

Maine Asthma Coalition

Meeting Minutes

September 25, 2012

Key Plaza

Members Present: Andy Pritchard, Effie Craven, Lee Gilman, Peter Doran, Carol Coles, Bonnie Irwin, Rhonda Vosmus, Veronica Boucher, Sharon Dow, Alex Hughes, Martha Webster, Sarah Mayberry, Jim Braddick

Healthy Air Campaign

Effie Craven is a new employee at the Lung Association working on their Healthy Air Campaign. The focus is on protecting the federal Clean Air Act. The Maine Asthma Coalition is a member of that Campaign, which has 42 members in Maine. The Campaign is currently recruiting people affected by air quality issues to speak to the importance of clean air.

Related to this issue, Maine's DEP operates [EnviroFlash](#), which is an automated electronic notification system to notify people of poor air quality in their zip code area. Martha Webster encouraged Coalition and Healthy Air Campaign members to utilize this system, which is updated daily. The US EPA has a [school flag notification system](#), in which colored flags are used to inform school personnel and students of the local air quality forecast.

Workgroup Updates

Schools Workgroup – has finalized the School Nurse Survey and is working distributing the remaining school nurse toolkits.

Workplaces Workgroup – this group has lost some of its members due to their changing jobs or job descriptions. Its recent activity focused on adding content to and promoting the use of Healthy Maine Works (HMW), the workplace wellness assessment tool used by HMP's in their work with local businesses and employers. Jim recently received information that the funding reduction to HMP's would result in their being largely unable to do much with HMW, but several members at today's meeting indicated that a formal decision had not been made. Regardless of the status of HMP activity, HMW will continue as a resource to Maine's employers; there will be no need to work with an HMP to access the HMW resources.

At its last meeting the remaining Workgroup members agreed to merge with the [Maine Occupational Research Agenda \(MORA\)](#), which includes Peter Doran and Desi-Rae Severson as members. In response to a question, Jim indicated that specific workgroups are not required by federal CDC as a condition of funding the Asthma Program, but there needs to be a Coalition structure that can successfully implement the State Asthma Plan.

Homes Workgroup - this group is engaged in several activities to provide information on asthma and indoor air quality to different target audiences, including [Local Health Officers](#), and Resident Service Coordinators at multi-unit housing sites.

Coalition Satisfaction Survey

Andy Pritchard reviewed the results from the 2012 Maine Asthma Coalition Survey. The Survey has been done annually since 2009. Jim identified two findings of concern to him:

- The number of respondents has declined from last year, and overall since 2009.
- The 2012 responses indicate a decrease in enthusiasm for Coalition membership & activities from the 2011 Survey.

The discussion that followed raised the following points:

1. The Coalition may be at a point in its life cycle where it needs new membership and new challenges.
2. Funding losses may be a factor in the Coalition being unable to fund some activities of interest to members.
3. The Coalition should revise the State Asthma Plan to rewrite or prioritize activities to ensure the Plan identifies the issues of most concern to the Coalition.
4. There was discussion of whether the current system of quarterly meetings is adequate for members' needs. Ideas on this include:
 - i. Distribute project/activity evaluation results to Coalition members
 - ii. Create a summary of achievements for distribution to Coalition members
 - iii. Circulate summaries of workgroup activities prior to Coalition meetings
 - iv. Provide the Leadership Group and the Coalition with a document which identifies the status of each Goal and Objective in the State Plan.

Jim will draft the document described in iv. for distribution to the Leadership Group for discussion prior to the next Coalition meeting, and will work with Andy and workgroup members to develop the information described in i., ii., and iii.