



State Report

State: Massachusetts

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Projects/Activities Addressed This Year

Massachusetts Association of Public Health Nurses (MAPHN) Activities

- Thirteenth annual Public Health Nursing Conference entitled “*Healthy People 2010: How Does Massachusetts Measure Up?*” was held on April 30, 2009. Public health nurses from surrounding New England states were invited to attend.
- Massachusetts Public Health Legislative Breakfast was held at the Massachusetts State House on March 3, 2009, health screenings were offered.
- Revisions continue to be made to the MAPHN Public Health Nursing Leadership Guide and Resource manual. This guide can be downloaded from the MAPHN website at www.maphn.org
- A Public Health Nursing podcast was created as a collaborative project between MAPHN and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Communications Office. The podcast describes the public health nursing role and emphasizes the value of public health nursing. Once finalized it will be posted on the MDPH website and the MAPHN website.
- MAPHN and Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) worked with the New England Alliance for Public Health Workforce Development to offer a core curriculum for public health nurses and sanitarians. This is being offered through the Local Public Health Training Institute via classroom courses and online training using a Webinar. More information at <http://www.masslocalinstitute.org>
- MAPHN newsletter is published twice a year and can be viewed on the MAPHN website at www.maphn.org
- MAPHN website was upgraded this past year to make it more user-friendly and to give it a more professional appearance.
- Local and state PHN representatives presented “*The Public Health Nurse, Why Every Town Needs One!*” to local town officials across the state.
- MAPHN representatives presented at the annual disease surveillance trainings in March 2009. The topic presented was “*The Local Public Health Nursing Role in Communicable Disease Investigation and Follow-up*”.

National Public Health Nursing Activities

- Glynnis LaRosa was elected as a Member at Large representative for a two year term 2008-2010 to the ASTDN Executive Committee. Glynnis also serves as the Massachusetts ASTDN state representative.
- Glynnis LaRosa and Diana Pistole are the co-chairpersons of the ASTDN Program Planning Committee for the 2009 annual conference “Public Health Nurses: Nobody Does it Better” to be held May 4-6, 2009 in Oklahoma City, OK.
- Glynnis LaRosa was co-chairperson of the workgroup that drafted the ASTDN position paper “The Public Health Nurse’s Role in Achieving Health Equity: Eliminating Inequalities in Health”.
- Glynnis LaRosa participated in a Northeast ASTDN conference call held by Jan Morrisette, the ASTDN Maine and the Northeast regional representative.
- Glynnis LaRosa continues to be a member of the APHA PHN section Development Committee.

Other Public Health Nursing Activities

- New England Alliance for Workforce Development, located at Boston University School of Public Health, has allocated funding for New England public health nursing education which includes: sponsoring attendance at the Massachusetts Public Health Nurses annual conference 4/30/09, sponsoring New England PHN leaders attendance at the ASTDN annual conference 5/4-5/6/09, and the development of three webinar educational sessions for New England public health nurses during June, July, August 2009.
- MDPH public health nursing staff continued to visit undergraduate and graduate nursing programs across the state to give presentations on public health nursing and emergency preparedness and response.
- Public health nurses are involved in providing educational support to the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) in Massachusetts.
- Public health nurses are working on the Emergency System for Advance Registration of Voluntary Health Professionals (ESAR-VHP) project workgroup (called MSAR in Massachusetts).
- Public health nurses at the local and state level continue to be mentors and preceptors to nursing students.
- Public health nurses are members of various statewide planning and advisory committees.

Massachusetts Department of Public Health Nursing Activities:

Bureau of Infectious Disease Prevention, Response and Services

- On January 1, 2009, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health HIV/AIDS Bureau and Bureau of Communicable Disease Control merged into a single entity called the Bureau of Infectious Disease Prevention, Response, and Services. This merger unites the epidemiologic, medical, and scientific expertise of the Bureau of Communicable Disease Control with the administrative, programmatic, policy, and advocacy capacities of the HIV/AIDS Bureau.
- MDPH Bureau of Infectious Disease Prevention, Response & Services public health nursing staff continues to work on specific public health competency development and cross training.
- MDPH Bureau of Infectious Disease Prevention, Response & Services nursing staff held its annual Nursing Retreat. This all day off site retreat that enables the nursing team to do strategic planning, review the previous year’s accomplishments and develop goals and objectives for the next year.
- The “Flu Care at Home” project is in Phase II. The informational booklet has been translated into Spanish, Portuguese, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole and Chinese. For more information and to view related materials go to www.mass.gov/dph/flu

