



MCD Public Health

Insight Innovation Impact

March 2014

Call to Action

Are you a member of APHA? Do you care about rural health? Then you can help!

The American Public Health Association's current Rural Health policy statement was developed in the 1990s by then Rural and Frontier Health Committee member Gail Bellamy. What was written then is still true and, unfortunately, many of the problems persist. In anticipation of a new Rural Health Data Book being published in 2014, APHA's Rural and Frontier Health Committee members developed and submitted a new policy statement to APHA for consideration. The process for vetting a policy statement can take a year or more between submission and acceptance. The draft policies currently under consideration by APHA have been posted to the [APHA website](#). All APHA members are encouraged to use the form posted on the site to comment on the draft policy (in addition to rural health there are several others that may well be of interest to you).

DOES IT MATTER? Absolutely! Even if you think the draft policy is perfect as is, it is important that you submit comments on the draft to APHA. The number of comments, in addition to the content of the comments, helps APHA assess both the level of interest and the level of quality of the proposed policy. The more people who review the draft and submit comments, the more the APHA staff leadership will get the message that rural health is important to APHA members. If you do only one thing this month, please let it be submitting a review to APHA on the draft rural health policy statement.

- Kate Perkins, Director, MCD Public Health

Project Spotlight



According to Forbes magazine, the US telehealth market is predicted to grow to \$1.9 billion in 2018 from \$240 million today, an annual growth rate of 56 percent. Through telehealth technology, patients are able to get the healthcare they need without being in the physical presence of their providers—often resulting in reduced costs for patients, increased access to timely services and specialists, and improved health outcomes. As telehealth rapidly

gains popularity in response to our country's diverse and significant healthcare needs, the [NorthEast Telehealth Resource Center](#) (NETRC) at MCD Public Health is here to help.

"The NETRC assists organizations to develop successful and sustainable telehealth programs," says Kim Mohan, Director of the NETRC. "Success requires careful consideration of many factors that go far beyond selecting the right technology for the job." For example, providers hoping to start or expand a telehealth program often have questions related to clinical concerns, finances, regulatory issues and interagency logistics.

The NETRC Team supports the expansion of sustainable telehealth programs serving rural and underserved populations throughout New England and New York. Customers include healthcare organizations as well as public health leaders and policy makers. The NETRC Team offers a variety of services and develops tools to help them succeed, including:

- Short and long term technical assistance for healthcare organizations
- Education for the telehealth workforce
- Access to educational materials, specialized tools and templates
- Access to Telehealth experts willing to sharing their experiences

- Support for collaborations promoting the use of Telehealth

Over the last two and a half years, the NETRC has been instrumental to the growing telehealth field. Beyond offering telehealth education and helping healthcare organizations to design and implement telehealth programs, NETRC has also helped organizations obtain grant funding for related projects, assisted individuals prepare expert testimony leading to changes in State laws, and conducted and published research to increase the evidence base for telehealth.

The NETRC is a partnership between MCD Public Health and Fletcher Allen Health Care/University of Vermont, funded by the U.S. DHHS. For more information, visit: <http://www.netrc.org>.

Kudos Corner

MCD Public Health congratulates the 2014 Oral Health Heroes recognized at the Maine [Oral Health Coalition's](#) annual legislative breakfast on February 13:

- **Dr. Gordon Trowbridge** for his work with the Special Olympics to increase access to oral health for athletes and their families.
- **Joint Standing Committee on HHS: Senator Margaret Craven, Representative Richard Farnsworth, Representative Drew Gattine and Representative Peter Stuckey** for going above and beyond to ensure access to oral health care for adults with special needs.
- **[Maine CDC Oral Health Program](#)** for optimizing scarce resources in working to improve the oral health of Maine citizens.



Accepting the Maine Oral Health Coalition's Oral Health Heroes 2014 Award, left to right: Nicole Breton, BS, RDH, Public Health Educator, Maine CDC Oral Health; Maureen Higgins, LCSW, Cancer Health Outreach Educator, Patrick Dempsey Cancer Center for Hope & Healing, Lewiston (presenter); Dr. Sheila Pinette, Director, Maine CDC; Judith Feinstein, MSPH, Program Manager, Maine CDC Oral Health.



Kudos to [Healthy Lincoln County](#) and their newest staff member, **Jennifer Hemingway**, Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator and facilitator of HLC's prevention coalition. In February, Jenn launched a pilot of the Student Intervention and Reintegration Program (SIRP), a diversion program for youth who are engaging in high-risk behavior and decision-making about substance use. The program has three components: 1) a 12-hour educational class for

youth, 2) a parent informational meeting with referral to community supports, and 3) follow-up with students by a community champion. SIRP is offered by HLC in the context of other coalition work with schools, youth organizations, parents, law enforcement, businesses and community members to effect environmental change and implement policy in ways that create a positive environment for youth to develop and thrive. Look for Jenn in an upcoming promotional video by AdCare that will feature her as SIRP instructor.

Mark Your Calendars!

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Visit the [Maine Colorectal Cancer Control Program](#) and [ScreenMaine](#).

Next training session begins March 28 -

[Maine Practice Improvement Network Quality Improvement Coach Training](#)

MCD Public Health, Augusta, Maine

April 16 -

[Hanley Center Honors for Leadership in Health Equity & Health Disparities](#)

STAY CONNECTED

