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## April 2025 Newsletter - Downeast Public Health Council

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# Downeast Public Health Council April 2025 Newsletter



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## Partner Highlight: Health Inspection Program (HIP)



### Maine CDC Health Inspection Program

The Health Inspection Program is part of the Division of Environmental and Community Health that provide licensing and inspection services for a number of different types of businesses to protect the public health including restaurants, lodging, campgrounds, youth camps, public swimming pools and spas, tattooists, micropigmentation, body piercing, electrolysis, school cafeterias, and mass gatherings.

### Organization

The program [staffs](#) 17 inspectors covering Maine's 8 Districts, however the HIP districts do not align with county lines, see map [here](#). Currently the program is almost fully staff, and is only short 1 staff:

1. HIP manager
2. HIP Supervisor
3. FDA Certified Supervisor Inspectors
4. Inspectors
5. Compliance Specialist
6. Licensing Clerks

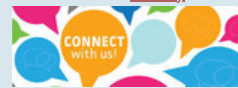
### Inspectors

### Next Downeast Public Council Meeting Friday, May 16, 2025

10:00 - 12:00 PM

Zoom

For Council information, please contact [Al May](#).



[Downeast Public Health Council Facebook Page](#)

[Downeast Public Health Council Website](#)

[Maine CDC Downeast District Website](#)

To become a member of the Downeast Public Health Council please fill out our [Membership Application](#).

### Downeast Public Health 2024 Priority Committees

**Prevention Committee:** Angela Fochesato, Chair

**Older Adult Health and Safety Committee:** Dante Zanoni, Chair

**Emergency Operations and Response Committee:** Andrew Sankey, Chair

**Mental Health Primary Care Education Committee:** Tracy Parker, Chair

### 2024 Ongoing Topics

Health Literacy

Palliative Care and Hospice

Maternal and Child Health

### Final 2025 CHNA Reports

[Maine Report](#)

[Hancock Report](#)

[Washington Report](#)

The FDA Supervisor Inspectors train and supervise inspectors to make sure that they are consistent, this takes around 6 months to 1 year from hiring to be able to inspect by the Food Code. The program inspectors have experiences with kitchen and food handling, therefore they are able to efficiently educate food handlers in complying with the code.

## Downeast Inspectors

- **Weibley Dean:** covers District D which includes parts of the Downeast, Aroostook and Penquis.
- **Holly Sault:** covers District E which includes parts of the Downeast, Penquis and Midcost.

## Rules adopted by the HIP for establishments regulations

- [Health Inspection Program Administration Rule](#)
- [Maine Food Code for eating establishments](#)
- [Lodging Rules](#)
- [Youth Camp Rules](#)
- [Campground Rules](#)
- [Public Pool and Spa Rules](#)
- [Electrology Rules](#)
- [Tattoo Rules](#)
- [Body Piercing Rules](#)
- [Micropigmentation Rules](#)
- [Mass Gathering Rules](#)
- [Sale and Delivery of Tobacco Products Rule](#)
- [Compressed Air Rules](#)

### Resources:

[Complaint Form](#)

[Online License Renewal](#)

[Other Forms and Applications](#)

[Policies](#)

[Business Answers about License Facilities](#)

*For more information and questions:*  
[hiplicensing.dhhs@maine.gov](mailto:hiplicensing.dhhs@maine.gov)

# National Public Health Week (NPHW): Building Healthier Communities



The National Public Health Week is an opportunity to celebrate and recognize the vital role of Public Health in the community.

## Why Public Health Matters?

Public health touches every aspect of our lives:

- Disease prevention

## Events/ Trainings

April 26- May 3

[CDP'S 10th Annual Tribal Nations Training Week](#)

To apply [contact](#)

May 13 & 14

[PER 211: Medical Management of Chem., Bio., Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive Events](#)

May 16

[Dermoscopy and Skin Biopsy Training](#)

May 28

[AWR-228 Community Resilience](#)

May 29

[AWR-379 Coastal Hazards Awareness](#)

July 16 & 17

[MGT 403: Underserved Populations Preparedness Planning for Rural Responders and Volunteers](#)

