

MINNEAPOLIS

HEALTHY CITY THRIVING FAMILIES



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

Fall 2010

UCare to Sponsor Skyway Senior Center

The Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS) is pleased to announce that UCare has generously offered to sponsor the Skyway Senior Center for the next three years. Grants from the UCare Fund and UCare's community benefit program are providing operational support from Oct 2010 - 2013 to the popular downtown destination for people age 50 and older. "UCare has created a public/private partnership with the City of Minneapolis that enables the Skyway Senior Center to continue serving thousands of area citizens without interruption," says Ghita Worchester, Senior Vice President of Public Affairs and Marketing, UCare. "This vital community resource offers a wealth of health-related programs and services that enhance the lives of its guests and volunteers. We look forward to a positive and productive relationship with the center."

As Minnesota's fourth largest health plan, UCare is an independent, nonprofit organization providing health care and administrative services to more than 200,000 members. Its growing *UCare for Seniors* Medicare plan serves more than 75,000 members across Minnesota and western Wisconsin.

Located in downtown Minneapolis, the Skyway Senior Center is a vital resource for seniors who access its exercise classes, information sessions on health and wellness, enrichment activities or opportunities to socialize. The Center also provides connections to services such as veteran's benefits and Medicare information. "The partnership with U Care at the Skyway Senior Center is an exciting new opportunity to work together to serve seniors," says Gretchen Musicant, Commissioner, Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support. "We believe it is a strategic alliance that will foster innovative programming."

Since the beginning of 2010, the Center has logged 12,583 visits and averages 66 visits a day. With only one employee, Director Christina Kendrick, the Center depends on its more than 30 volunteers who work tirelessly to provide these and other services to seniors. For more information, contact Christina Kendrick at (612) 370-3869 or christina.kendrick@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

Increasing Flu Vaccination Outreach through Assessments and Partnerships

Last winter, MDHFS operated flu clinics in a number of schools in response to the H1N1 influenza pandemic. While the flurry of last year's H1N1 flu pandemic has died down, there are plenty of reasons to get an annual flu shot. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now recommends that everyone over six months of age be vaccinated for the flu each year to help prevent the spread of flu.

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MDHFS has been working to improve its seasonal flu outreach efforts by assessing barriers and by ramping up its school-based flu clinics. To address why some flu clinics have had low turnout, MDHFS conducted a survey of leaders from 49 community organizations, many of which serve racially diverse populations along with low-income, refugee and immigrant people.

The most cited barrier to flu vaccination was the request for proof of health insurance. Ideas to make flu vaccinations more convenient included more accessible locations; the opportunity to vaccinate an entire

family at once; and holding clinics at community events. The availability of free vaccines and clarification on who should get inoculated were also noted as ways to increase participation. Survey results also emphasized the importance of social networks of friends and family to get the word out, as well as conducting community information sessions.

This year, MDHFS has increased outreach through public schools by vaccinating children, their families, and staff during school-sponsored events. Approximately half of the MPS schools are hosting vaccination clinics. Planning is underway for charter and non-public schools. Partners in the school-based effort include

Minneapolis Public Schools, Minnesota Visiting Nurse Agency, Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota, and Kohl's department store.

Visit MDHFS' website for community flu clinic locations, and other information such as how to recognize flu symptoms, prevent the spread of flu, and care for someone with the flu. For information about the survey, contact Katie Muehe at 612-673-3416 or kathryn.muehe@ci.minneapolis.mn.us. For information about community clinics, contact Marie Hauser at 612-673-2147 or marie.hauser@ci.minneapolis.mn.us or visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/flu Vaccination.asp.

**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

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A nurse from the Minnesota Visiting Nurse Agency administers flu vaccinations at a flu clinic at South High School last year.

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.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs/newsletter.asp>

Southwest High School Gets a School Based Clinic

In November, MDHFS opened a new school based clinic at Southwest High School, providing a school clinic at all seven Minneapolis public high schools. School based clinics are a convenient resource for students as clinic staff are able to treat most illnesses and can administer routine exams such as sports physicals. The Southwest clinic will deliver

a comprehensive spectrum of preventive and acute physical and mental health services. Social services, health education and nutrition education will also be available to students.

Staff spent the month of October setting up the new clinic, meeting with faculty and getting to know students at Southwest. Before

school started, parents were notified about the new clinic and asked to sign parental consent and registration forms. Results from MDHFS' 2008 survey revealed that parents like that their teens have easy access to health care and a safe place to talk about high-risk behaviors such as sexual activity, drug use, and other issues. For more information, contact Coral Garner at (612) 673-5446 or coral.garner@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

Urban Health Agenda: Helping People Eat Better through Food Preservation

The art of food preservation is making a big comeback in Minneapolis. This fall, residents embraced new opportunities to expand their skills in preserving tomatoes and apples through "Can-Along" events provided by the Food Preservation Network (FPN) and MDHFS. The events are part of MDHFS' larger effort to increase residents' self-sufficiency around accessing healthy foods throughout the year.

