



2015-2016 ANNUAL REPORT

{ **CELEBRATING**
10 YEARS }
OF CREATING HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

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Vice President of External Affairs
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Through June 2016

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Through April 2016

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As of April 2016

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A LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Ten years ago, a small group of area health and civic leaders sat in a Lowell General Hospital conference room, excitedly mulling the idea of a new organization that would help bring together regional resources to significantly impact the overall health of Greater Lowell communities. It would be an ambitious undertaking: an almost completely volunteer-led entity, facilitating collaboration among health, educational, civic, and business leaders and organizations to identify and address the region's most urgent unmet health needs.

Undaunted by the enormity of the task before them, a founding board established the Greater Lowell Health Alliance in 2006.

Over the past decade, the GLHA has turned the founding board's dream into reality, meeting or exceeding their goals to play a critical role in helping to raise awareness and improve the region's health.

The Alliance's five health-focused, community-led task forces — each targeting an individual healthcare need in the community — have grown in size and scope each year, serving as a catalyst for long-term change and improvements in the health of the region. Through our first grant cycles, the Alliance — as an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit — has injected more than \$900,000 into programs and services that directly impact the unmet health needs threatening our communities.

The GLHA's growth and success in our first decade have been possible due to the active engagement and fierce spirit of collaboration among our members, elected officials, leaders, businesses, and nonprofit organizations.

I would like to express my sincerest admiration and gratitude to our GLHA Board of Directors, Steering Committee, and Task Force leaders and members, whose tireless and selfless efforts and commitment are making a difference in countless lives every day. And a special thank you to Executive Director Kerrie D'Entremont, whose vision, leadership, and dedication are a driving force behind the Greater Lowell Health Alliance.

I am proud to have been part of the genesis of this organization and — with your continued support and involvement — look forward to an even more impactful future in our next decade.

Sincerely,



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



**OUR MISSION IS TO SUSTAIN
A STRATEGIC ALLIANCE OF
COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS THAT
IMPROVES THE OVERALL HEALTH
AND WELLNESS OF THOSE LIVING
IN THE GREATER LOWELL REGION.**

A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

Over the past three years, Greater Lowell Health Alliance has taken major steps in addressing the unmet health needs identified in the 2013 Greater Lowell Community Health Needs Assessment. Now, with the completion of the 2016 Needs Assessment, we are excited to begin work with community members to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan that will serve as a roadmap to address our region's most urgent healthcare needs. This roadmap will enable us to continue GLHA's impact in improving the overall health of the communities we serve.

Over the past year, the GLHA has assumed a major leadership role in battling the devastating opioid epidemic that is threatening the fabric of our society. In addition to the passionate work of our Substance Use and Prevention Task Force, we have been working directly with the Middlesex District Attorney's Office to develop resources and facilitate solutions. In December, the GLHA co-hosted "Crafting a Solution for the Inside: A Public Policy Dialogue Forum," a powerful program by Middlesex District Attorney Marian Ryan addressing opioid addiction.

This past year, the GLHA launched and completed the first two phases of the Cancer Disparities Pilot Project, a significant initiative to help reduce the impact of cancer, while reducing cancer disparities and promoting health equity in the Greater Lowell region.

We have also worked to expand our impact and visibility outside of Lowell by providing networking luncheons and hosting events in neighboring communities. We have enhanced the structure and value of the luncheons for practitioners and community members by focusing on health priority areas and expanding resources.

We continue to enhance our grant application and distribution process to ensure that we are maximizing the impact of the funds released into the community. This past year alone, we supported our community through two successful RFP/grant distribution cycles of over \$250,000—part of more than \$900,000 in grants and community support distributed by GLHA to date.

We have grown stronger every year of our first decade under the leadership of our outstanding and dedicated Board of Directors, Steering Committee, and Task Force leaders and members. There are not words enough to express my thanks and appreciation to each one of you. And our success this past year would not have been possible without the wonderful work of GLHA Administrative Assistant Christine Soundara.

It is truly a privilege to serve the Greater Lowell Health Alliance, and I look forward to an even brighter future ahead.