August 26 & 27

[MGT-348 Medical Preparedness & Response for Bombing Incidents](#)

[PHEP training and exercise calendar.](#)

## News

[Maine CDC Offers Tips for Staying Safe While Traveling](#)

[Maine DHHS Outlines Impacts on Public and Behavioral Health Services from Termination of Federal Health Grants](#)

[The Department of Health and Human Services Introduces Maine's Whole Person Care Waiver](#)

[Inside the Enhanced 'By the Numbers' Dashboard: Greater Insights for Maine DHHS](#)

[Seasonal Influenza Activity Remains Elevated in Maine](#)

## HANs

[Expanded Measles Vaccination Recommendations for Domestic Travel](#)

[Influenza-Associated Pediatric Death](#)

[U.S. CDC: Ongoing Risk of Dengue Virus Infections and Updated Testing Recommendations in the United States](#)

[HIV and Hepatitis C: Penobscot County Updates and Clinical Guidance Package](#)

- Health education
- Community wellness
- Access to healthcare
- Environmental health

## The 2025 NPHW priorities include:

- It Starts Here: Your Health Is Our Mission

Health begins at home and in our community. Together, we can create environments that promote mental, physical, and emotional well-being for all.

- Climate Action Starts Here: Building Resilience for Health

Climate action is health action. From reducing waste to supporting renewable energy and green spaces, every step taken protects health and the planet.

- Health Equity Starts Here: Optimizing Health for All

Health equity means ensuring everyone has the opportunity to live their healthiest life. By addressing systemic barriers and supporting underserved communities, health for all can be optimized.

- Advocacy Starts Here: Amplifying Voices for Public Health

Advocacy is a powerful tool for change. From voting to amplifying community voices, actions can shape policies that create healthier, more equitable communities.

- The Future of Public Health Starts Here: Strengthening the Public Health Workforce

A strong public health workforce is key to a healthier future. By investing in education, resources, and innovation, the next generation of public health leaders can be empowered. The future starts here.

## What can organizations do?

### 1. Focus on Prevention First:

- Promote regular health screenings.
- Organize vaccination programs.
- Disseminate health education messages.
- Promote and encourage early intervention/screening.

### 2. Health Equity:

- Address healthcare access in your community.
- Work towards removing barriers to care.
- Support diverse communities.
- Make resources available to all.

### 3. Community Engagement:

- Share reliable health information.
- Support local health initiatives.
- Participate in health programs.
- Build trust through communication.

**Remember: Public health success depends on all of us working together for healthier communities.**

**For more information:** [NPHW Themes and Facts](#).

[U.S. CDC: Expanding Measles Outbreak in Texas and New Mexico and Guidance for the Upcoming Travel Season](#)

## Oral Cancer Awareness Month

Oral cancers include cancer of the tongue, cheeks and gums, floor of the mouth, and the back of the throat. The warning signs for oral cancer are [here](#).

In 2020, nationally 45,703 new cases of oral and pharyngeal cancer were reported, and 10,835 people died from it. In Maine, the incidence rate of oral cavity and pharynx cancer was significantly higher at 14.3/100,000 compared to national rate of 11.9/100,000.

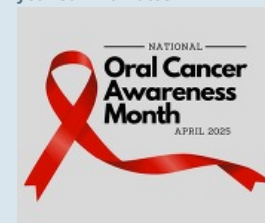
### Risk factors:

- Tobacco use.
- Alcohol consumption.
- HPV infections.
- Sex: Male.
- Age: over 55 years.
- UV light exposure.
- Certain genetic syndromes.

### Prevention:

- Limit alcohol consumption.
- Stop tobacco use.
- HPV vaccination.
- Maintain healthy weight and eating patterns.
- Regular dental check ups: [The Oral Cancer Exam](#)

Diagnosing oral cancer at an early, localized stage significantly increases the 5-year survival rates.



## STD/STI Awareness Week April 13-19

STD/STI are very common and the goal is to prevent and treat infections before they become diseases, which can be transmitted through vaginal, oral, and anal sex, and intimate physical contact.

