

Preventing disease, promoting wellness, increasing access, and improving quality.

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## Your Monthly News & Updates - August 2017

Dear Colleagues:

Months back, our newsletter touched on a complex question and that is, "What is public health?" As the world of public health is multidimensional, we realize that one article in a newsletter is not sufficient in educating our policymakers and stakeholders on what the field entails, the impact it makes, or the challenges that it faces. Recently, through the support and actions of our Maine Senators, at this moment we have a short reprieve from the attack on health care for all. However, we are still experiencing a significant dismantling of vital public health programs. This is happening on both a federal and state level, as many changes are leading to shifts in funding and the restructuring of public health programs and resources. For more insight on what is happening at the state level, read the [article](#) from Becca Boulos, Executive Director of the Maine Public Health Association.

As proponents of public health in the State of Maine, we have an obligation to raise awareness about public health, what we do, and the communities we serve. As a rural state facing numerous issues with a growing substance abuse epidemic, health care and oral health access, and an isolated aging population, it is necessary for programs to reach these areas of need through outreach at the local level.

Therefore, we stand with organizations like the Maine Public Health Association, American Public Health Association, the National Network of Public Health Institutes, and many others who work to spearhead important public health issues nationally and in Maine. Despite ongoing challenges, it is crucial to not lose sight of the valuable work that has been done and the work that is being planned and implemented across many communities.

In this month's newsletter, we highlight an important public health advancement as August is [National Immunization Awareness Month](#). Maine CDC contracts with MCD Public Health to provide Quality Assurance Specialists for the Maine Immunization Program. Check out their article below for more information around ongoing efforts, and the strides Maine is making in immunization compliance.



Elizabeth  
Foley  
Co-Director

Best Regards,  
*Elizabeth & Danielle*



Danielle  
Louder  
Co-Director

## Kudos

The MCD Public Health Team has received some good news over the past few weeks:



- We received official notification from HRSA, and from the [Offices of Senators Collins and King](#) that our proposal was funded to continue to serve as the [Northeast Telehealth Resource Center](#), covering all of New England, New York and New Jersey. This extends our efforts through August 2020, and we look forward to seeing how the telehealth space continues to evolve in that time!
- [The TDES© Program](#) (Telephonic Diabetes Education and Support) has successfully renewed its contract with the Maine Municipal Employees Health Trust. Our TDES team has built a long-standing relationship with the MMEHT over the last decade, and the program continues to have a growing impact on the health and well-being of their members and more recently retirees, who work and live all over the state of Maine.
- The [WellStarME](#) team also recently renewed and just began work on year two of their three year contract with the State of Maine to coordinate a broad spectrum of services and resources to improve the health and well-being of more than 32,000 employees and dependents state-wide.
- We also recently learned that our abstract: "*How a Statewide Rural Active Living Assessment will be used to Impact Maine's Health*" has been accepted for presentation at the [MPHA Annual Conference](#) in October. We hope you'll join colleagues Amanda Jordan (MCC Environmental Steward), Dawn Littlefield (Healthy Weight Coordinator) and Doug Beck (Outdoor Recreation Supervisor), as they present the culmination of their work and vision for utilizing this data to enhance state-wide recreational opportunities!

Congratulations to all involved!

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## Public Health Update at the State Level

On July 29th, Becca Boulos - Executive Director of the Maine Public Health Association, provided a Special to the Maine Voices:Press Herald regarding the status of public health in Maine. To learn more on what is happening at the State level, read the [full article here](#).



Did you know that August is National Immunization Awareness Month? Vaccination is important because it protects the person receiving the vaccine and helps prevent the spread of disease, especially to those who are most vulnerable to serious complications (such as infants and young children, the elderly, and those with chronic conditions and weakened immune systems). The [National Public Health Information Coalition](#) has created a toolkit to promote the importance of immunizations during National Immunization Awareness Month. We encourage you to use the valuable resources in this toolkit throughout the year.

Here in Maine, the Maine Immunization Program works to spread information and resources out to health care providers across the state. Quality Assurance Specialists **Ashley Lauze** and **Susan Greene** travel across Maine conducting Vaccines For Children Compliance site visits and AFIX (Assessment, Feedback, Incentives and eXchange) visits. Vaccines For Children is a federal entitlement program that funds states to ensure all children and adolescents are fully vaccinated as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Compliance site visits ensure vaccines are being stored and administered properly, wastage is minimized and federal dollars are maximized. AFIX visits focus on provider education and improving immunization rates within the practice. Providers also have access to a team of educators, Vaccine Management specialists, and ImmPact database specialists to ensure their patients are fully

vaccinated.

For more information on the Maine Immunization Program and the vaccines they offer, please visit [www.immunizeme.org](http://www.immunizeme.org).

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## Mark Your Calendars!

**Tobacco Intervention: Basic Skills Training - September 7, 2017** - Best Western Plus, Waterville and **September 21, 2017**, The Bethel Inn Resort, Bethel. Fee: \$50. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**6th Annual Let's Go! National Obesity Conference - Working Together to Get our Patients Moving: Small Steps = Big Gains - September 28 & 29, 2017**. MaineHealth Conference Center, Portland. For more information and to register - <https://www.mh-edu.org/6thLetsGo>

**8th Annual Patient Safety Academy - September 29, 2017**. Abromson Center, USM Campus Portland. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

**Maine Public Health Association's Annual Conference - Health Equity: Can We Get There From Here? October 17, 2017**, University of Southern Maine, Portland Campus. Keynote Speaker: Mark Fenton. [Early Bird registration](#) rates available until July 31. Click here for information on [Sponsorship opportunities](#).

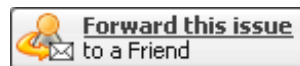
**APHA's 2017 Annual Meeting & Expo - Creating the Healthiest Nation: Climate Changes Health, November 4-8, 2017**, Atlanta, Georgia.

**Maine Cardiovascular Health Council's Annual Summit - The Advancing Science in Cardiovascular Care, November 9, 2017**, Samoset Resort, Rockport, ME. [Registration now open!](#)

**New England Rural Health Conference - Transitions in Healthcare, November 15-16, 2017**, Attitash Grand Summit, Bartlett, New Hampshire. For more information, visit: <https://newenglandruralhealthroundtable.wildapricot.org/2017-Conference-Home>

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