



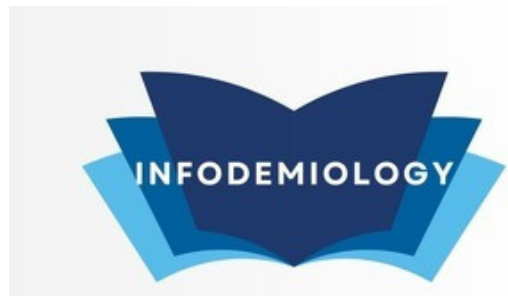
Downeast Public Health Council- July 2026 Newsletter

Downeast Public Health Council July 2026 Newsletter



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Infodemiology



**Next Downeast Public
Council Meeting**
Friday, July 17, 2026

10:00 - 12:00 PM

[Zoom](#)

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



[Downeast Public Health Council
Facebook Page](#)

[Maine CDC Downeast District
Webpage](#)

Effective communication can help raise awareness of health risks and how to prevent them, however with the increased use of the internet and social media, the risk of individuals falling for inaccurate information increases.

What is an infodemic?

An **Infodemic** is the overabundance of information including false or misleading information in both digital and physical environments during a health crisis.

Infodemiology is the study of the determinants and dissemination of health information and misinformation, that finds knowledge translation gaps between best evidence and practice.

The first infodemiological study was published in 1996 which evaluated the accuracy of nutrition sources on the internet and concluded that 45% of the information was not consistent with the dietary standards in Canada (*Davison, 1997*).

What is the impact of an infodemic?

- Creates confusion
- Promotes risk-taking behavior
- Leads to mistrust in health authorities
- Undermines public health response
- Intensifies or lengthens outbreaks
- Amplifies harmful messages

How can infodemics be managed?

A systematic risk and evidence-based analysis and approach to manage and reduce its impact is recommended, specially during health emergencies-

- Listening to community concerns and questions
- Promoting understanding of risk and health expert advice
- Building resilience to misinformation
- Engaging and empowering communities to take positive actions

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

Downeast Public Health 2026 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

2026 Ongoing Topics:

- Health Literacy
- Palliative Care and Hospice
- Maternal and Child Health
- Adult Tobacco Use Prevention and Treatment

Final 2025 CHNA Reports:

[State of Maine](#)

[Hancock County](#)

[Washington County](#)

Events/ Trainings

May 20- July 29

[Project ECHO: Aging, Community & Equity](#)

What to do to avoid the spread of false information?

- Identify website developers & sponsors
- Contact website owners & developers
- Identify potential conflict of interest or bias
- Identify the explicit purpose of the site; commercial or advertisement
- Look for the original source of the content
- Check site updates
- Assess the confidentiality of personal information is safeguarded
- Develop a site evaluation process

High quality information as described by an expert panel at the U.S. HHS is- accurate, current, valid, appropriate, intelligible and free of bias.

Free online training is available on infodemiology, media monitoring and communications:

[Infodemiology Training for Public Health Professionals](#)

[Infodemiology Training for Doctors and Health Care Providers](#)

Chronic Disease Awareness Month

July 15
[Conflict Prevention Strategies to Deter Targeted Violence](#)

July 15
[LHO Webinar: Healthy Maine Beaches](#)

July 22
[Maine State Health Improvement Plan \(SHIP\) Virtual Community Conversation](#)

July 23-24
[MGT-439: Pediatric Disaster Response & Emergency Preparedness \(Bangor\)](#)

September 8, April 13, 2027
[Project ECHO: Innovating to Provide Rural Perinatal Care in Challenging Times \(HCPs\)](#)

September 23
[Age-Friendly Health Systems Online Course \(HCPs\)](#)

More training and exercises:

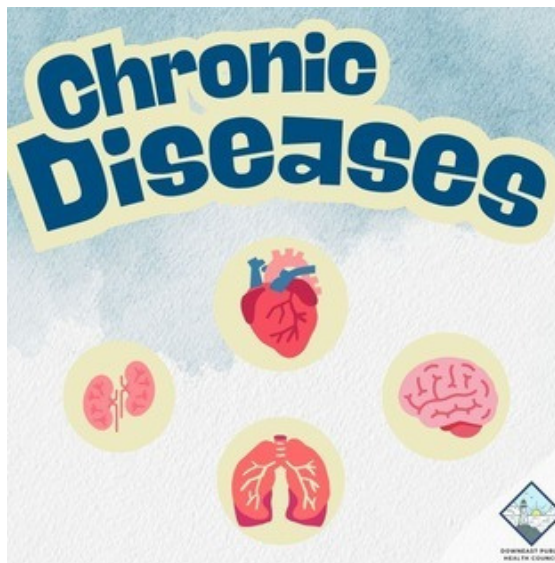
[PHEP Calendar](#)

[LHO Upcoming Trainings and Resources](#)

[MEMA Training Site & Calendar](#)

News

[Maine CDC Reminds Maine People and Visitors: Prepare for Active Mosquito Season](#)



Chronic diseases are widely described as illnesses that last 1 year or longer and require continuous medical attention or that restricts activities of daily living or both.

