



Community Partners 2013

Acre Coalition to Improve Our Neighborhood
Acre Family Child Care
African Center of Merrimack Valley
Alternative House
Anne Sullivan Center
Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence
Asian Women for Health
Billerica Public Schools
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
Boston Alliance for Community Health
Boston Medical Center Health Net Plan
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell
Bridgewell/Pathfinders
Carstar
Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association
Center for Hope and Healing
Centralville Neighborhood Action Group
Chelmsford Board of Health
Christ Jubilee International Ministries
City of Lowell
Coalition for a Better Acre
Comfort Home Care
Community Teamwork Inc.
Department of Children and Families
Department of Veteran Services
D'Youville Life & Wellness Center
Eastern Bank
Elder Services of Merrimack Valley
Fallon Community Health Plan
Genesis Healthcare
Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts
Glenwood Care and Rehab
Greater Lowell Technical High School
Greater Lowell YMCA
Habit Opco, Inc.
Hallmark Health
Hannaford - Lowell
Healthy Futures
Home Away from Home
Home Health VNA
Institute for Health and Recovery
International Institute of Lowell
Lahey Health Behavioral Services
Latin American Health Institute
LifeLinks, Inc.
Living Waters
Lowell Adult Education
Lowell Chamber of Commerce
Lowell Community Health Center
Lowell General Hospital
Lowell Health Department
Lowell Housing Authority
Lowell House, Inc.
Lowell National Historical Park
Lowell Police Department
Lowell Public Schools
Lowell Senior Center
Lowell Telecommunications Corporation
Lowell Transitional Living Center
Lowell WIC
March of Dimes
Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS)
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
MASS Health Operations
Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
Mental Health Association of Greater Lowell
Middlesex Community College
Middlesex House of Correction
Middlesex Sheriff's Office
Merrimack College
Merrimack Valley AHEC
Merrimack Valley Catholic Charities
Merrimack Valley Food Bank
Merrimack Valley Legal Services, Inc.
Merrimack Valley Trauma Services, Inc.
Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board
Mill City Grows
Network Health
Next Step Living
Northeast Behavioral Health
Pawtucketville Neighborhood Association
Polished Dental
PRIDEStar EMS
Project Beam Early Intervention
Project Bread
Senior Whole Health
Servings
Sisters of Notre Dame
Solamor Hospice
Somerville Health Department
South Bay Early Intervention
South Bay Mental Health
Spina Bifida Association of Massachusetts
Statewide Head Injury Program
Stop and Shop - Chelmsford
Tewksbury Board of Health
Tewksbury Police Department
Tewksbury State Hospital
Tobacco-Free Community Partnership
Town of Chelmsford
Trinity EMS
Tyngsboro Health Department
United Teen Equality Center
University of Massachusetts Lowell
UMass Lowell Police Department
VNA of Greater Lowell
Westford Board of Health

Annual Report 2013

Greater Lowell Health Alliance of Community Health Network Area 10

Achieving the continuous improvement of the health status of the Greater Lowell Health region



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^ Through September 2013

* Beginning September 2013

A LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

It has been a year of great change and great progress for the Greater Lowell Health Alliance (GLHA). In 2013 the Greater Lowell Health Alliance partnered with Lowell General Hospital in commissioning students and researchers at the University of Massachusetts Lowell to conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment to identify the unmet medical and public health needs within the Greater Lowell community.

This needs assessment is important to us because it validates that the GLHA is on track in targeting the areas most in need. The study will prove useful in helping to form the GLHA's long-term agenda and strategy, with a goal to address unmet health needs and strengthen the area's health system.

Over the next 14 years, the GLHA will receive nearly \$5 million – or \$350,000 per year – from Lowell General Hospital through the hospital's Determination of Needs process for its recent campus expansion. This process through the Department of Public Health ensures that hospitals are providing a measurable community benefit to the communities they serve.

These funds will support the Alliance in taking the lead in addressing many of the needs raised, helping to drive health initiatives that can be implemented in the community. Starting in the spring of 2014, the majority of the funds will be disbursed through a grant process to organizations targeting priority areas of need identified by the needs assessment and the GLHA task forces. Strengthened by the funding from Lowell General Hospital over the next 14 years, we are confident that we will make significant progress in reducing these unmet needs.

With the recent growth in size, scope, and financial responsibility of the Alliance, the Board in 2013 engaged in an essential process focusing on the long-term stability of the organization, reviewing and revising the structure and bylaws. These revisions have strengthened the foundation of the organization as we play a critical role in meeting the healthcare needs in our region.

