Massachusetts Public Health Association

Action for a Healthy Massachusetts!

2011 Annual Report
Dear Friends:

With your help, MPHA realized two important goals in 2011: building a new campaign model that forged stronger regional partnerships and calling for community prevention as part of the next phase of health reform.

- MPHA led the way, working with partners to file original legislation with Representative Lewis: House Bill 1498 *An Act to promote prevention and wellness through a public health trust*. This groundbreaking proposal would create sustainable financing for prevention and link public health to health care payments.

- In early 2011, MPHA kicked off a new advocacy model combining local and statewide groups for the Act FRESH campaign to create vibrant communities with equal access to healthy, affordable food and safe public space for physical activity.

And at the State House, we saw the impact of years of work to raise the profile of prevention when Representative Jason Lewis and Senator Harriette Chandler formed the first-ever Prevention for Health Caucus of the Massachusetts Legislature.

Despite these good developments, we continued to battle cuts to public health at the state and federal level, and succeeded in protecting some, though not all, public health resources.

Without MPHA, not only would we lack this progress, but we would also be in danger of backsliding and losing important gains.

Read on to learn more.

And thank you for joining us to create a Massachusetts where every community has the resources for health, and where we value prevention enough to pay for it.

Sincerely,

Karen van Unen  
President

Visit [www.mphaweb.org](http://www.mphaweb.org) for a summary of MPHA’s FY2011 financial statements. The complete set of financial statements, audited by independent certified public accountants Alexander, Aronson, Finning & Co., P.C. is available upon request.
Leading the Way: Linking Prevention to Payment Reform

Because we won’t reduce medical costs without investing more in prevention, MPHA led the drafting of pioneering legislation to create a new Prevention Trust. Joined by a broad set of coalition partners, MPHA worked with Representative Jason Lewis of Winchester to file House Bill 1498 An Act to promote prevention and wellness through a public health trust.

2011 Campaign highlights include:

- **a packed State House briefing** at which Urban Institute researchers demonstrated how Massachusetts could save close to half a billion dollars in 5 years by reducing hypertension and diabetes by 5%.

- **a letter to legislators signed by over 300 civic leaders** from health, business, municipalities and religious institutions, calling for new resources for prevention in payment reform legislation.

- **Powerful local and grassroots action**: letters to the editor in local papers, district meetings with legislators, and more.

The bill was reported favorably out of the Public Health Committee, and MPHA and partners continue to call for new resources in payment reform legislation to provide grants to local communities for prevention.

Protecting Public Health Infrastructure

**Department of Public Health (DPH) Resources.**

MPHA successfully protected funding for programs at DPH, including:

- Environmental Services- critical protections from and investigation of radiation, foodborne illness, and environmentally-induced illness, among others.

- State funding for services across DPH supported by the $2.7 million federal Preventive Health and Services Block Grant, which was eliminated.

**Coalition for Local Public Health.**

MPHA played a leadership role in this coalition, working to advance policies that support the vital work of local health officials.

**Emergency Preparedness.**

MPHA worked with CLPH partners to advance a bill to assure legal protections for medical volunteers in public health emergencies.
Kicking Off! In early 2011, MPHA and the Act FRESH Leadership Team kicked off the Act FRESH campaign—FResh Environments Support Health—with a standing-room-only State House event. Act FRESH is led by a diverse group of MPHA member organizations, combining the force and knowledge of grassroots organizations from across the Commonwealth with statewide associations.

Together, Act FRESH is calling for:
- Implementation of healthier school nutrition
- Comprehensive zoning reform that includes a focus on health
- Better access to healthy food through supermarkets and other retail outlets
- And physical education requirements in schools

In 2011, Act FRESH members testified at public hearings, put public health in the forefront of zoning reform conversations with legislators, and gathered input for the MA Grocery Access Task Force recommendations.

Act FRESH Leadership Team:
- American Academy of Pediatrics - MA Chapter
- American Heart/Stroke Association
- BOLD Teens/Codman Square Neighborhood Council
- Boston Public Health Commission
- Fun n' FITchburg
- Groundwork Lawrence
- Healthy Weight Task Force- Greater Lowell Health Alliance
- LivableStreets Alliance
- Live Well Springfield
- MA Association of Health Boards
- MA Public Health Association
- Nuestras Raíces (Holyoke)
- Southeast Center for Healthy Communities
- Voices for a Healthy SouthCoast
- Worcester Food & Active Living Policy Council

Learning Together and Building Support

“Funding the Future of Public Health: Back from the Brink?” MPHA’s Annual Meeting in November brought the public health community together to learn and share ideas about the unprecedented funding challenges facing public health today and the emerging opportunities for funding a strong 21st century public health system, including new revenues and linking public health funding to health care payments.

Breakfast Celebration. On June 3, 2011, 350 friends and colleagues gathered at MPHA’s 9th Annual Awards Breakfast to honor the achievements of Paul Farmer, MD; Lauren Smith, MD; Robin Chase and Ellen Parker, Chef Kirk Conrad and the work of Project Bread. More than 300 people enjoyed music, breakfast, inspiration, and networking — all while supporting MPHA!

Right: Dr. Lauren Smith accepts MPHA’s 2011 Public Health Leadership in Medicine Award
Special thanks to our major funders for making our work possible:
Collaborating for Public Health

MPHA played a role in numerous coalitions and policy groups in 2011, including:

MA Food Policy Council (Governor-appointed representative)
MA Grocery Access Task Force (Co-convener)
School Nutrition Implementation Working Group (Convener)
Campaign for Better Care | Coalition for Local Public Health
Coalition for our Communities | Community Transformation Grant Leadership Team
DPH Wellness Promotion Advisory Council | Healthy People/Healthy Economy Coalition
MA Food Policy Alliance | MA Healthy Air Campaign
Pioneer Valley Food Security Advisory Board | Transportation for Mass
UMass Medical School Community Relations Committee
Worcester Food and Active Living Policy Council

In addition, we continued to build relationships across sectors including with agriculture, local planning, statewide smart growth efforts and with senior advocates who share the goal of healthy aging communities.

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As of November, 2011

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