The Can-Alongs are the result of research conducted by the City's Homegrown Minneapolis initiative to improve access to locally grown foods and a FPN survey of 376 respondents pinpointing barriers residents have in preserving produce when it is fresh and affordable. The FPN identified 19 people skilled in canning techniques and engaged the University of Minnesota's Extension Service to train them in the latest food safety procedures. The canners then conducted food preservation events at six locations throughout the city, which attracted over 81 participants. Plans for the future include increasing the number of

trainers, providing more canning events throughout the growing season, and offering instruction in Hmong and Somali. One canning event was provided in Spanish and there are plans to expand that offering.

Eventually, the food preservation effort will be integrated into a larger, local food resource network under development. The network will center around neighborhood hubs to address other food growing issues

such as access to affordable seeds, seedlings and compost. Classes will also be offered on building healthy soils, starting seeds, building garden structures, and beekeeping.

The Food Preservation Network's Minneapolis canning initiative is funded by the Statewide Health Improvement Program. For more information, contact June Mathiowetz at (612) 673-2027 or june.mathiowetz@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.



Participants learn how to make apple sauce through the Food Preservation Networks' Can-along sessions at Calgary Lutheran Church on September 30.

Healthy City Updates

Lead Poisoning Prevention Day Celebration

More than 100 attendees took part in Lead Poisoning Prevention Day on October 6, an effort to raise awareness to prevent children being exposed to lead. Attendees learned about the hazards of lead poisoning; screened their children for lead poisoning; tested toys for lead; and learned how to make chemical-free household cleaners. Resources were also provided in Hmong, Somali, and Spanish. The event was hosted by MDHFS along with the Minnesota Department of Health, Hennepin County, Minneapolis Department of Regulatory Services, and community partners.



A child is being taught by CLEARCorps USA staff how to properly wash his hands, which is an important way to prevent lead exposure.

New Funding Awards:

- MDHFS was awarded a \$325,000 grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to implement gang prevention curriculum. In partnership with the YMCA, work will begin this fall with young people who are incarcerated at the Hennepin County Juvenile Detention Center and with children in the Beacons program at Nellie Stone Johnson School. The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board will also receive funds to enhance their street-based outreach focusing on Folwell, Farview and North Commons parks.
- The School-Based Clinic program received a \$36,000 sub-contract from Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) to expand mental health services at Washburn High School. MPS received a grant from the Medica Foundation to support these services.
- The University of Minnesota Powell Center for Women's Health was awarded a one year \$100,000 planning grant from the federal Office on Women's Health for the Minneapolis Women's Perinatal Mental Health Project. MDHFS will coordinate a community needs assessment of perinatal depression as well as develop a strategic plan and implementation plan for related interventions. The project is a partnership between the University of Minnesota, MDHFS, HCMC's Hennepin Women's Mental Health Program, and NorthPoint Health & Wellness Center. Community partners include Women's Initiative for Self Empowerment and Aquí Para Tí at East Lake Clinic.

Staff Updates:

- Congratulations to recipients of MDFHS' Skipper Award, a monthly accolade given to an individual or division for accomplishments that contribute to MDFHS' or the City's goals, or provides extraordinary contributions to a team work environment. Awardees are: July: **Jared Erdmann**, Research; August: **Diane Haugesag**, Administration & Planning; September: **Amy Godecker**, Research; October: **Aliyah Ali**, SHIP.

New Staff:

- MDHFS welcomes **Maria Sarabia**, a Public Health Prevention Service fellow from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Maria will be working with MDHFS partners such as the Urban Health Agenda Community Advisory Committee and Minneapolis State Health Improvement Program staff to coordinate a multicultural health storytelling project. Maria earned a M.A. in Social Service Administration from the University of Chicago and her B.A. in Inner City Studies from Northeastern Illinois University. Minneapolis competed with over 300 applicants nationally and was among the 30 public health departments selected to host a CDC prevention specialist.
- **Brian Thomas May** is a new Program Aide working with Twin Cities Healthy Start, Emergency Preparedness and the Public Health Advisory Committee. Brian worked at Marriott Southwest as an event manager and the University of St. Thomas as an assistant director of admissions. Brian has a B.A. in theology and is working on an M.A. in professional psychology from St. Thomas.