Why is this important?

Chronic diseases are the leading cause of illness, disability and death in the United States. According to the U.S. CDC, 3 in 4 adults have at least one chronic condition and over 50% have 2 or more chronic conditions.

The 10 most common chronic diseases in the U.S. are (2020):

1. Obesity
2. High blood pressure
3. High cholesterol
4. Coronary heart disease
5. COPD or emphysema
6. Asthma
7. Chronic kidney disease
8. Cancer
9. Depression

Most chronic diseases are caused by modifiable risk factors (*things you can change*) like smoking, poor

[Maine CDC Shares Tips for a Healthy Summer](#)

MaineHAN

[Seasonal Arbovirus Update for Clinicians](#)

[Extreme Heat and Unhealthy Air Quality this Week](#)

[Bicillin L-A Shortage Extended to Q4 2027](#)

[Human Powassan Case in Maine](#)

National Park and Recreation Month

Recreation and parks have the ability to unite people, improve health and wellbeing, and create stronger, more connected communities. Parks guarantee that everyone can get the benefits of nature, which inspires and restores people. Visit local park and recreation spaces this July!

The benefits of parks and recreation:

● They combat social isolation by connecting people with nature and each other through festivals, parades, social gathering, performing arts, tours and other activities.

● Local parks are nature access points, and nature is healing.

nutrition, physical inactivity and excessive alcohol use. Some people are more prone to chronic diseases because of certain Social Determinants of Health (*conditions in which people are born, grow, live and age*).

What you can do to prevent chronic diseases:

- [Quit smoking](#)
- [Eat Healthy](#)
- [Physical Exercise](#)
- [Limit alcohol consumption](#)
- Get screened for [cancer](#) & [diabetes](#)
- [Take care of teeth](#)
- [Get enough sleep](#)
- [Know your family history](#) (so you can prevent or detect diseases early)

Many of the diseases' risk factors overlap which highlight the importance of healthy living and screening for chronic disease prevention and improving overall health.

Resources:

[Full list of long-term conditions](#)

[Check your alcohol use](#)

[Addressing SDOH and Chronic Diseases](#)

[Maine CDC: Rethink Chronic Disease](#)

UV Safety

● Local parks supply clean water, lower ground temperatures, lessen flooding, and improve the quality of the air.

Information:

[Find Downeast & Acadia Parks and Lands](#)

[Maine State Parks](#)

[Park Passes, Fees & Rules](#)

[Stay Informed: Safety Updates](#)



World Hepatitis Day

July 28

July 28th is the birthday of the Nobel-prize winning scientist Dr. Baruch Blumberg who discovered Hepatitis B virus and developed a diagnostic test and vaccine for the virus.

Over 300 million individuals worldwide suffer from viral hepatitis, which causes over a million deaths annually. Despite efficient immunizations, preventative measures, and drugs- hepatitis-related mortality are rising worldwide.

This year let's break down barriers by:

- Increasing knowledge and awareness
- Sharing available resources



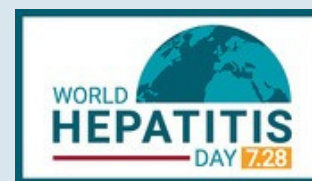
UV rays are a type of electromagnetic radiation which can be harmful to the skin. Most skin cancers are caused by excessive exposure to UV light that comes from the sun. However, UV light can also come from tanning beds and sun lamps.

Protect your skin from UV rays by:

- Staying in the shade especially during midday hours
- Wearing clothes that covers arms and legs
- Wearing a wide-brimmed hat to protect head, face and neck
- Wearing sunglasses that block UV rays
- Using sunscreen with at least SPF 30
- Avoiding tanning beds, booths, sunlamps and other artificial sources of UV light

Take the [Sun Safety Quiz](#)

- Fighting misinformation and myths
- Ending stigma



"Where you see wrong or inequality or injustice, speak out, because this is your country. This is your democracy. Make it. Protect it. Pass it on."

Thurgood Marshall (1908-1993), American jurist and Associate Justice of US Supreme Court

**Downeast Public Health
District and**

**Age-Friendly Public
Health System**



Sources: WHO, ODPHP, U.S. CDC, Cleveland Clinic, ACS, NRPA, World Hepatitis Alliance, PGP, Maine CDC.

If you have any questions, please contact Alfred May, District Liaison or Kawther Mohamed, Public Health Educator.



Maine Center for Disease
Control and Prevention

Complete Maine CDC's Local Health Officer (LHO) survey!

We want to learn more about how municipalities support their LHOs, what the role entails from town to town, and what support you might need from us.

Open to all covering the Local Health Officer role.

Thank you to all those who have already submitted - your input matters.

Estimated duration: less than 10 minutes to complete.

*Survey closes: **Friday July 10, 2026***

Local Health Officer Survey (2026) – Fill out form

Help Us Improve; We Want To
Hear What You Think Of Our
Newsletter!

[Take this short 3 min. survey.](#)



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