Sincerely,



Kerrie D'Entremont
Executive Director



STEERING COMMITTEE

MERCY ANAMPIU
Lowell Community Health Center

DIANNE CORBIN
Merrimack Valley Trauma Services

MARILYN GRAHAM
Lowell WIC

HEATHER HILBERT
Lowell General Hospital

IVY HO
University of Massachusetts Lowell

AINAT KOREN
University of Massachusetts Lowell

SHEILA OCH
Lowell Community Health Center

KELLY PETRAVICZ
South Bay Community Services

SUSAN PULIDO
The Center for Hope and Healing

MARIA RUGGIERO
Tewksbury Police Department

JENNIFER SHUART
Lowell Community Health Center

JENNIFER WELCH
Tewksbury Police Department

NEYSHA WILKINSON
Lowell General Hospital
Through January 2016

GLHA STAFF

KERRIE D'ENTREMONT
Executive Director

CHRISTINE SOUNDARA
Administrative Assistant

AMY LAMONT
ALEX MACMILLAN
MERCY NJOGU
MELANIE STEFANAKIS
Interns



CREATING IMPACT

The Greater Lowell Health Alliance of the Community Health Network Area 10 brings together healthcare providers, business leaders, educators, and civic and community leaders with a common goal to improve the overall health of our communities. The GLHA serves as a catalyst in identifying and addressing unmet healthcare needs, raising awareness, and providing resources for community partners to take actions that will lead to significant change.

The GLHA serves as an advocate for non-profits, securing funding and sharing resources with the outstanding frontline organizations addressing the region's health priorities. Working collaboratively, the GLHA helps break down barriers that threaten our most vulnerable populations, linking them to available services and resources to address their needs.

Over the past three years, the GLHA has taken major steps in addressing the unmet health needs identified in the 2013 Greater Lowell Community Health Needs Assessment, conducted by researchers and students from University of Massachusetts Lowell on behalf of the GLHA and Lowell General Hospital.

ASSESSING THE NEED

In partnership with the Greater Lowell Health Alliance, Lowell General Hospital in 2016 commissioned researchers and students from 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. The geographic area assessed included the communities of Lowell, Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Dunstable, Tewksbury, Tyngsborough and Westford. This assessment involved primary data collection using focus groups and key informant interviews, as well as secondary data sources, such as the Massachusetts Department of Public Health MassCHIP database and the United States Census. Similar studies were conducted in 2010 and 2013.

FOUNDATION FOR ACTION

The study had two key objectives. The first was to fulfill state and federal requirements of Lowell General Hospital to conduct a Comprehensive Health Needs Assessment every three years. The second and ultimately more important objective was to generate a study that would provide a foundation for the GLHA and its partners, including Lowell General, to build consensus on the area's priority health needs and develop action plans to improve the health of the area's residents.

A PLAN FOR THE FUTURE

The study will prove useful in helping to form the Greater Lowell Health Alliance's long-term agenda and strategy, with a goal to help meet the unmet healthcare needs and strengthen the area's health system. In the coming year, the focus of the Greater Lowell Health Alliance will be working with the community to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), based on the priority areas identified in the 2016 Community Health Needs Assessment.

A CHIP is used as roadmap for health improvement over a three to five-year period and guides the investment of resources of all organizations that have a stake in improving health for the residents of Lowell and the surrounding communities.

GLHA TASK FORCES

The work of each of the GLHA's five task forces, individually and collectively, has set the stage for long-term improvements in the health of our community, with a focus on encouraging collaboration among member organizations. Their creativity and resiliency have led to significant improvements in our healthcare landscape. It is even more impressive when you consider that these task forces are comprised entirely of community volunteers who take time from their full-time commitments to focus on the health of others. Below is a brief description of the task forces and some of the recent initiatives they have undertaken to address specific health concerns in each of their target areas.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY TASK FORCE

TRI-CHAIRS: MERCY ANAMPIU, IVY HO, JENNIFER SHUART

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.

