



# Public Health Advisory Committee

# Annual Report

February 2015

Health Department

# 2014 Annual Report of the Public Health Advisory Committee

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In fall 2013, the Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC) engaged in a prioritizing activity to better align its discussions, actions, and efforts with the Minneapolis Health Department and City of Minneapolis goals. The resulting priorities gave direction to 2014 as the Committee considered speakers, topics, and actions.

## Priority #1: School ready children & Breastfeeding rates-supports-challenges

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The PHAC devoted a number of meetings to learning more about city, local, and statewide breastfeeding initiatives to better understand breastfeeding initiation and continuation rates, supports available to moms / parents and families in and out of the hospital, and barriers encountered.

**Learning:** PHAC members received presentations from the Minnesota Breastfeeding Coalition, Minneapolis Health Department staff from Healthy Start & its community based partner The Family Partnership, and the Minnesota Visiting Nurse Association.

### Actions:

- PHAC hosted a panel discussion with representatives from four Minneapolis hospitals on breastfeeding initiation rates, in-hospital supports, and challenges hospitals encounter. Abbott-Northwestern Hospital, North Memorial Medical Center, Hennepin County Medical Center, and the University of Minnesota Medical Center were represented. Panelists agreed that breastfeeding is one of the most effective preventive health measures for infants and mothers; the most benefits are gained from exclusive breastfeeding during the early stages of life; a mother's experience during her hospital stay has a significant impact on breastfeeding rates; and, mothers and families encounter many barriers and challenges outside the hospital environment.
- PHAC members were very engaged and discussed potential actions / priorities for committee follow-up on this topic. Ideas generated include: reviewing the policies and supports the City of Minneapolis, as an employer, has in place for creating a breastfeeding-friendly work place; discussing ways to provide education and outreach for all women on breastfeeding support and concerns; breastfeeding support call-in lines and/or drop-in breastfeeding support clinics for after the hospital stay; breastfeeding-friendly spaces in all public places; and more.
- PHAC commissioned a study by a Master's student at the University of Minnesota-School of Public Health to examine cultural and structural barriers to breastfeeding in Minneapolis' cultural communities and identify actions the City could take to better support breastfeeding families. The report is expected in summer 2015.

## Priority #2: Access to Healthy Foods

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The PHAC had previously engaged in a discussion and provided feedback about proposed changes designed to update Minneapolis' Staple Foods Ordinance. PHAC members were interested in the planned healthy food, tobacco, and tobacco alternatives policies and practices for the new Vikings Stadium development.

**Learning:** Received an update on outreach efforts and proposed changes to Minneapolis' Staple Food Ordinance from Kristen Klingler, Sr. Public Health Specialist – MHD and Robin Garwood, Aide to Council Member Cam Gordon. Proposed changes (later passed by the City Council) updated Minneapolis' ordinance by reducing exemptions, and strengthening staple food stocking requirements in Minneapolis stores in order to increase access to fresh foods for Minneapolis residents. Members of the Policy & Planning sub-committee reviewed the Health Department's Vikings Stadium Health Guidelines and recommendations.

### **Actions:**

- Engaged the Director of Communications for the Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority in discussion around health considerations for the Vikings Stadium development and operation. The discussion ranged from food policies to vendor expectations to tobacco (and tobacco alternatives) policies and other year-round uses for the stadium.
- Submitted a letter to the Health Environment & Community Engagement committee and provided public testimony during the committee's public hearing supporting the proposed changes to the City's Staple Foods Ordinance. (*Ordinance passed unanimously.*)

## Priority #3: Smoke-Free Living (E-cigarette regulation)

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**Learning:** Received two presentations: 1) a summary of the health department's recent work on tobacco issues, including a survey of local restaurants, coffee shops and café managers to assess attitudes on e-cigarettes; and, 2) a presentation by the Minneapolis Youth Congress (MYC) Tobacco Initiative on their proposed City Council recommendations for limiting e-cigarette access for youth.

### **Actions:**

- PHAC members urged support for the regulation of e-cigarette use in accordance with the Freedom to Breathe Act. The Committee wrote letters to Governor Dayton, each member of the Minneapolis delegation, and Health Commissioner Ehlinger.
- PHAC supported MYC's work and recommendations, submitted a letter to the City Council's Health, Environment & Community Engagement committee, and provided testimony of that support during MYC's presentation to the HE&CE committee.

- PHAC member, Sahra Noor, provided public testimony during the City Council’s public hearing on e-cigarette regulation. (*Ordinance regulating the use of e-cigarettes in indoor public places and places of employment passed.*)

## Priority #4: Reduce Youth Violence

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**Learning:** Received an update on the revised Blueprint for Action to Prevent Youth Violence and its goals.

**Action:**

- Ward 5 representative and PHAC co-chair Tara Jenson invited Sasha Cotton, Youth Violence Prevention Coordinator, to present the revised Blueprint at the Community Health and Advocacy Talks (CHAT), sponsored by Urban Research and Outreach Engagement Centers and UMN North Memorial Family Medicine Residency Program.

## Priority #5: Housing and Homelessness

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With a collective interest in the complexities of housing disparities, segregation and the concentration of poverty, and homelessness, the PHAC finished the year by studying various aspects of these topics.

**Learning:** Received a presentation from the University of Minnesota’s Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity about housing policies, funding, and development as it relates to segregation, homelessness, and concentrated poverty. Received a presentation from Health Department staff on the public health implications of hoarding disorder and how the City has addressed hoarding behavior.

**Actions:**

- Invited the Residential Finance Manager from the City’s Community Planning & Economic Development office to a meeting of the Policy & Planning sub-committee to discuss housing policies, funding, and development.
- The PHAC strongly recommends development of a Housing Advisory Committee; a recommendation is in draft form at this time.

## Priority #6: Committee Operations

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### Actions:

- PHAC members helped review the nominations for the Local Public Health Heroes awards, the Health Department's public ceremony which honors community partners whose service to public health activities transforms and strengthens the lives of Minneapolis residents and visitors.
- The Communications & Operations (Comm/Ops) sub-committee updated the member orientation manual and provided orientations and new manuals to each member. Additionally, as vacancies occurred, Comm/Ops reviewed new applications and provided feedback on applicants regarding their strengths and the committee's needs.
- The Collaboration & Engagement (C&E) sub-committee members are in the planning phases for viewings and community discussions around *The Raising of America* (scheduled for release summer 2015). *The Raising of America* is a documentary series that explores how a strong start for all our kids can lead to a healthier, safer, better educated, more prosperous, and equitable America.

## 2015 Priorities...

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- Provide feedback on the Cradle to K Cabinet report
- Plan viewings and community discussions around the documentary: *The Raising of America*
- Draft a recommendation for the development of a Housing Advisory Committee
- Review PHAC priorities alongside Health Department goals
- Engage Council Members, community, and partners: discuss health concerns and priorities in Minneapolis