

Maine Asthma Coalition  
Meeting Minutes  
December 7, 2011  
Key Plaza

**Members Present:** Martha Webster, Jim Braddick, Andy Pritchard, Amy Wagner, Santosh Nazare, Sarah Mayberry, Peter Doran, Renee Page, Nancy Dube, Desi-Rae Severson

**Phone:** Elaine Beaulieu, Jerolyn Ireland, Kathy Beers, Bonnie Irwin, Rhonda Vosmus, Carol Coles

### **1. Asthma month**

Historically the Coalition and the Asthma Program have not done an event for May which is asthma month. New BRFSS data will be available and could potentially tie into an event of some sort. We have all payor data from 2004 – 2009. Data indicates that about 50% of asthma patients have not seen a medical provider nor have filled their prescription. Jim Braddick notes that people on Mainecare have higher rates of asthma. He said this impacts physicians in many ways. He was seeking ideas and feedback on who else to involve in this discussion. Desi-Rae Severson mentioned the MIAQC should be involved too as they are also wanting to do something in May as far as an educational outreach piece. Renee Page suggested the district coordinating councils should be involved. Renee noted that she's unsure of the level of involvement at this point but she did mention that certain councils would definitely be interested. Jerolyn Ireland mentioned the tribal health centers could be involved somehow too. Peter Doran said the association of school nurses should be at the table. Sarah cautioned that we should figure out our message before we figure out who our audience is. Jim said our message should be driven by the data we are getting from the all payors database. Kathy Beers echoed the sentiment that messaging to the provider is essential. Peter suggested talking to Physicians on the lung association board so seek out a "spokesman" specifically Dr. Sears on how we can reach the providers. Elaine Beaulieu recommended pediatrician grand rounds as a way to address providers in her area. She suggests adding some state wide statistics. Andy Pritchard mentioned presenting data then having a panel of experts discuss what it means. Rhonda asked for clarification on what our message is and who we are trying to reach. Jim stated people with asthma are not seeing their providers, and they are not filling their prescriptions. Rhonda Vosmus said providers need to know what and when to prescribe as well as the importance of asthma education. Certainly regional champions are beneficial in the messaging. Sarah said an asthma month event should get the people in the community talking about asthma not just to focus on the clinical piece. Sarah Mayberry suggested multiple messages that reach across all sectors and sides. Jerolyn added that lack of action management plans is an issue that should be addressed. Rhonda noted that Maine medical center is enforcing a policy that no inhalers should be given out at the ED. While this can be a problem for some, it can also force others to see a primary care physician and not end up using the school nurse or the ED doctors as their primary care providers. The bottom line is

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we need a story to tell, something that has a dollar amount and some critical information. Rhonda suggested using the Connolly family as the “face”. Rhonda will touch bases with Donna Levi regarding the timing of a PSA. Peter and Rhonda will bring the idea to the Lung Association Board. Jim will reach out to Ed Miller letting him know the Asthma Coalition wants to do an event in May and would like to include the Connolly family’s story.

Statewide Plan Revision:

The Leadership team discussed the revision of the plan in conjunction with the release of the new BRFSS data. Jim was seeking input on how to best revise the plan. Historically the plan has been solely written by the program. The coalition agreed to change that practice. Nancy suggests a smaller group look at the plan and identify any glaring discrepancies or issues. Then bring those back to the coalition for discussion and input. Jim cautioned that he’d like someone other than a program staff to look at the plan. One method might be to assign the coalition to read the plan and offer feedback.

Updates:

Workplaces workgroup

Leadership has changed in the workplaces group as well as membership. Leslie Walleigh and Andy Spaulding are both unable to participate. The group was working on implementing the Healthy Maine Works tool into community businesses. Amy Wagner gave a quick overview of the tool. Leslie Walleigh will continue to offer training on the tool to the HMPs whenever that training is scheduled. Membership of the group needs to be revisited. Peter Doran asked about the connection with MORA. Amy does not see Occupational Asthma falling off MORA’s radar.

Homes workgroup

The homes group is figuring out how to best fit in with all the other healthy homes initiatives going on throughout the state. The homes group is working with Eric Frohberg on a matrix to identify where the resources are but also where the resource gaps are. The group is also connecting with other trainings that are being offered around the state. There is a DCC currently working on a training and the group is trying to integrate and assist the DCC in any way they can.

Schools workgroup

The schools group has been on the road since April distributing asthma tool kits to school nurses. Nancy Dube says they are 65% percent complete. She is going to be working on the harder to reach school nurses. Asthma management plans are on the rise, however, some come back poorly filled in. That doesn’t matter as at least it allows the school nurse to open a dialogue with the provider. The results of the school nurse survey will be presented at the school nurse summit next year.

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Membership Survey:

Appendix H discussion. Andy noted that generally the responses were positive even though it was a 23% response rate. One area to improve upon is member inclusion in the creation of the State wide asthma plan. Jim questioned specifically about the switch from a monthly meeting to a quarterly meeting. Which do people prefer? Sarah asked if we could compare attendance at the quarterly meetings to those of the monthly meetings. We can go back and get the attendance numbers. Sarah said some people may not even realize they are coalition members. She feels if they are working on asthma in the state they are automatically part of the coalition. Peter was wondering what people who received our information were doing with it. Andy said we could add that question to the survey to try to find that missing piece. Jim wanted to hear how the 2 hours we meet can be made better. Is this 2 hours working for people? Rhonda said she appreciated the call in option. The use of meeting software is appealing to many too. Especially if you cannot be at the meeting face to face you still have the material in front of you. It is also important to keep an eye on the statewide plan and how the meeting agendas drive us towards the goals and objectives in that plan.

Outdoor Air:

Martha Webster wanted to be sure the school nurses were aware and using the outdoor air quality forecast and paying attention to the days when the outdoor air can be dangerous especially to those with asthma. Martha reports to the EPA and they send out the enviroflash notices, they also tweet the notices. Nancy said the nurses are aware and are heading the outdoor air quality alerts. Jim asked about the no idling policy - Lynn Caiting handles the no idling policies any inquiries should be directed to her.