Over the past year we:

- **Trained 39 new medical interpreters** for the region, working towards our goal of increasing capacity of service providers to meet National Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Service Standards. The GLHA provides scholarships to five participants yearly, to attend the training. Languages represented: Arabic, Spanish, Khmer, Portuguese, Swahili, Mandarin Chinese, Haitian Creole, Vietnamese, and Gujarati.
- Provided **cultural competency trainings and workshops** to medical personnel and community health partners, including film screenings of "Unnatural Causes" and group discussions.
- In collaboration with Lowell Public Schools, Lowell General Hospital, and Project Learn, hosted an **"Early Childhood Education Symposium: Stimulating a Vibrant Local Economy"** on May 23, 2016.
- Planned the GLHA Networking Luncheon – November 7, 2016: **"The Refugee Journey"** Presented by: Sarah Blumenshine, Co-Director, Greater Boston Refugee Ministry.

- Planned a film screening and dinner event: **"Unnatural Causes...Is Inequality Making Us Sick?"** with discussion of disparities and demographics in Lowell in relation to the film.
- Developed a list of community interpreters trained through the **Bridging the Gap Medical Interpreter program** and linked them to organizations in need.

LGBTQ SUBCOMMITTEE

CO-CHAIRS: HEATHER HILBERT, CAMILA BARRERA

This subcommittee addresses the potential risk facing members of the LGBTQ community by providing education to businesses, community organizations/agencies and health providers in the region so that they are better able to serve the LGBTQ community. The 2013 Greater Lowell Community Health Needs Assessment revealed that members who are isolated or without family support are at risk of developing mental health, substance abuse and other issues. There is a lack of sensitivity to this community by many healthcare professionals, as well as a lack of outreach and a lack of awareness of transgender individuals. Individuals in this community tend to go to Boston to seek care, as there is a perception of better acceptance, expertise, and confidentiality.



Photo: Heather Barker, Howl Magazine

Over the past year we:

- Hosted the **4th Annual Transgender Day of Remembrance**, with more than 75 people in attendance.
- Hosted the **1st Annual Greater Lowell Pride Family-Friendly Picnic** at Boarding House Park in Lowell on June 26. Hundreds of people came out to celebrate the first event of its kind in the City of Lowell, which included signing a banner to send to Orlando in support of the victims of the Pulse nightclub shooting, and raising funds for next year's event. Special guests included U.S. Representative Niki Tsongas, Mayor Edward Kennedy, State Representative Denise Provost, and City Councilor Corey Belanger.
- Hosted **1st Greater Lowell Youth Pride Dance** at the Onyx Room in Lowell.

GLHA TASK FORCES

HEALTHY EATING AND LIVING TASK FORCE

CO-CHAIRS: MARILYN GRAHAM, HEATHER HILBERT

The mission of the Healthy Eating & Living Task Force is to develop and improve partnerships that are committed to leading Greater Lowell area residents to a healthier community. Cross-cultural and intergenerational collaborations build on strengths of the community to improve active living and nutrition for healthy minds and healthy bodies for all.

Since its inception, the Healthy Eating & Living Task Force has successfully reached out to community members and local organizations to increase awareness and initiate healthy lifestyle changes.

Our significant accomplishments over the past year have included:

- Hosted a **“You-Focused Wellness”** networking luncheon at Lowell General Hospital in May. Local health and wellness professionals volunteered their services to offer various modalities to the public, including Qigong, Reiki, back massages, satin hand treatments, tapping therapy, and body mass index measurements.
- Completed the **Complete Streets** policy, which was approved by the Lowell City Council. The goal of Complete Streets is to improve the health of all residents within the City of Lowell who are disproportionately low income, by advocating, educating, and transforming Lowell’s built environment to be more accessible to pedestrians and cyclists.
- Expanded the **“Mass in Motion: Corner Store Initiative.”** Our goal is to work with local convenience stores to help provide healthier food and drink choices for the community. Over the past year we have engaged with several stores in Lowell. Communities that have been participating in Mass in Motion since its inception in 2009 have shown a statistically significant drop in the percentage of overweight and obese school children compared to the state as a whole.
- Worked with the **Wellness Committee** to develop a new allergy policy in Lowell Public Schools.

