

Maine Asthma Council: Schools Work Group

Meeting Notes (11-20-08)

In attendance:

- Ruth, Lisa, Sue, Marla, Renee, Nancy, Abby

Agenda:

- Review ideas from Phoenix Event
 - Consider other possible action steps
 - Who else should be at the table and how will they be invited
 - Narrow action choices
 - How will we move ahead
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Notes:

- Review Ideas
 - 1. Advocacy plan to change the school funding formula to provide for a school nurse in every school
 - Advocacy should continue even if reaching this goal is not likely
 - At the very least, maintain current numbers and stop any decline
 - Realize that we may not be able to improve this ratio right now but continue to create awareness with decision makers about importance of school nurses in all schools so as not to see decline
 - Educate legislators
 - Develop system for creating awareness
 - Need to more clearly define the ratio
 - Account for part-time nurses
 - Ensure that one nurse per 100 students in a few schools does not skew the numbers so as to lead us into a false sense of success (need to account for the many other school systems where the ratio is much worse)
 - Example: St. Francis has one nurse for 66 students, but only for 4 hours/week
 - Possibly start talking about case management rather than nurse to student ratio
 - Recommended ratio is 1:750 but only funded 1:800
 - Possibly develop stance/position statement to strongly recommend nurse in every building (especially when nebulizer available; make it clear that other staff members are not in a position to provide this treatment)
 - 2. Development of Indoor Air Quality Team at the school level with a training program and toolkit and evaluation component
 - Example: SAD 75
 - Has equivalent of Indoor Air Quality Team and tracking system
 - Helped justify maintenance and renovation
 - Helped educate staff about ventilation system
 - Includes custodial staff and other interested parties
 - Use of Tools for Schools
 - All schools have nebulizers (bought or donated) and school doctor has written standing orders with schools so that students may get this treatment if needed
 - Every building has nurse/health aid (not all full-time)
 - May want to look more closely at SAD 75 for best practice
 - Find out:
 - Number of schools with Indoor Air Quality Teams
 - Number of schools that use Tools for Schools
 - Number of schools that send staff to air quality meetings/trainings
 - 3. Maine Healthy Schools Project (resources, toolkits, trainers, surveillance reporting)
 - Find out what this is (Nancy)
- 2008 State Honor Roll of Asthma and Allergy Policies for Schools
 - #16 incorrect
 - #17
 - possibly incorrect; any school that has a School Health Coordinator will have this policy (44 SHCs in Maine, every school that has a SCH must also have this policy in place)
 - #11 – unclear
 - #9 – see above

- #4, 7, 8
 - If 4 is true, 7 and 8 must also be true
 - Question about “requirement”, “mandate”
 - SHAC/School Health Manual does have policies on “fur and feather” and anaphylaxis
 - Standardization of health update form would be helpful
- Try to determine where/who this information came from
- Two HMP requirements, re: asthma
 - Education for staff
 - Possibly come up with ideas about how this goal could be met
 - Laminated folders (from ALA?) for specific staff members about what to do if student has an asthma attack
 - Example: Sue’s project
 - Respiratory therapist came to school (1 day before start of year) and gave 30-45 minute training to all staff
 - Basic but very informative
 - Free (volunteered time!)
 - Information from specialist
 - Laminated cheat sheet for handout
 - Increase the number of asthma action plans among students with asthma
 - Attempt to compile list of best practices (how some schools are able to do this so well) in order to help schools that struggle
 - Possibly create an option on the plan to let parents simply sign off and acknowledge receipt
 - Old plan had asthma history piece that was very helpful for nurses; that piece has been eliminated
 - Determine what the components of a good asthma action plan
 - Possibly get input from doctors
 - Heated issue...

Identified areas to consider as we move ahead:

- School nurses:
 - Realize that we may not be able to improve the nurse-to-student ratio right now but continue to create awareness with decision makers about importance of school nurses in all schools so as not to see decline
 - Development of a system for creating awareness
 - Development of stance/position statement to strongly recommend nurse in every building
 - Better define nurse-to-student ratio or consider thinking more about case management rather than ratio
- Indoor air quality:
 - Find out:
 - Number of schools with Indoor Air Quality Teams
 - Number of schools that use Tools for Schools
 - Number of schools that send staff to air quality meetings/trainings
- Maine Healthy Schools Project
 - Determine what this is
- Honor Roll
 - Determine specific meaning/requirements to meeting those objectives
 - Determine the source of the information
- HMP requirements
 - Compile list of best practices from schools that have been successful with these
 - Possibly create toolkit for struggling schools

Next meeting:

- Hoping for monthly attendance as we begin; possibly less later on
- Doodle for dates/times