

MINNEAPOLIS

HEALTHY CITY THRIVING FAMILIES



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

May - June 2007

Community improvement grants awarded

In February, the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS) announced recipients of a \$681,000 Community Development Block Grant to help mostly low-income people. Grantees provide services that focus on prevention of health and social problems, reduce health disparities and improve resident-community engagement. Funding priorities included people without health insurance, isolated seniors, early childhood health, teen pregnancy prevention and youth violence prevention. This grant is provided by the U.S. Department of Housing

and Urban Development for community development.

A 28-person panel from the community and the Minneapolis Public Health Advisory Committee reviewed more than \$3 million in proposals and made funding recommendations to MDHFS and the Minneapolis Public Health Advisory Committee. The City Council approved the recommendations. The grant cycle will run from June 1, 2007 through May 31, 2008. For more information, contact Becky McIntosh at (612) 673-2884 or visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/dhfs.

Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities

The Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support staffs three citizen advisory committees that guide the Mayor and City Council in setting policy and making programming decisions.

The Minneapolis Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities is an all-volunteer committee of representatives from Minneapolis' 13 wards that advises the Mayor and City Council on issues that are vital to the disability community. Its goal is to work collaboratively with City departments and other boards and commissions to help Minneapolis be an inclusive place to live and work.

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PRIORITY AREA	GRANTEE	AMOUNT
Uninsured	Children's Dental Services	\$11,000
	Lao Assistance Center of Minnesota	\$55,000
	St. Mary's Health Clinics	\$21,000
	Fremont Community Health Services, Inc.	\$50,000
Isolated seniors	Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches	\$50,000
	Living at Home/Block Nurse Program (Nokomis, S.E. Seniors, Longfellow/ Seward)	\$75,000
Early childhood	Southside Family Nurturing Center	\$50,000
	St. Stephen's Human Services	\$50,000
Teen pregnancy prevention	Asian Media Access	\$30,000
	Employment Action Center	\$50,000
	Minneapolis Public Schools Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Program	\$76,000
Youth violence prevention	Domestic Abuse Project	\$40,000
	Minneapolis Urban League	\$75,000
	MIGZI Communications, Inc.	\$48,000
Total		\$681,000

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Funding aims at decreasing violence among young people

As part of its Youth Opportunities Project, the Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support recently awarded \$125,000 from the City General Fund to reduce violence among teens by engaging them in positive and healthy relationships and activities.

Based on research showing that early delinquent behavior is a strong predictor of later serious and violent criminal behavior, the Youth Opportunities Project will target 10- to 15-year-olds who are identified by the Minneapolis Curfew Truancy Center at high risk for delinquency, crime and violence. Identified youngsters will be assigned to 1 of 3 funded

agencies, which will provide a youth worker to help identify his or her skills and interests and then find organizations, opportunities and activities that will engage him or her in ongoing positive relationships and activities. Youth workers will provide intensive one-on-one weekly interaction with the youth to make sure he or she has successfully connected with identified community resources.

Selected agencies include:

- Minneapolis Parks Youthline Outreach Mentorship Program, which engages teens in positive activities and teaches them to be leaders

- Bolder Options, which provides early intervention youth mentoring centered on fun, challenging, athletic activities that result in lower truancy rates, improved academic performance and a lower offender or re-offender rate
- Yo the Movement which fosters leadership in young people and connects them with cultural opportunities and referrals to other youth serving organizations through its “What’s Up Youth Information Line”

For more information contact Jan Fondell at (612) 673-5527.

The Minneapolis Department of Health and Family Support (MDHFS)

VISION:

Healthy residents, communities and environments.



MISSION: to provide leadership in meeting the unique needs of our urban population by engaging partners in promoting individual, community and environmental health and eliminating disparities.

Gretchen Musicant, Commissioner

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The committee is sub-divided as follows:

- The Access Committee works with the City’s Inspections Division to review architectural plans for proposed buildings and offer suggestions for improving or adding access items that meet or exceed requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The Transportation Committee works on addressing transportation issues for people with disabilities. Their purview includes metro transit, taxi service, curb cuts, safe routes of travel on mixed-use pedestrian travel routes, metro mobility, light-rail transit, clearing walkways of snow and ice, safe street crossing and other transportation-related concerns. Presently, the committee is working on taxi cab licensing to increase and improve services for riders with disabilities.
- The Employment Committee works with the City’s Human Resources Department to train and educate management and employees on “reasonable accommodations” for hiring, retaining and promoting employees with disabilities.

For more information about the committee, contact committee member Kenneth Brown at (612) 729-8463.

The Public Health and Senior Citizen advisory committees will be featured in future editions of Healthy City, Thriving Families.

Urban Health Agenda: Storytelling to collect health information across cultures

Typically, health policy decisions are largely informed by statistical data such as leading health concerns in Minneapolis, affected populations and social and economic impact. Though essential, statistics only reveal part of the story and can be misleading about residents' overall health and well-being. For example, by Western standards, recent refugees and immigrants may seem to be healthier in Minnesota according to data on healthy births and mortality rates, but they may consider themselves less healthy because of stress, loss of their cultures and separation from their families.