- Participated in planning a successful **Food Day Kick-off Event** in October. Certificates of recognition were given out to local food champions and a proclamation was declared at the Lowell City Council Meeting as well as an official “Apple Crunch” – where everyone took a bite of an apple at the same time to signify the official start of Food Day 2015.
- Facilitated the **No Kid Hungry** campaign, an initiative that connects children in need with nutritious food and teaches their families how to cook healthy, affordable meals. The campaign also engages the public to make ending child hunger a national priority. Through its **Cooking Matters** program, the No Kid Hungry campaign educates and empowers low-income families to stretch their food budgets so their children receive healthy meals at home.
- Implemented **Safe Routes to Schools** with an aim to improve the safety and health of our schoolchildren. They educate students on pedestrian and bike safety and give away reflectors to students after their presentations which are normally done during school assembly. Parents and volunteers are trained on crosswalk, sidewalk and parking lot safety.
- Participated in Tewksbury’s 6th Annual **Bike Safety Rodeo** in August.
- Provided testimony before the Joint Commission on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies, leading to \$6 million in capital funding recently authorized for the **Massachusetts Food Trust**.



MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH TASK FORCE

TRI-CHAIRS: AINAT KOREN, KELLY PETRAVICZ, NEYSHA WILKINSON

We bring together key stakeholders to address the most pressing health issues related to mothers and their families.

Over the past year we:

- Marketed the **Mom2Be** website (Mom2Be.info), which offers information and resources about the services available to promote early and adequate prenatal care to at-risk populations (immigrants, teens, and women experiencing substance abuse or domestic violence). We are working with individuals and organizations interacting with at-risk populations to spread the word about this helpful resource.
- Hosted a **Car Seat Safety** event. Over 79 car seats were checked and 19 car seats were given away. This was in collaboration with Greater Lowell Health Alliance, Lowell General Hospital, Tewksbury Police Department, Lowell Police Department, Salem Five Charitable Foundation, and Hannaford Supermarkets.
- Hosted a three-day **Child Passenger Safety & Training** (CPS) at the Tewksbury Police Department, with a goal to help prevent misuse of car seats. GLHA and Tewksbury Police Department were sponsors.
- Started a **support group** for first-time moms, moms with infants, and expectant moms.
- Participated in another successful **World Breastfeeding Week** celebration in August.

TEEN PREGNANCY PREVENTION SUBCOMMITTEE

CO-CHAIRS: STEPHANIE BUCHHOLZ, HANNAH TELLO

We work to decrease teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted disease transmission among Greater Lowell youth through information gathering and distribution, integration of services, and support of effective initiatives. Over the past year we:

- Distributed **training curriculum and resources** to six pediatric practices in the Greater Lowell area on best practices for adolescent reproductive health and addressing confidentiality.
- Collaborated with Massachusetts organizations to get clarification on the role of mandated reporters in reporting cases of underage sex. As a result, Massachusetts law enforcement



officials (the Attorney General and the Middlesex District Attorney) have recently launched an **online training for mandated reporters**. While recognizing that mandated reporting is an important tool for addressing sexual abuse and assault, this training acknowledges that not all under-age teen sex must be reported to the state Department of Children and Families (DCF). Available at: <http://51a.middlesexcac.org/>

- **Merged meetings** of the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Subcommittee and the Maternal Child Health Task Force, breaking off into working groups when projects arise.

DELAYING THE SECOND PREGNANCY AMONG TEEN MOTHERS PROJECT SUBCOMMITTEE

CHAIR: AINAT KOREN

The program, with funding from GLHA and AT&T, models a program developed by Illinois Subsequent Pregnancy Program (ISPP) that has shown success in delaying second pregnancies and helping young mothers to complete their high school education, with outcomes consistent across diverse ethnic backgrounds.

The program has two main components:

- Participation in bi-monthly Advisory Group meetings, providing a forum for intense training and peer support for the common goal of not getting pregnant. The group will be held at Lowell High School, with lunch provided.

- Ongoing, individual support provided by a home visitor, providing information and education, ongoing guidance and support, referrals to community services, and monitoring and follow-up of contraceptive use.

Over the past year we:

- **Officially launched** the program on July 1, 2016.
- **Trained** home visitor supervisors and program directors, purchased the syllabus and tools from a “focus on youth” organization in Chicago, and developed tools for program evaluation.
- Enrolled six teen mothers in the **home visit program**.
- **Engaged in collaboration** with the Michael B. Christensen Community & Family Support Center, Greater Lawrence Community Action Council, Inc., which provides similar services in the community.

