

Maine Asthma Council
Meeting Minutes
April 11, 2010
Maine Center for Public Health

Members Present: Carry Buterbaugh, Veronica Currier-Boucher, Lee Gilman, Ruth Lawson-Stoppes, Ed Miller, Amy Olfene, Helen Roy, Desi-Rae Severson, RuthAnne Spence

Via Phone: Carol Bell, Stacey Chacker, Barb Chilmonzyk, Christy Crocker, Kim Havea, Bonnie Irwin, Tina Pettingill, Rhonda Vosmus

Guest Presenter: Amy Belisle, American Academy of Pediatrics ME Chapter

Announcements

ARC meeting April 8th in Boston. Topic include Environmental Public Health Tracking, Promoting Investing in Best Practice especially regarding insurance reimbursement and the business case, as well as many other break-out sessions. The Maine Indoor Air Quality Council is hosting its 2010 annual conference on March 24th. The keynote speaker will be Dr Jack Spengler from the Harvard School of Public Health. He will be speaking on PCBs and their effect on human health. Break out session will be conducted around issues of mold, mildew, healthy homes and much more. There is a pre-conference seminar on deep energy retrofit on March 23rd. The Lung association is sponsoring the annual Asthma Educators Institute. This years two-day training will be held at Kennebec Valley Community College in Fairfield. Registration information is available on the Lung Association web-site. Lee Gilman indicated that they are hoping to grow a COPD Educators Institute at some point in the future.

Asthma Quality Initiative Presentation

Amy Belisle presented on the Asthma Pilot Project between Maine, Ohio, Oregon, and Alabama. The overarching goal of the project is to get 10-15 practices to implement the NHLBI/NAEPP guidelines. Copies of the slide are attached to the email with the minutes.

Reports

Ruth wanted to call the Councils attention to several articles that have come out lately. Merck and George Washington University. The report, supported by the Merck Childhood Asthma Network, Inc., (MCAN) and the RCHN Community Health Foundation (RCHN CHF), is the result of a year-long investigation into America's childhood asthma problem to discover why the country has not benefitted more from what is known about asthma, the single most common chronic disease among children and can be downloaded by clicking this address http://www.mcanonline.org/policy_issues/index.html

The Asthma Regional Council also recently published an article titled *Asthma: A Business Case for Employers and Health Care Purchasers*. This is an excellent

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report using evidence based resources to reduce overall asthma related costs. The report can be downloaded at this page by clicking this address <http://asthmaregionalcouncil.org/asthma-management>

The February 5, 2010 Volume 59 NoSS-1 issue of *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* released 2007 BRFSS rates, and cited Penobscot County as having the highest rates of asthma in Maine. Lee Gilman noted that the report isn't telling us anything we did not already know. Ruth wants the Council to keep this data in mind as we think about the future work of the council.

Schools Update

The *Asthma and Schools* talking points have been distributed to some schools in the State but not all. The Asthma Action Plan is in draft form and currently being tested at certain sites and practices. Feedback is also needed from parents. The Schools group is also putting together a tool box –there is discussions on what exactly should be in this tool box. The box is slated for delivery this fall. The focus on the box will be resources for parents, kids, school nurses, and teachers. The Final Report on the school asthma survey is coming out soon. Rhonda Vosmus mentioned that at a meeting with 12 Portland area school nurses, it was clear resources were needed in Somali and Arabic that demonstrating things like how to use inhalers, how to use the asthma action plan. These tools may also be valuable in places like Lewiston where there is a large Somali population.

Homes Update

The Healthy Homes collaborative is developing a display to message best practices around healthy homes. This display will make it's debut at the Manchester Lions Home and Garden show at the Augusta Civic Center in April. Housing varies regionally across the state and this display will be flexible enough to meet the needs of the various demographic regions. A training is also being developed for workers who enter peoples homes as part of their job. These trainings are slated to be held in Presque Isle, Machias, Waterville, and the Lewiston/ Auburn area. Components of the training will include: pest management, lead, safety, radon, mold, asthma, and smoking.

Workplaces Update

The workplaces group is struggling with the data which they want to drive their activities. The group wants to focus on place with a high level of exposure to asthmagens and also places with high employment numbers to reach as many people as possible. A report recently released by the Asthma Regional Council of New England titled *Asthma: a Business Case for Employers and Health Care Purchasers* contains excellent tables and charts that the workplaces group hopes to use. The group is also exploring venues for presenting information on occupational asthma.

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Workplan Ideas

Some items to think about for the year two work plan include:

Embedding the new asthma action plan in to EMR's

More outreach to Northern Maine Practices

Reimbursement for asthma education through insurers

Showcasing the avoidable cost of asthma in the new State Health Plan

Ruth noted that the program has hired a contractor to be looking at a sample of certain cases to see if they indeed are avoidable costs.

Program Evaluation

Carry Buterbaugh and RuthAnne Spence provide evaluation for the Program. They also evaluate the workgroups and the council. Carry suggested annual surveys of the council are a good way to gauge effectiveness. She has the survey that has been used in the past and she will look to see if there are questions that need to be added or changed then the survey will be administered again. This will capture the councils energy (or lack there of).

Listserve

The program recently got the listserve titled 'maineasthmacouncil' Desi-Rae Severson will be working to get the listserve up and running smoothly.

Other

An asthma preschool brochure has been drafted and is currently at the designers. Long term plans for this brochure include training daycare/preschool staff on managing asthma. Ruth also mentioned the Quality Counts Conference is April 16, 2010 and she encourages all to attend.

Next Meeting

Will be held June 10, 2010 at Maine Center for Public Health from 1pm-4pm.