public health performance improvement initiatives based on the six Public Health Strategic Priorities. We applaud the work group members for continuing to volunteer their time for this initiative. It speaks to the power of partnerships.

Inform and Educate

Work Group Leaders – Mary Ann Cooney and Ned Helms

New Hampshire's Six Public Health Performance Strategic Priorities

- 1) Inform, educate and empower people about health issues
- 2) Monitor health status to identify and solve community health problems
- 3) Mobilize community partnerships and actions to identify and solve health problems
- 4) Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts
- 5) Develop a communication plan
- 6) Workforce Development

This group continues to discuss the creation of an inventory of public health promotion activities that would be available via the web. A survey is being developed to gather this information from public health partners. The survey will ask respondents to note what best practices they have based their health promotion activities on. Building on knowledge gleaned from the Citizens' Health Initiative Report, *A Pound of Prevention*, <http://www.steppingupnh.org/>, the inventory will begin by listing initiatives that address the leading contributors of death in New Hampshire: tobacco, physical activity, nutrition and alcohol. The next group meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2008 from 1:00- 3:00 PM, in the Lab Training Room of the Health and Human Services Building on Hazen Drive.

Monitoring Health Status

Work Group Leaders – Karla Armenti and Amy Costello

This group is continuing to focus on how to get local data out to public health partners who need it for public health initiatives. They will be working with staff from the Citizens Health Initiative and the Division of Public Health Services to define solid measures for data related to tobacco, physical activity, nutrition and alcohol.

Mobilizing Community Partnerships

Work Group Leaders - Jonathan Stewart and Aviva Meyer

Members from this group are finalizing a survey to obtain information on community partnerships that exist around the state that would be available on the web. This group shares the same vision as the Inform and Educate group, to place this information on a website for all public health partners. Initially it was thought that one survey could collect both sets of information, but these will likely be two separate surveys.

The group will also draft action steps related to the *Call to Action* (see Public Health Improvement Services Council) for the Council to consider related to broad-based partnerships.

Develop Policies and Plans

Work Group Leaders – Kate Frey and Elaine Frank

This work group reviewed the first draft of the Public Health Improvement Action Plan report to be published to document PHIAP's work and future plans. They provided valuable feedback that will be incorporated into the revised report. A January 2008 publication date is anticipated.

Develop a Communication Plan

Work Group Leaders – NH Public Health Association and Nancy Clark

The New Hampshire Public Health Association and the Glen Group have begun work on a public health communication campaign, generously funded by the Endowment for Health. Focus groups were held in eight locations throughout the state to gauge perceptions of public health in New Hampshire. Information gleaned through the focus groups will be used to inform a campaign which will be launched in 2008.

Workforce Development

Work Group Leaders - Rosemary Caron, Holly Tutko, Rosemary Orgren and Thom Flynn

This group has agreed to use TRAIN, a web-based learning management system that can be utilized to post public health learning training and track competencies. They will be working on marketing TRAIN to training providers. To view TRAIN visit www.nh.train.org

Future meetings will focus on workforce competency initiatives.

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