

Healthy City Updates

City of Minneapolis Passes Healthy Food Policy for Employees

In October 2011, the Minneapolis City Council passed a healthy food policy to support the health and wellness of City employees by ensuring the availability of healthy options in City vending machines, cafeterias and meetings. The policy supports the health of employees by improving access to fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat and low-calorie options. The policy is a result of an employee wellness survey indicating that 70 percent of respondents supported the City's establishment of healthy food guidelines. The need for the policy is also underscored by the startling statistics that in 2009, employees incurred over \$56,000,000 in insurance claims for preventable chronic conditions such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, heart attack and stroke. The new healthy food policy also supports the City's commitment to improving the health of employees and residents alike.

April 4 Public Health Week Celebration

A healthier America begins with a strong public health system. National Public Health Week is April 2-6 and MDHFS will celebrate with an open house and awards ceremony on April 4, 11 am-1 pm in the City Hall Rotunda. Awards will be given to community partners who have contributed to the following health department goals: A strong urban public health infrastructure; Healthy Weight through Active Living and Healthy Eating; Healthy Sexuality and Relationships; Thriving and Violence Free Youth; A Healthy Start to Life and Learning. Please stop by to learn about MDHFS programs and initiatives in action. For more information, please contact Pam Blixt at 612-673-3933 or pam.blixt@minneapolismn.gov.

Youth Violence Prevention Week: March 19-23, 2012

To raise awareness around youth violence, MDHFS is urging local agencies to participate in Youth Violence Prevention Week to engage the public in effective ways to prevent and reduce youth violence. The education effort is in collaboration with Minneapolis Public Schools, Minneapolis Youth Congress and Community Power against Violence. As part of a larger national public awareness initiative, the week features activities and events to call attention to the issue of youth violence and to promote the positive role youth and adults can have in making their communities and schools safer. A toolkit is available to help organizations hold activities, nominate individuals for a peacekeeper award, and submit an entry for a poster contest. To access the toolkit, visit: www.minneapolismn.gov/health/yvp/dhfs_yv.

Prevention Institute Highlights City's Violence Prevention Efforts

The Prevention Institute has featured the City's efforts around youth violence prevention in a booklet summarizing Mayor R.T. Rybak's presentation at the Blueprint for Action Youth Violence Prevention Conference in May 2011. The booklet outlines the Blueprint's positive impact and how taking a public health approach has transformed the issue of youth violence in Minneapolis. For a copy, visit <http://www.preventioninstitute.org/component/jlibrary/article/id-324/127.html>.

New funding awards

Numerous grants have been awarded to MDHFS for Lead and Healthy Homes programs:

- \$195,300 to provide lead outreach, education, in-home visits and referrals to remediation resources; funding is provided from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through Hennepin County Housing Community Works and Transit from March 2012 to December 2013.
- \$25,000, with funding ending August 31, 2012, to conduct healthy home assessments, distribute healthy home supplies to families, educate building code officials, and develop a Minneapolis lead and healthy homes strategic plan. Funding is from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention through the Minnesota Department of Health.

- \$49,980 from February 2012 to June 2014 to provide in-home education visits by public health nurses for children with poorly controlled asthma living in Section 8 multi-unit housing, and to provide asthma trigger reduction supplies to their families. Funding is from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through the Minnesota Department of Health.

- \$30,000 from June 2012 to May 2014 to conduct outreach to emergency rooms and clinics about healthy home messages and resources available to their patients. Funding is from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through the Minneapolis Regulatory Services department.

Skipper Awards

Congratulations to the latest recipients of the quarterly Skipper Award recognizing staff's outstanding contributions to MDHFS' mission.

- The Healthy Living Team for their tireless work on securing the second installment of funding from the Statewide Health Improvement Program, along with coordinating and presenting at the national Making It Better conference last November. Team members are: **Aliyah Ali, Patty Bowler, Megan Ellingson, Kristen**

Klingler, June Mathiowetz, Sarah Reuben Meillier, Maria Sarabia, Sarah Stewart, and Lara Tiede. In addition, **Brian May** was also recognized for his invaluable assistance with such School Based Clinic projects as the transition to electronic medical records and the Asset Trax inventory management program.

- Homegrown Minneapolis Coordinator **June Mathiowetz** for her leadership and advocacy in working with agencies and the community to establish systems, resources and opportunities for residents to grow and sell fresh vegetables and fruits, especially in low-income neighborhoods.

Staff Transitions

- **Chris Senko**, a MDHFS support staff team member, recently passed away after a year-long battle with cancer. Chris will be remembered as a kind and thoughtful co-worker and will be dearly missed.
- **Marie Hauser, R.N.**, worked for MDHFS since 2005 as the emergency preparedness pandemic planner and was laid off at the end of 2011 due to federal and City budget reductions in public health preparedness.
- **Grace Anderson**, who was a site coordinator with Twin City Healthy Start, was recently rehired to work on public health emergency preparedness training.
- **Stacye Ballard**, a project coordinator overseeing Twin City Healthy Start contract sites left in February due to program funding cuts.