PERINATAL MENTAL HEALTH COALITION

(formerly MotherWoman of Lowell)

CHAIR: HEATHER BIEDRZYCKI

The Perinatal Mental Health Coalition brings together medical and mental health providers and community members to address a wide range of perinatal emotional complications. We strive to improve the emotional wellbeing of pregnant and postpartum woman and their families through education, outreach, advocacy, and support.

Over the past year we:

- Launched a new **“Moms Connected”** free support group for pregnant and post-partum mothers.
- Hosted three film screenings of **“Dark Side of the Full Moon,”** a documentary on maternal mental health, for practitioners in May and June.
 - Lowell General Hospital offered CEUs and MEUs, with nearly 40 participants.
 - Lowell Community Health Center: two showings, with twenty practitioners at each viewing.
- Participated in an **“Advanced Training for Leaders: The Community-Based Perinatal Support Model for Mothers”** on September 22, 2016 in Worcester, highlighting the work of the Mom2Be site.

GLHA TASK FORCES



MENTAL HEALTH TASK FORCE

TRI-CHAIRS: DIANNE CORBIN, SHEILA OCH, SUSAN PULIDO

We bring together mental health providers to share resources, examine and develop best practices, and identify service gaps that we can collaboratively address. We are comprised of over 15 mental health providers and social service agencies, and our objectives 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:

- Held a successful **Vicarious Trauma & Compassion Fatigue Training** in April, reaching 40 health and human service providers.
- Continued to **explore and implement** activities to address challenges faced by mental health providers.

SUBSTANCE USE & PREVENTION TASK FORCE

CO-CHAIRS: MARIA RUGGIERO, JENNIE WELCH

The Substance Use & Prevention (SUP) Task Force works to strengthen new and existing collaborations in the Greater Lowell community to prevent and reduce the use of substances among our community members. With a focus on environmental strategies, the task force employs efforts on policy making, substance use intervention, and prevention education.

Over the past year we:

- Hosted **September National Recovery Month** and October **National Substance Abuse Prevention Month** press conference and events in the region.
- Participated in the **Substance Use and Prevention Regional Initiative** for education efforts in the towns of Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Lowell, Tewksbury, Westford, and Wilmington, funded by a \$100,000 state grant secured with efforts from Task Force members.
- Sponsored **“Drug Take Back”** events by local police departments.
- Participated in the **“MyOldMeds”** Campaign for safe medication disposal, focusing on proper home disposal of medications and the preferred method of community disposal programs (drug kiosks).

- Participated in multiple **National Night Out** events, an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships to make our neighborhoods safer, better places to live.
- Promoted **awareness and potential solutions** among youth for prevention of underage drinking and other drug use, including opioids education for regional communities.

There are four dynamic subcommittees under the SUP umbrella:

MASSACHUSETTS OPIOID ABUSE PREVENTION COLLABORATIVE (MOAPC)

CHAIR: PETER SAING (through April 2016)

Led by the City of Lowell, the subcommittee includes the towns of Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Tewksbury, Westford, and Wilmington. This initiative aims to address opioid misuse and its related consequences through implementing strategies focused on local policy, practices, and environmental change.

The mission of the Massachusetts Opioid Abuse Prevention Collaborative (MOAPC) is to implement local policy, practice, systems, and environmental change to prevent the use/abuse of opioids; prevent and reduce opioid overdoses, both fatal

and non-fatal; and increase both the number and the capacity of municipalities across the Commonwealth addressing these issues.

Over the past year we:

- Maintained **drugfreegreaterlowell.org**, a website that provides resources on substance use and prevention.
- Promoted **“Said No Drug Dealer Ever”** public service announcement (PSA). Created by Middlesex Partnerships for Youth to raise awareness among young people about the dangers of opioid use and how one bad decision could lead to a lifetime of negative consequences. middlesexpartnershipsforyouth.com/opioid

ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES WORKING GROUP (ESWG)

CHAIR: SOCHENDA UCH

Led by Lowell Community Health Center’s Teen BLOCK, ESWG works to inform and educate youth, parents and members in the community about how substance abuse is affecting our neighborhoods. ESWG is a youth-led group that implements strategies to reduce and prevent substance use. Some activities include youth surveys, compliance checks, forums, events, workshops, campaigns and training.