I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge and thank Kevin Coughlin for his hard work and dedication as Executive Director of the GLHA over the past year. We are very grateful for his contributions to our organization and our community. With Kevin's departure, the board has embarked on a search for a new Executive Director to capably lead this organization into a promising future.

During this leadership transition, the important and effective work of the GLHA has continued, driven by the outstanding professionals on our five task forces – Cultural Competency, Healthy Eating and Living, Maternal and Child Health, Mental Health, and Substance Use and Prevention – supported by board members dedicated to improving the health of our community. You can read about some of the exciting and important initiatives of the task forces on the following page.

We extend our deepest thanks to the many individuals, businesses, and community organizations that enable GLHA to sustain a "collaborative coalition", bringing together healthcare providers, business leaders, educators, and civic and community leaders with a common goal to help the Greater Lowell community improve the overall health of our communities.

With your continued support and engagement, we at the Greater Lowell Health Alliance are energized and committed to a strong, healthy, and impactful future.

Sincerely,

Michelle B. Davis
Chair, Board of Directors
Greater Lowell Health Alliance



CULTURAL COMPETENCY TASK FORCE

We seek to increase the capacity of healthcare and human service providers to achieve positive outcomes with all patients/clients. We do this by increasing provider awareness of cultural diversity and skills related to working with diverse client bases in order to better serve all persons.

Our current and past initiatives include:

- Training 16 new Medical Interpreters for the region, working towards our goal of increasing capacity of service providers to meet National Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services Standards.
- Partnering with The Center for Hope and Healing to host an annual Transgender Day of Remembrance, raising awareness of violence against the transgender community and creating a safe space for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals to come together.
- Creating an LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning) Resource Guide for Greater Lowell.



HEALTHY EATING AND LIVING TASK FORCE



The Healthy Eating and Living Task Force, previously known as the Healthy Weight Task Force, develops and improves partnerships that are committed to leading Lowell area residents to a healthier community. Last year, we launched The Corner Store Initiative, working with local stores to create a "junk free zone" with healthier food options more visible for shoppers upon entering a store. We are hoping to start with two stores, assisting the store owners with purchasing shelves, signs and, more importantly, healthier foods.

During the past year the task force also worked with Act Fresh (a statewide initiative), school wellness programs, and Safe Routes to Schools. The task force also presented information about food security, sustainability and access at a CHNA 10 networking luncheon.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH TASK FORCE

We bring together key stakeholders in the Greater Lowell Area to address some of the most pressing health issues related to moms and their families.

Over the past year, we have worked toward the launch of the mom2be website, offering information and resources about the services available to promote early and adequate prenatal care to at-risk populations. Through our "Share Love, Not Pertussis" campaign, nearly 150 vaccines were administered to close contacts of infants under the age of one.

Teen Pregnancy Prevention Subcommittee

We work to decrease teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease transmission among Greater Lowell youth through information gathering and distribution, integration of services, and supporting effective initiatives.

Over the past year, we:

- Contributed sexual behavior questions to the Communities That Care Youth Survey with 3,000 Lowell Public school students.
- Implemented a survey of 206 parents and guardians of children ages 9-19 on causes and solution to teen pregnancy.
- Presented the compiled data from the two studies to multiple health and education audiences, resulting in a vote by the Lowell Public School Committee to begin a Lowell High School condom distribution program.



MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE

Addressing the whole health of individuals and the community, we seek to bring together mental health providers to share resources, examine and develop best practices and identify service gaps that we can collaboratively address.



Comprised of over 15 health and mental health providers and social service agencies, the objectives of the Task Force are to reduce stigma associated with mental health issues; increase awareness of mental health issues and available services; improve access to mental health care; and identify and address mental health issues that face our community.

Over the past year, we reviewed the "Healthy People 2020" Mental Health Objectives and identified mental health needs, including funding gaps, and aligned our 2013 tasks with two major HP 2020 objectives: launching a mental health awareness campaign and hosting a legislative mental health roundtable discussion.

SUBSTANCE USE AND PREVENTION TASK FORCE

We work to reduce substance and alcohol abuse through successful collaboration and community mobilization, effective use of community resources, and implementation of environmental strategies, harm reduction, and evidence-based practices.

Our current and past year initiatives include:

- Information gathering about current trends in drug use, focusing on opiates, through several sources: Communities That Care Youth Survey in public schools; death data linked to overdoses; hospital emergency department data on overdoses; people seeking treatment; and people in both inpatient/outpatient treatments.
- Expansion of efforts to surrounding towns and cities.
- Research of the implications of medicinal marijuana.
- Launch of an effort to research, evaluate, and recommend a comprehensive drug awareness and prevention curriculum for schools.
- Participation in "Drug Take Back" by local police departments, where people can drop off unwanted medications.