It is estimated that 20% of the U.S. population (1 in 5 people), had an STD/STI in 2018. In 2022, Maine had 3,137 cases of Chlamydia, 621 Gonorrhea, 112 Syphilis, 41 HIV and 29 cases of acute Hepatitis B.

**Risk for acquiring STD/STI increases with:**

# National Minority Health Month (NMHM)



NMHM is celebrated annually to raise awareness about disproportionate burden of illness and premature death in people from racial and ethnic minorities and motivate action through health education, early detection and reduction of disease complications.

In Maine the average life expectancy is 78.7 years with a population that is 93.7% White, 2.1% Black, 2.3% Hispanic, 6% Asian, 0.7% American Indian/Alaska Natives and 0.2% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, the highest life expectancy was 94.5 years in the Hispanic population, and lowest was 75.2 years in AI/NA.

Maine's agricultural sector is large and diverse: in 2015, 18% of paid hired farm workers were migrant workers. Migrant workers are seasonal farmworker (MSFW) who travel to find work and are unable to return home at the end of the workday. Washington county holds the largest number of MSFW at one time in Maine during the blueberry harvest.

Four percent of Maine residents are immigrants, predominately from Canada, the Philippines, Germany, India and Korea. Additionally, as reported by Office of Maine Refugee Services, 445 people resettled in Maine between January 2025 to February 2025, 76% were refugees mainly from DRC, Syria and Venezuela.

**All people should be able to reach their full health potential, however health gaps still exist among race and ethnic minority groups, where they may have higher disease rates, early death, health care costs and lower quality of life.**

Everyone can play a role in reducing disparities:

- Maine CDC's Office of Population Health Equity ([OPHE](#)) promotes health equity by addressing underlying conditions and systems, collaborating with programs and community leaders to ensure public health initiatives reflect people's needs.
- [REACH](#) is a CDC program that aims to improve health, prevent chronic diseases and reduce health disparities among racial and ethnic populations with the highest risk or burden from chronic diseases.
- [Maine Mobile Health Program](#) is a community health center and the state's only agricultural worker health organization that links agricultural workers to care and resources, it aims to reduce limited access for people working in this industry.

**Resources:**

- Anal, vaginal or oral sex without a condom.
- Multiple sex partners.
- Anonymous sex partners.
- Sex while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

**Reduce STD/STI exposure by:**

- Abstaining from vaginal, anal or oral sex.
- Vaccination: hepatitis B and HPV.
- Reduce number of sex partners.
- Regular testing.
- Mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who is tested and negative.
- Using condoms right every time you have sex.

[Learn about the Maine STD Prevention Program activities here.](#)

[Maine CDC Infectious Disease Program](#)

[Maine CDC Infectious Disease Services](#)



**World Health Day**

**April 7**

World Health Day (WHD) is celebrated every year. This year WHD is prioritizing maternal and newborn health to accelerate efforts to prevent avoidable maternal and newborn deaths and ensure women's long-term health and well-being.

Pregnancy and childbirth causes nearly 300,000 deaths annually, with 2 million babies dying within their first month and another 2 million stillborn, resulting in 1 preventable death every 7 seconds.

Maine's fetal mortality rate increased by 10% in 2022 to 5.7 per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate has increased to 6.9 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2015.

The [Maternal Fetal Infant Mortality Review](#) panel presented recommendations to address the ongoing crisis of stillbirths, and maternal and infant mortality learn more here: [MFIMR Report 2023](#).

WHD 2025: [Explore free courses to enhance maternal and newborn health.](#)



[Connect with U.S. CDC Office of Health Equity](#)

[Maine CDC OPHE Community Care Program](#)

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**Sources: U.S. CDC, HHS, Maine CDC, AIC, County Health Ranking, NIH, NPHW, ACS, DHHS, DOL, WHO.**

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## Epi/Infectious Disease Corner

### Infectious Diseases Data:

[Infectious Disease Dashboard](#)

[Maine Influenza Surveillance](#)

“April was just beginning, and after the warm spring day it turned cooler, slightly frosty, and a breath of spring could be felt in the soft, cold air.”

*Anton Chekhov, 1860-1904*



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