New Staff

- **Don Moody** has joined MDHFS as a program **aide working** with emergency preparedness and providing support for healthy living initiatives as well as conducting follow-up calls to families whose children tested high for lead.
- **Julie Polan** is the new coordinator for the Not Ready Now program at Longfellow School to work with students on pregnancy prevention and assist them in completing high school. Julie has worked as a nurse in a variety of settings and most recently completed an adolescent health fellowship at the University of Minnesota.
- **Farhiya Farah** has been hired as a Family Support **Specialist III** working on Healthy Homes and Lead Poisoning Prevention. Farhiya has a Master's in Public Health Degree and was previously employed by the University of Minnesota and by Regulatory Services as a Food Inspector. She is a 2009 Bush Leadership Fellow recipient and served on the Department's Urban Health Agenda Advisory Committee.

MINNEAPOLIS HEALTHY CITY THRIVING FAMILIES



A Quarterly Update from the City of Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support

March 2012

Healthy Living Projects Re-Funded to Reduce Obesity and Tobacco Use

In late 2011, the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS) received two grants to continue and expand activities to increase healthy eating, physical activity and smoke-free living. .

From the Minnesota Department of Health, MDHFS received \$1,047,374 from the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) to help Minneapolis residents lead longer, healthier lives by reducing the burden of chronic diseases such as asthma, heart disease, stroke and diabetes. These preventable illnesses burden individuals and their families and cost the health care system billions of dollars each year. According to the Minnesota Department of Health, heart disease and stroke account for 75% of total health care spending. Each additional unit of body mass index (BMI) increases medical charges by nearly 2%. Tobacco use alone is associated with 26% higher medical charges.

MDHFS has also received funding—through Hennepin County—from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Community Transformation Grant for the same purpose. Together, these funds will support the department and its partners in transforming schools, neighborhoods, clinics, child care programs and other venues to be more conducive to healthy living. These efforts are primarily concentrated in Minneapolis communities where up to two-thirds of residents are overweight or obese and smoking rates are two times higher than the city rate. Specific projects include:

Access to healthy foods:

- Helping corner store owners increase the variety, affordability and visibility of healthy foods.
- Working with farmers markets to accept electronic benefit transfers (EBT) from low-income residents.
- Providing gardening and food preservation skills through Local Food Resource Hubs and the Homegrown Minneapolis initiative.
- Improving nutrition practices at child care programs.
- Improving the food environment and implementing farm-to-school strategies at local schools.
- Creating a network of food shelves to increase healthy food options.

Physical activity:

- Converting city streets into permanent biking and walking corridors.
- Implementing guidelines to make streets friendlier for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Increasing active play during school recess and increasing students' biking and walking to school.

Quality health care

- Expanding obesity and tobacco use prevention efforts at clinics; emphasizing chronic disease management and emotional health services at certain clinics.
- Increasing resource referrals for free/low-cost smoking cessation, physical activity, nutrition and chronic disease management programs.

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MDHFS Seeks Public Health Accreditation

In January, MDHFS began its periodic local public health assessment and planning process that must be completed by February 2015, as required by state statute. It is aligned with the Public Health Accreditation Board requirements and is part of a national movement toward accrediting public health institutions to strengthen infrastructure. There are four phases to the accreditation process:

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Smoke free environments:

- Implementing smoke-free policies at subsidized multi-unit housing properties and post-secondary institutions (colleges, technical and trade schools).
- Requiring buildings funded through housing assistance programs to be smoke-free and to include amenities for physical activity and growing fruits and vegetables.

Community transformation:

- Establishing healthy living neighborhood districts to serve as hubs for healthy activities and community dialogue.

The focus of all of these initiatives is to change policies, systems and environments in a sustainable manner so that the healthy choice becomes the easy choice. For more information on these efforts, contact Lara Tiede at 612-673-3815 or lara.tiede@minneapolismn.gov.



Lowry Food Market Owner Bassem Kablaoui, a participant of MDHFS' Healthy Corner Store Program, stands next to his revamped produce display. Since he started carrying healthier items, produce sales have increased 50 percent.

Radon Kit Give-away

On January 31, MDHFS gave away free radon kits to increase awareness of radon's cancer risks and to encourage people to test their homes. Radon is an odorless, colorless, tasteless gas that occurs naturally in the soil and can enter homes primarily through cracks and openings in basement or foundation floors and walls. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S and the first cause among nonsmokers.

The Minnesota Department of Health estimates that one in three existing Minnesota homes pose a health risk. To get a free radon kit to test your home (while supplies last), contact one of these community partners: CLEARCorps USA at 651-603-8000; Southeast Asian Community Council at 612-521-4859; Sustainable Resources Center at 612-872-3282.

Radon kits are donated by the Minnesota Department of Health.

