

Maine Asthma Council

Homes Work Group Meeting 11/16/09

Attendees: Donna Levi (P), Kathy Murray (P), Jessica Loney (P), Helen Roy (P), Amy Olfene, Ruth Lawson-Stopps, Desirae Severson, Beth Pratt, Eric Fromberg, Christy Crocker, Carol Coles

Updates:

- Dept of Agriculture:
 - Kathy reported that IPM is reaching out to home owners about proper pest control, and educating families on the misuse of pesticides. This would be a good partnership in terms of getting into home shows and conducting outreach around healthy housing to home owners and managers.
 - Writing a grant to conduct a “homework” project to educate families through student education and evaluation of the pest control in the home. Will be a project for 2-3 grade, 7-8 grade students through a 2-year cycle.
 - Information being published on the web about non-pesticide/chemical ways of eliminating pests from the home (prevention).
- Smoke-Free Housing:
 - Training in South Portland on October 19th was successful, but it was noted that several attendees were from out of state. Plan to use the upcoming Healthy Housing trainings in the Fall of 2010 as a forum for future trainings, as landlords and property managers are also beginning to look at healthy housing more comprehensively.
 - Conducted annual robo-call survey of (>5,300) landlords on November 12, 2009. The robo-call survey showed that the number of landlords with a written 100% smoke-free policy in at least one of their buildings increased by 10% since last year in Maine to 44%. Currently 90% of housing authorities in the state have a written smoke-free policy.
- MIAQC:
 - March 24, 2010, Maine Indoor Air Quality Council conducting annual conference. December 14-16, 2009 (three days, three locations with teleconferencing to satellite sites) conducting trainings for weatherization professionals on the impact of weatherization on indoor air quality. Hired consultants to evaluate the protocols for

addressing and correcting the impacts of weatherization on indoor air quality. February 5, 2010 they will be piloting the protocols.

- Lead:
 - DEP developing trainings for lead professionals on lead safety.
 - CLPPP: Eric just returned from training in Atlanta on how to convert lead programs into Healthy Housing programs.
 - Checklist form from Rhode Island was used as a model.
 - Little discussion of radon and secondhand smoke.
 - No real levels of significance noted in the discussions; they noted that problem chemicals and infestations were found, but no reports on whether such levels were connected to ill health effects—lack of science, eval and data.
 - A great deal of information on asthma.
 - CLPPP conducted mailing to all areas of the state EXCEPT high density population (these will occur after the community coalitions have time to educate landlords).
 - Conducted high-density summit and there is a great deal of success coming from the community groups.
- PTM:
 - Working on an extensive ARA application regarding tobacco control and prevention. The primary focus of the competitive application will be to improve compliance of existing laws and voluntarily policies. Currently working on collaborative approach with the Breathe Easy Coalition to target education and support of voluntary policies in workplaces, homes, post-secondary education centers (colleges), hospitals, schools and recreation areas (municipals and private).
- Maine Asthma Program:
 - Developed a school training document that they plan to disseminate statewide for schools to be able to use as talking points for training and educating staff.
 - Contains a pre- and post- test.
 - Using HMPs and school health coordinator connections to get this document out.
 - Currently updating Asthma Action Plan for schools.

Healthy Homes Models and Message

- **Sites to review (mentioned in our discussions):**

- <http://www.health.ri.gov/healthyhousing/index.php>
 - <http://www.nchh.org/What-We-Do/Healthy-Homes-Principles.aspx>
 - **Dry:** Damp houses provide a nurturing environment for mites, roaches, rodents, and **molds**, all of which are associated with asthma.
 - **Clean:** Clean homes help reduce **pest infestations** and exposure to **contaminants**.
 - **Pest-Free:** Recent studies show a causal relationship between **exposure to mice and cockroaches** and asthma episodes in children; yet inappropriate treatment for pest infestations can exacerbate health problems, since pesticide residues in homes pose risks for neurological damage and cancer.
 - **Safe:** The majority of injuries among children occur in the home. Falls are the most frequent cause of residential injuries to children, followed by injuries from objects in the home, **burns**, and **poisonings**.
 - **Contaminant (Poison)-Free:** Chemical exposures include **lead, radon, pesticides, volatile organic compounds, and environmental tobacco smoke**. Exposures to **asbestos particles, radon gas, carbon monoxide, and second-hand tobacco smoke** are far higher indoors than outside.
 - **Ventilated:** Studies show that **increasing the fresh air supply** in a home improves respiratory health.
 - **Maintained:** Poorly-maintained homes are at risk for **moisture and pest problems**. Deteriorated lead-based paint in older housing is the primary cause of **lead poisoning**, which affects some 240,000 U.S. children.
 - <http://www.healthyhomestraining.org/Launching/index.htm>
 - <http://www.nchh.org/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=rs1iUR2e%2f%2fA%3d&tabid=298>
 - <http://www.disasterhousing.gov/offices/lead/hhi/index.cfm>
 - http://www.habitat.org/env/pdf/hhp_english_color.pdf
 - <http://www.afhh.org/>
- **7 principles:** dry, clean, pest-free, safe, air moving (ventilated), poison free, well maintained
 - Comfortable: temperature and moisture control (eighth point used by MIAQC)
 - Group all agreed that these principles were a good model to work from.
 - Questions that arose during our discussions:

- How do we get people to understand the purpose and work required to get people to follow the seven principles of healthy housing?
- How do we define the principles so they relate to asthma?
- Do we want a comprehensive healthy housing program, or do we want the message to work directly within the confines of asthma?
 - Eric suggests we look at who the target audience is and draft a message around that, instead of focusing on trying to capture everything within the national model for healthy housing programs.
 - Jessica suggested that we look into what programs, including MaineHousing and Community Action Programs, that can help provide assistance to low-income and disparate populations who may not be able to properly maintain their home without assistance.
 - Beth stated that she saw these principles as a “tree” or matrix of ideas, and that the messages related to each item should address the “low hanging fruit” that people can address easily without strong time or financial restrictions.
 - Create messages that empower people to believe they can make a difference in their own homes.
- Carol recommended that we locate the contacts from each program to be addressed within the seven principles of Healthy Housing. These should be on a website so that people can address the issues they want more information on each area. Eric and Ruth both believe this could be housed on their respective websites.
 - Christy noted that MIAQC has several of these contacts.
 - Amy noted that these contacts will be very intrinsic to developing a list of presenters and programs for the Fall 2010 Healthy Homes trainings to be held in Aroostook County, Penquis, Downeast and Central Maine. In addition, these individuals/agencies/programs will be necessary for partnership as Lead and Asthma attempt to develop a comprehensive Healthy Homes program in the State of Maine.
- *By January 25th, the group will look at the websites listed above and determine which programs should be addressed under each principle.*
 - Come to meeting with items in hand of which programs/ideas need to be addressed as part of the presentation board and the training program to be held in the Fall 2010.

- Maine Asthma Program can fund the design and production of the presentation board.
- Eric will check in with Joe Anderson regarding funds for the exhibition fee of the Manchester Home and Garden Show in April 2010.

Check List:

- Carol will be taking 20 Asthma Healthy Homes checklists to Starks town office.
- Christy taking 25 Asthma Healthy Homes checklists to ALA office.

Meetings:

- Next meeting at Key Bank Building, Augusta, January 25th, 2010 from 10-11:30am.
- **NO DECEMBER MEETING.**

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