Over the past year we:

- Won the **Peer Outreach Award** from The 84 Movement at the 2016 Youth Leadership Awards at the Massachusetts Statehouse. The 84 aims to engage young people in educating others about tobacco industry tactics, participating in local change efforts and promoting the norm that most youth do not smoke. Teen BLOCK ran a “Grow the Movement” activity where they had about 60 possible new members show up for a fun afternoon of games and receive information about The 84 Movement. They also created a graffiti wall for people to learn more about the program.
- Sponsored youth from ESWG Chapter 84 in attending a June Lowell Board of Health public hearing on proposed **amendments to the city’s tobacco regulations**. The Lowell Board of Health voted to adopt policies that prohibit sales of tobacco products to those younger than 21 and allow the sale of flavored tobacco products only at adult-only retail tobacco stores.
- Hosted a **“Not Yet” event** at Lowell High School in May, focused on underage drinking prevention and reaching over 200 teens in their educational games and activities program.

MARIJUANA SUBCOMMITTEE

CHAIR: MARK KENNARD

This subcommittee was formed when legislation was passed in Massachusetts allowing for the medical use of marijuana to convene local leaders to discuss the concerns of enforcement and access, as well as the potential impact on youth. The goals of the subcommittee are:

- To be informed on the status of the statewide marijuana laws and implementation.
- To educate ourselves and the community on the issues and concerns.
- To offer assistance to cities and towns looking to develop zoning laws ordinances and/or regulations.

Over the past year we:

- **Convened a meeting** with Massachusetts Senator Ken Donnelly (D-Arlington) in December to address a legislative report studying the impact on Colorado’s public health since the state legalized recreational marijuana in 2012.
- Convened a meeting with Patriot Care, Lowell **medical marijuana dispensary**, in May to keep an open dialogue on the progress of the dispensary.
- Planned a half-day workshop in October 2016 on **“The Impacts of Marijuana: Strategies to Address Related Health, Social and Legal Issues.”**

SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND PREVENTION COLLABORATIVE (SAPC)

CHAIR: MARIA RUGGIERO

Led by the Tewksbury Police Department, SAPC was launched in July 2015 as part of a comprehensive approach to substance misuse and abuse prevention in Massachusetts. This Subcommittee focuses on increasing the capacity of communities working to prevent and reduce underage drinking and other drug use among youth. Collaborating with MOAPC, this initiative focuses on the communities of Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Lowell, Tewksbury, Westford and Wilmington.


Over the past year we:

- Launched an **underage drinking PSA** (completed by the Tewksbury Police Department).
- **Completed a SAPC** plan and presented information and facts to the GLHA Board and GLHA Networking Luncheon.



GLHA GRANT DISTRIBUTION

Over the next decade, the GLHA is will continue to distribute nearly \$5 million allocated by Lowell General Hospital through the hospital's Determination of Need process for its 2010 campus expansion. This process through the Department of Public Health ensures that hospitals are providing a measurable community benefit to the communities they serve.



2015 GRANTS

2015 COMMUNITY HEALTH INITIATIVES GRANT

The GLHA released an RFP for mini grants in the Fall of 2015 to support programs and services to improve the overall health of the Greater Lowell community. Grants were awarded around the following priority areas:

- Access to Health Services
- Cancer
- Cardiovascular Disease
- Diabetes
- Health Related Quality of Life and Well-Being
- Hepatitis B in the Cambodian Community
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Health
- Maternal, Infant, and Child Health
- Mental Health and Mental Disorders
- Nutrition and Weight Status (Including Physical Activity and Obesity)
- Public Health Infrastructure
- Respiratory Diseases (e.g. Asthma and Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)
- Social Determinants of Health
- Substance Abuse (Including Tobacco Use)

2015 GLHA MINI-GRANTS

The GLHA awarded six grants totaling \$50,000 to community-based organizations to address critical health issues in the Greater Lowell area.