Recognizing the importance of hearing from Minneapolis' various ethnic and racial communities as it develops its programming and policy agenda, the Department of Health and Family Support created a multicultural community advisory committee. This 16-person group includes representatives from Minneapolis' African-American, African-born, American Indian, South East Asian, European-American and Latino communities who are charged with engaging communities in the process of determining how the City and other health-related institutions can be more supportive of health as each community defines and practices it.

To collect this information, the committee has organized storytelling sessions to learn about conditions under which community members felt healthiest. Though storytelling is not a traditional Western form of data collection, it is the primary way that many cultures share information between and within generations. International organizations such as the World Bank have used similar methods to capture the perspectives of diverse people.

The storytelling sessions began in December 2006 with members of the African-American, American Indian, Hmong and Somali communities. While the practice of storytelling differs among these cultures, results suggest both common themes and

important cultural distinctions regarding definitions of health and experiences with the health care system. For example, so far all of the communities have expressed the important roles that cultural identity and intergenerational relationships play in achieving optimal health.

This summer, the Department of Health and Family Support and the committee will host storytelling sessions in the European-American, Latino and Vietnamese communities and then produce a video compilation of all the sessions, which will be shared with policymakers and funders. Results of the storytelling sessions will be available in the fall. For more information, contact Emily Wang at emily.wang@ci.minneapolis.mn.us or (612) 673-2144.



Thirty women gathered at Kwanzaa Community Church in North Minneapolis to participate in a storytelling event where they shared stories about health and describe the times when they felt the healthiest.

Healthy City Updates

- Each fall, the Minnesota Visiting Nurse Agency (MVNA) provides flu shots for Twin Cities residents and City of Minneapolis employees. After the death of a Minneapolis firefighter and several Minnesota children from seasonal influenza in February, the agency responded to increased public demand for vaccinations by vaccinating thousands of Minneapolis residents at community-based venues. In addition, MVNA and MDHFS coordinated flu shots for City employees and their families, vaccinating 446 people in three days.
- The Journal of School Nursing (December 2006) featured two articles on the Healthy Learners Model, a collaborative to improve children's health so they can focus on learning. The articles describe the model's management of students' chronic conditions and its asthma initiative, which improved care coordination between their families, school staff and community providers. The Healthy Learners Model is a collaborative among MDHFS, Minneapolis Public Schools, health plans and health care providers. For single copies of the articles, contact Mary Heiman at (612) 668-0853 or mary.heiman@mpls.k12.mn.us.
- Since the September 11th terrorist attacks of 2001, MDHFS, Hennepin County Medical Center and Hennepin County Public Health have joined forces to register, train and grant credentials to health care professionals to voluntarily serve in a public health emergency. The Medical Reserve Corps of Hennepin County has recruited 380 volunteers who, if a deployment occurred, would be called upon to help. For more information, call (612) 543-5234 or visit www.mrc-hennepin.org.

Funding Received

- The March of Dimes Minnesota Chapter awarded a \$14,685 grant to support the Healthy Sleep for a Healthy Start project, designed to educate the community about safe sleep practices for infants and provide portable cribs to 120 families. The project is part of the Twin Cities Healthy Start initiative.
- The Health Resources and Services Administration awarded MDHFS a four-year, \$901,441 federal research grant to determine the effectiveness of an interview method to screen for non-medical factors that may jeopardize a healthy pregnancy, such as lack of housing or nutritious food, maternal depression or substance use, partner violence, or lack of social support. The research will be conducted with Twin Cities Healthy Start participants at Community-University Health Care Center and NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center.
- The Minneapolis Senior Ombudsman Program received a grant of \$19,445 from the Minnesota Department of Revenue to support its taxpayer assistance program, which provides free tax preparation assistance to low-income and middle-income taxpayers, with special attention to those age 60 or older.

Staff Updates

- MDHFS bid a warm farewell to Janelle Peralez, coordinator for Steps to a Healthier Minneapolis, who left in January for a position at the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta. In May, Lara Tiede was hired as the new Steps coordinator.
- Alisha Ragland has been hired as a permanent staff member after starting as a temporary employee in June 2006. As a program aide to Twin Cities Healthy Start, she will provide administrative support to the program director and site coordinators.
- Christina Kendrick has a new role at MDHFS. In February, she became the director of the Medica Skyway Senior Center. Since joining the department in 2001, Christina has worked with the Weed and Seed Initiative, Adolescent Parent Family Home Visiting Initiative and Teen Parent Connection.
- MDHFS is pleased to welcome a new intern, Rachelle Werth, a University of Minnesota senior enrolled in the College of Biological Sciences. During the spring, she will explore different public health career options by dividing her time between the public health lab and the Research Division.



An AARP volunteer and Spanish interpreter, Roman Gonzalez, from the City of Minneapolis assist a client in e-filing his taxes.