Health Impact Assessment to be conducted for Mississippi River Project

A \$125,000 grant from the Pew Charitable Trust will provide funding to conduct a health impact assessment (HIA) to evaluate the potential health effects of proposed redevelopment along the Mississippi River north of the Plymouth Avenue Bridge. The project aims to transform the industry-laden area into a destination park to showcase the Mississippi's natural beauty, amenities and history. HIAs provide vital information to guide policymakers and communities in approving and shaping a potential project. For instance, the future development of the Mississippi may improve air and water pollution; increase opportunities for exercise by developing park land along the riverfront; revitalize nearby substandard housing; and attract businesses to the area.

The HIA process will include broad community engagement to develop a design that maximizes health benefits for residents. Grant funding is from January 2012 to June 2013 and is a partnership with the City of Minneapolis' Department of Community Planning & Economic Development, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board, and Minneapolis Riverfront Partnership. For more information, please contact Dave Johnson at 612-673-3948 or david.johnson@minneapolismn.gov



An artist's rendering of the proposed Mississippi redevelopment (source: RiverFIRST: A Park Design Proposal and Implementation Framework for the Minneapolis Upper Riverfront)

MDHFS Seeks Public Health Accreditation *continued from page 1*

1. Assessment requires MDHFS to conduct both a self-study to determine its ability to meet national accreditation standards along with a community health assessment to engage community partners in gathering, reviewing and synthesizing existing data.

2. Prioritization includes the identification of the ten areas of greatest community health needs and the three national standards most in need of improvement by MDHFS.

3. Plan development for: 1) the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), a community plan involving community partners in assessment, planning, strategy development and implementation; 2) the Strategic Plan for identifying the department's role and responsibilities for implementing the CHIP; and 3) the Quality Improvement Plan to improve operational efficiency and effectiveness.

4. Implementation takes place as plans are finalized and progress toward goals is reported to community partners and the public.

MDHFS is currently working to develop the CHIP in partnership with public health departments serving Bloomington, Edina, Richfield, and other parts of suburban Hennepin County. Surveys have been sent to community agency stakeholders to assess capacity and activities related to emergency preparedness, as well as public health, health care, and social services programs. Health data has also been compiled to identify health-related priorities; health disparities among socioeconomic groups, racial/ethnic groups, or neighborhoods; and gaps in services.

This spring, assessment data will be shared at forums where community representatives will identify priority areas and develop a plan to improve community health.

For more information, contact Pat Harrison at 612-673-3883 or pat.harrison@minneapolismn.gov.

Receive Healthy City Thriving Families Electronically

As MDHFS strives to institute greener practices, we invite our Healthy City Thriving Families readers to receive our newsletter electronically instead of by mail. Each quarter you'll receive the same great newsletter and can choose to unsubscribe at any time.

To sign up please visit: http://www.minneapolismn.gov/health/dhfs_dhfs-esubscribe

Urban Health Agenda: Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council

As of January 2012, Minneapolis residents now have their own food council to advise leaders and develop policies to expand access to healthy, sustainable and locally grown foods. The Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council will also address challenges such as the processing, promotion, distribution, consumption and composting of locally grown foods. The establishment of a city-based food council is part of a nationwide trend among urban areas to engage community members in developing food and agriculture policies to make communities healthier and more economically vibrant.

The 21-member Food Council is composed of City staff from six departments and 15 residents who completed an open appointment process. Community members Beth Dooley and Mustafa Sundiata have been selected to co-chair the council, which also includes an executive committee and working groups to lead special initiatives.

To date, the Food Council has taken two formal actions to advance local urban agriculture activities: 1) supported the proposed Urban Agriculture Text Amendments to implement the Urban Agricultural Policy Plan passed by the Minneapolis City Council in April 2011; and 2) supported changes to improve the City's composting ordinance. The Food Council is also working to further define its structure and articulate priorities to guide its work over the next two years.

Through the larger Homegrown Minneapolis initiative, the City Council also recently adopted goals for its local food sustainability efforts to increase city gardens by one additional acre by 2014 and to ensure all Minneapolis residents are within a quarter mile of a healthy food source such as a grocery store, corner store, farmers market or community garden.

To receive regular Homegrown Minneapolis email updates or to participate in activities, contact June Mathiowetz before April 6 at 612-673-2027 or june.mathiowetz@minneapolismn.gov. After April 6, please contact Gayle Prest at 612-673-2931 or gayle.prest@minneapolismn.gov. Food Council agendas and minutes are also posted on the Homegrown Minneapolis website: www.minneapolismn.gov/health/homegrown/index.htm.

The Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS)

VISION:

Health, equity and well-being for all people in their communities.



MISSION: To promote health equity in Minneapolis and meet the unique needs of our urban population by providing leadership and fostering partnerships.

Gretchen Musicant, Commissioner

250 South Fourth Street
Room 510
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1384

(612) 673-2301

www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at (612) 673-2162. Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may use a relay service to call 311 agents at (612) 673-3000. TTY users may call (612) 673-2157 or (612) 673-2626.