Division of Epidemiology and Immunization

- The Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program for Massachusetts fully converted to a web-based Public Health Information Network (PHIN) compliant system, called MAVEN, in 2006. The integration of this new system has increased the number of HBsAg-positive women identified, allowing for Massachusetts to exceed the CDC point estimate for HBsAg-positive women in Massachusetts for 2007 and 2008. In 2008, the number of babies identified as being born to HBsAg-positive women has increased by 30% from 354 in 2007 to 474 in 2008. This is directly related to the increase in women being identified earlier in pregnancy via electronic reporting of HBsAg-positive prenatal labs through MAVEN.
- MDPH received a second year of 317 funding from the CDC totaling \$426,486.00 to purchase and offer combined hepatitis A and hepatitis B (Twinrix) vaccination to a high risk population. With these funds, MDPH was able to purchase 11,037 doses of Twinrix. The vaccine has been offered to: county correctional facilities and the state Department of Corrections to vaccinate inmates, Integrated Counseling, Testing and Referral Centers, and Local Boards of Health for administration to high risk populations.
- MDPH received a grant to develop a comprehensive action plan to increase adolescent and adult immunization. A series of meetings were conducted across the state to solicit input in helping to describe current strengths and resources, identify gaps, and envision programs and activities to address the gaps.

Tuberculosis (TB) Control Program

- MDPH regional-based tuberculosis (TB) public health nursing advisors and local public health nurses provided nursing case management to 548 reported TB suspects, 260 of whom were confirmed cases, until therapy was completed, including conducting contact investigations.
- Continued ongoing development of the statewide comprehensive electronic infectious disease reporting and surveillance information system (MAVEN), and began training local health department nurses in its use.
- Conducted four TB conferences for public health nurses.
- Continued partnering with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the New Jersey Medical School National Tuberculosis Regional Training and Medical Consultation Center (RTMCC), and the Medical Foundation of Massachusetts, as the New England RTMCC satellite site for TB education, training, and clinical consultation activities.
- Presented TB updates at five regional-based infectious disease trainings across the state.
- Janice Boutotte, PhD, RN participated on the National TB Nurses' Coalition's Nursing Informatics Committee.
- Kathleen Hursen, RN, MS participated on the National TB Nurses' Coalition's Board of Directors as President.
- Collaborated with the MDPH AIDS Bureau to implement the Expanded HIV Emphasis in TB Clinics Project at four TB clinics. This project improves linkages between the clinics and HIV testing and counseling centers to increase the number of TB clients counseled, tested, and referred for services. One of these clinics is also including Hepatitis screenings.
- Collaborated with the MDPH Bureau of Substance Abuse to develop written policies/procedures for TB screening of clients in substance abuse programs.

Sexually Transmitted Disease Program

- MDPH Public Health Nurse provides medical consultation and case management for patients seen by primary care providers.
- MDPH PHN directs all activities related to the Infertility Prevention Project.
- MDPH PHN routinely provides consultation to DIS field staff in the handling of clinical and medical issues related to priority STD cases and their contacts.

Emergency Preparedness and Response

- Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Emergency Preparedness/Bioterrorism trainings continue across the state. Modular sessions offering continuing education credits include: BT agent overview, pandemic flu, smallpox, emergency dispensing site clinics, rash surveillance, behavioral health disaster response and psychological first aid.
- An Advanced Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS) training is under development in collaboration with MDPH SNS staff.
- MDPH Bureau of Infectious Disease Prevention, Response & Services public health nurses provided pre-screening and education, as well as conducted a 'take' evaluation clinic, for State Laboratory staff that received smallpox vaccinations.
- Thousands of public health nurses, school nurses, occupational health nurses, student nurses and other health care professionals from across the state have been trained by MDPH Public Health Nurses to administer the smallpox vaccine. An online smallpox recertification course for those volunteers previously certified to administer smallpox vaccine is available in an effort to maintain competency.
- MDPH Public Health Nurses were trained in Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) methodology this past year which will enable these state PHNs to better evaluate exercises and drills across the state.
- MDPH Public Health Nurses planned, participated and evaluated school closing and emergency dispensing site exercises and drills. These exercises and drills continue to test Emergency Dispensing Site (EDS) planning and operations. Flu clinics continue to be used to drill EDS sites and utilize the ICS structure.
- School nurses are being trained on all aspects of emergency preparedness and planning across the state.
- MDPH public health nursing staff provided Emergency Preparedness Planning and Infectious Disease educational sessions to undergraduate and graduate nursing programs across the state.

Issues & Special Concerns for Public Health Nursing

- State and local budget deficits have impacted public health nursing services. There are cities/towns that do not have local public health nurses, while other cities/towns only have part time public health nurses. We are seeing some cities and towns now reducing and/or eliminating their public health workforce including PHNs.
- We continue to actively promote the value of Public Health Nursing across the state !