Below is the list of grant recipients:

- **Circle Home, Inc.:** Fall Prevention Program - \$8,000
- **Coalition for A Better Acre (CBA):** Creating No-Smoking Policies and Support - \$8,000
- **Community Teamwork, Inc.:** Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Education for Homeless Families - \$8,000
- **Lowell House, Inc.:** The Prisoner Re-Entry Program (PREP) - \$8,000
- **Mill City Grows:** Mill City Grows Community Programs - \$8,000
- **University of Massachusetts Lowell:** I Have a Plan: Delaying Second Pregnancy Among Teen Mothers - \$10,000

2016 COMMUNITY HEALTH INITIATIVES GRANT

The GLHA is proud to announce the grant awards for the Fall of 2016 to support programs and services to improve the overall health of the Greater Lowell community. Grants were awarded around the following priority areas:

- Mental Health and Mental Disorders
- Substance Abuse (Including Tobacco Use)
- Chronic Disease (e.g. Asthma, Obesity, Diabetes)
- Prevention & Screenings (e.g. Cancer, children's nutrition)

The GLHA awarded eight grants totaling \$200,000 to community-based organizations to address critical health issues in the Greater Lowell area.

Below is the list of grant recipients:

- **Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley, Inc.:** Greater Lowell Falls Talk Project - \$40,000
- **Habitat for Humanity of Greater Lowell:** Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative: Building Healthy Places - \$10,000
- **Lowell Community Health Center:** Youth Substance Use Prevention Project - \$39,000
- **Lowell House Inc.:** Community Opioid Outreach Program (COOP) - \$21,000
- **McCarthy Middle School, Chelmsford:** Strengthening Health of Middle School Students - \$16,000
- **Merrimack Valley Food Bank:** Operation Nourish - \$10,000
- **Mill City Grows:** Farm to School Partnership Expansion - \$25,000
- **Tewksbury Police Department:** Regional Jail Diversion Program - \$39,000

[Learn more about our grant recipients and their wonderful programs at greaterlowellhealthalliance.org.](http://greaterlowellhealthalliance.org)

CANCER DISPARITIES CAPACITY BUILDING PILOT PROJECT

With the release of the Greater Lowell Cancer Disparities Needs Assessment in the summer of 2015, the GLHA has launched a significant initiative in helping to reduce the impact of cancer, while reducing cancer disparities and promoting health equity in the Greater Lowell region.

As the leading cause of death in Massachusetts, cancer claims approximately 13,000 lives annually. Racial and socioeconomic disparities continue to impact cancer incidence and mortality in Massachusetts and the Greater Lowell communities experience a higher age-adjusted overall cancer death rate than the state (224.7 per 100,000 versus 185.2 per 100,000) based on the most recent MassCHIP reports from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Greater Lowell community residents are burdened with higher mortality rates across almost all cancer types, including lung, breast, uterine, and oropharyngeal disease sites.

CANCER DISPARITIES NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In early 2015, GLHA conducted a cancer disparities needs assessment in the Greater Lowell region, funded by a \$50,000 grant through the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for Phase I of the

Cancer Disparities Capacity Building Pilot Project. The assessment gathered information on the health status of area residents, as well as cancer disparities and health inequities of interest and importance to the community. The needs assessment was conducted by researchers at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, in partnership with Lowell General Hospital and the Lowell Community Health Center.

The needs assessment final report is available at greaterlowellhealthalliance.org and was translated in multiple languages and disseminated to community members and organizations.

CANCER DISPARITIES INTERVENTION

During Phase II, funded by another \$50,000 DPH/CDC grant, the GLHA developed and implemented interventions to address cancer disparities in our region.

- Hosted an **M+R Advocacy and Policy Training** on March 21, 2016.
- Presented **“Delivering Care to Diverse Populations,”** an overview of healthcare transformation and the link to disparities and equity by Joseph R. Betancourt, Director of the Disparities Solution Center of Massachusetts General Hospital. The program was presented at Lowell General Hospital to 40+ attendees.

- Provided support to programs such as Mill City Grows to **improve translation and interpretation projects.** These projects will enable Mill City Grows to reach a more diverse cross section of Lowell-area residents with food education and access programs, including urban garden and healthy cooking workshops, as well as its Mobile Market, a farm stand on wheels that visits low-income and low food-access locations across Lowell.
- Supported the Coalition For a Better Acre **smoking cessation efforts** to empower and improve the health of low-income and immigrant communities.

CANCER DISPARITIES PROGRAM EVALUATION

Through an additional \$10,000 grant, Phase III will enable the GLHA to evaluate the success of the Cancer Disparities Capacity Building Pilot Project. The evaluation is being done in collaboration with the University of Massachusetts Lowell Center for Research and Community Engagement.



