

Maine Asthma Council  
Homes Workgroup  
Meeting Notes  
January 26, 2009

**Present:** Carol Coles, Partnership for a Tobacco Free Maine; Amy Olfene, Coalition for Smoke Free Housing; Desi-Rae Severson, Maine Asthma Program, Maine CDC; Eric Frohmberg; Lead Program, Maine CDC; Ruth Lawson-Stopps, Program Manager, Maine Asthma Program, Maine CDC.

**Present by Phone:** Jessica Loney, MidCoast Hospital; Marvin Cling, Pleasant Point, Passamaquoddy Tribe; Helen Roy, Asthma Educator, Southern Maine Medical Center

We had quite a bit of discussion surrounding issues brought to the table by participants and using the American Lung Association *A National Asthma Public Policy Agenda*, Homes Section as a springboard. We discussed and considered numerous ideas for action. We decided to focus our activities as a workgroup on the following:

1. Develop a reference library in the Homes section of our web site that will include resources that would be helpful to professionals and the public. The resource library will include links to additional resources.
2. Develop a web based *score card* for homeowners to determine if they have household triggers that could compromise their health. Link them to resources to address the problems that they discover. Once the *scorecard* is developed, determine means for circulation and promote it.
3. Develop a training program for anyone who goes in to the home (Codes Enforcement Officers, Energy Auditors, Public Health Nursing, Local Health Officers, ??). What to look for re: environmental triggers and what to do about it.
4. Work with Washington County, Passamaquoddy's at Pleasant Point and possibly others to address identification of individuals with asthma and assist with identification of environmental triggers. Consider stuffer in section 8 housing checks

Additional topics for consideration include:

1. Provide Home Assessment forms to physician offices and clinics.
2. Further, develop the Minimum Common Program Objectives of the Healthy Maine Partnerships to address Asthma Homes concerns.
3. Examine and address housing codes.
4. Develop an *asthma free multi housing registry*.

5. Green building standards should address asthma.

We would like to invite Kathy Murray from Department of Agriculture, Integrated Pest Management and someone from Maine State Housing to join this workgroup. Ruth will get in touch with Kathy Murray, is there anyone who could be in touch with someone from Maine State Housing?

We would also like to hear more about the work that the MIAQC is doing re: housing code from Christy Crocker at our next meeting.

At our next meeting we will begin to develop action steps for the top 4 priority items.

Smoke, second hand smoke, dust, mold and pet dander are the priority items that we will address as household irritants within this Asthma Homes Workgroup. We did however discuss the fact that in time we would not want to address asthma in isolation and that this workgroup could morph into a Healthy Homes Workgroup. At such time we would address asthma, lead, radon and other issues.

As we develop materials we will examine translation into French, Spanish and language for the Somali population. It was suggested that we talk with Regina Phillips in Portland who has experience with not only word for word translation but translation of intent of meaning. By the way, I believe that Regina was honored this last week by the Maine Civil Liberties Union for her work.

Next meeting, Monday, Feb. 23, 10:30-12, most likely in the Key Bank Building, Augusta. Please think about the top 4 activities and come with ideas as to how we can develop an action plan.

Thanks for your interest, your time and your attention in the .