2016 COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

The success of the GLHA relies on the collaborative relationship with the many wonderful partner organizations throughout Greater Lowell, including:

Acre Family Child Care
African Center of the Merrimack Valley
Alternative House
Anne Sullivan Center
Anstiss & Co. P.C.
Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence
Billerica Public Schools
Billerica Substance Abuse Prevention Committee
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts
Boston Medical Center HealthNet Plan
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Lowell
Bridgewell/Pathfinder
Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association (CMAA)
Center for Hope and Healing
Centralville Neighborhood Action Group
Chelmsford Board of Health
Chelmsford Unitarian Church
Chelmsford Wellness Center
Christ Jubilee International Ministries
Circle Home
City of Lowell
Cg's Promo & Entertainment
Clean Slate Centers
Clear and Now Holistic Healing Center
Coalition for a Better Acre
Comfort Home Care
Community Teamwork, Inc.
Community Servings
Cultivating Qi
Dracut Public Schools
D'Youville Life and Wellness Community
Eastern Bank
Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley
Element Care
Fallon Community Health Plan
First Parish UU Chelmsford
Gallagher & Cavanaugh, LLP
Genesis HealthCare
Girl Scouts of Eastern Massachusetts
Glenwood Care and Rehab
Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce
Greater Lowell Community Foundation
Greater Lowell Elder Mental Health Collaborative
Greater Lowell Technical High School
Greater Lowell YMCA
Habit Opco, Inc.
Habitat of Greater Lowell
Hallmark Health
Hannaford Supermarkets
Health Care For All
Healthy Futures
History UnErased, Inc.
Home Away from Home
House of Hope
Howl Magazine
In-Home Massage Therapy
Institute for Health and Recovery
International Institute of Lowell
Lahey Health Behavioral Services
Latin American Health Institute
The Living Room, North Andover
Living Waters Center of Hope
Lowell Adult Education Center
Lowell Alliance for Families and Neighborhoods
Lowell Community Health Center
Lowell General Hospital
Lowell Health Department
Lowell House, Inc.
Lowell Housing Authority
Lowell National Historical Park
Lowell Parks and Recreation
Lowell Police Department
Lowell Public Schools
Lowell Senior Center
Lowell Telecommunications Corporation
Lowell Transitional Living Center
Lowell Veterans Department
Lowell Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
LUK Inc.
March of Dimes
Mary Kay
Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS)
Massachusetts Department of Children and Families
Massachusetts Department of Public Health
Massachusetts Department of Veteran Services
Massachusetts Public Health Association (MPHA)
Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (MSPCC)
Massachusetts State Representatives
Massachusetts Statewide Head Injury Program
Mass Health Operations
McCarthy Middle School (Chelmsford)
Mental Health Association of Greater Lowell
Merrimack Valley Area Health Education Center (AHEC)
Merrimack Valley Catholic Charities
Merrimack Valley Food Bank
Merrimack Valley Legal Services, Inc.
Merrimack Valley Trauma Services, Inc.
Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board
Middlesex Community College
Middlesex House of Correction
Middlesex Partnership for Youth
Middlesex Sheriff's Office
Mill City Grows
Miracle Providers Northeast
Natural Living Massage
Network Health
New England Community Care
New You Hypnosis & Reiki
Next Step Living
Northeast Behavioral Health
Northeast Tobacco Free Community Partnership
Pawtucketville Neighborhood Association
PFLAG
Positive Effects Hypnosis
PRIDeStar EMS
Project BEAM Early Intervention
Project Bread
Project Cope
Sanofi Pasteur
Senior Whole Health
Sisters of Notre Dame
SLS Fitness
South Bay Community Services
Spina Bifida Association of Greater New England
Stop & Shop
Tewksbury Board of Health
Tewksbury Cares
Tewksbury Hospital
Tewksbury Police Department
Tewksbury Treatment Center
Town and Country Health Care Center
Town of Chelmsford
Trinity EMS
Tyngsboro Health Department
United Health Care
UTEC
Wayside Youth and Family Support Network
Westford Board of Health
Wilmington Board of Health
Elaine Wood, AOBTA-C.P.
World, Inc.



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