

METRO HEALTH

POLI- THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

MARCH 2011

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- A Message from the President Fundraising Committee** 1
- MWPHA Tackling Food Deserts in Washington DC.** 2
- Member Updates**
- Fight HIV IN DC- Save Needle Exchange Services** 3
- 14th Annual Health Education Advocacy Summit**
- The Intersection of Health and Policy** 4
- The Institute of Medicine launches Forum on Global Violence Prevention**
- MWPHA Social Action Session Follow-up Cameroon American Council** 5
- Article Highlight "Nurse-In"**
- Hair, Heart, & Health Program** 6

ABOUT MWPHA:

What is the Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association?

Established in 1962, MWPHA is the regional affiliate of the American Public Health Association.

Why become a member?

To get involved with building public leadership, partnerships, and advocating for health equality, MWPHA members effect change through the organization's many committees and programs focused on public health topics relevant to the DC area.

Who are our members?

We are health professionals, advocates, students, and community members dedicated to improving the health of the DC and surrounding areas of VA and MD.



:: A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear MWPHA Members and Friends,
Is it Spring yet? Hopefully by the time you read this it will be Spring again! This past fall was really exciting for MWPHA. During the fall, MWPHA once again worked with the George Washington University School of Public Health on public health advocacy projects. We have maintained this partnership for four years and it is becoming stronger every year.

We had a brand new project that attempted to create policy change at a very famous online company, Facebook. Did you know that many tobacco companies advertise to young people via Facebook? The team put pressure on Facebook to enforce their own policy of not advertising mature content to users under 18. The second project addressed the issue of food deserts in DC. The Get F.E.D. initiative worked to increase opportunities for Ward 8 residents to have access to fresh and healthy foods. They collected petitions and testified at a city council hearing. We plan to continue this project next fall.

The Governing Councilors were also working really hard on the infrastructure of MWPHA. Councilors have been engaged in business development, resources development and membership development. They are working hard to improve customer service and member offerings.

This Spring we will hold the 2011 MWPHA Annual Meeting in conjunction with the George Washington University's Black Public Health Student Network. The topic is "Working towards a Healthier Generation: The Implementation of Health Reform." We chose this topic because there is so much more to health reform than insurance and the affordable care act. As public health practitioners many of us have wondered how our work will be impacted. How will Ryan White be impacted? How will the Title V program change? I could go on. In addition, it is important for us to learn more about how our state and local health departments are implementing the Affordable Care Act. Please visit the Annual Meeting website to learn more.

Sincerely,

Aisha L. Moore, MPH CHES

MWPHA President



Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association

MWPHA needs volunteers for a fundraising committee!!

Do you like event planning?

Are you a \$\$\$ fundraising Guru?

Help plan local events in conjunction with

2011 APHA Annual Meeting Washington, DC

Contact: Katherine Patterson at KPatterson@hrsa.gov



>> VISIT YOUR METRO DC PUBLIC HEALTH SOURCE AT

MWPHA.ORG

:: MWPHA TACKLING FOOD DESERTS IN WASHINGTON DC -ACASIA OLSON



Harvest. It's a term associated with agriculture and more specifically, the gathering of crops planted in the earlier seasons of the year. One must consider the multiple factors which contribute to the desired outcomes of a harvest. The weather, the conditions of the soil, and even the harvest date can affect the quality of said

crops. So, you might ask, what does harvest have to do with MWPHA? Everything, that is, if you're talking about the recent efforts of the newly established, GetFED subcommittee of MWPHA. Every year, health promotion students of The George Washington University School of Public Health join and organize with MWPHA to address a local health issue that threatens the quality of life for D.C. residents.

This year was no different, as seven women came together to develop and establish an advocacy campaign to eliminate food deserts and food accessibility issues among residents in D.C.'s Ward 8 neighborhood. Food deserts, defined as areas with limited and hard to access healthy, affordable foods, are a key factor in the prevalence and increase of obesity related illness in underserved communities. Here, in the nation's capital, one can find a stark contrast in the health outcomes of individuals residing in four major quadrants of the city. There are more cases of type-two diabetes, obesity, and cardiovascular disease in Ward 8 than in Ward 2 or 3. There are also more minorities of low-socioeconomic status residing in Ward 8. In fact, the ratio of grocery stores to residents is far greater in Ward 2, than Ward 8, which boasts a larger population. Something, as you may have gathered, is not right with this picture.

Fascinated with both the topic and the potential positive outcomes of our efforts, we set out to move beyond the pages of a text book

and in class discussions to the fields of political action and social change.

As with any harvest, certain steps were needed and taken, which resulted in the successful progression of our initial efforts:

1. We entered the field at the **right time** of the harvest, right when legislation was under way, having been introduced by Councilmember Mary Cheh in July 2010;
2. We **cultivated relationships** with interested organizations who sought to achieve the same goals;
3. We **planted seeds** of knowledge and change in the hearts and minds of unformed residents by staging informational sessions at community events and at the Giant grocery store;
4. We **tilled the soil** of the D.C. council to encourage the inclusion of farmer's markets in the legislation by providing testimony and meeting with members' offices;
5. We **gathered the ideas** of residents on the status of food access and quality in their neighborhoods;
6. We set out to **uproot the weeds** of confusion and poor health outcomes by engaging in community outreach;
7. We reaped the benefits of a **solid team**, educational/outreach strategy, and **watered** our passion for addressing this issue by seeking viable/sustainable long term solutions for community members to carry out.

While the above steps were carried out to initiate necessary changes related to food access and food deserts in the District, we've only just begun. With a team of dedicated individuals, we seek to move further along in our efforts to eliminate food deserts and increase food equality for D.C. So join us and see just what your contributions can and will do to the growth of healthier communities. It's Harvest time

:: MWPHA MEMBER UPDATES

Personal update--Clare Feinson

Former MWPHA Governing Council member Clare Feinson lost her mother, Hilda Siegel, on October 20, 2010, and her partner of 29 years, Carl Dahlke, on November 6. She has greatly appreciated the concern and support of her friends and colleagues during this difficult period. Clare is back at her desk now, where she is currently working on the newsletter for the Maternal and Child Health Section of the American Public Health Association (APHA), which comes out three times a year. Clare has been the newsletter editor for the MCH Section for about six years. The newsletter should be out around the end of February. If you do not have access to newsletters on the APHA website and would like to receive a copy when it comes out, please contact Clare at cfeinson@speakeasy.net.

MWPHA member Caroline Sparks PhD, MA, has been appointed as the new Sustainability Chair for the DC Tobacco Control Program.

MWPHA would like to welcome two new Governing Council Members: MWPHA members Cassandra Chess and Mai-Kim Norman.

SAVE THE DATE:

2011 Annual Meeting

Working Towards a Healthier Generation: The Implementation of Health Reform

When: Tuesday, April 12, 2011

Location: George Washington University
Marvin Center
800 21st Street NW

Time: 8:30am—4pm

<http://mwpha.wordpress.com/>



:: Got News?

Email your public health updates, professional/personal achievements, and community news to your MWPHA Newsletter Editor at mwpha.communications@gmail.com.

:: FIGHT HIV IN DC— SAVE NEEDLE EXCHANGE

SERVICES —KARYN POMERANTZ

The Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association (MWPHA) calls on you to support needle exchange services to stop HIV. On Friday, February 25th, PreventionWorks! closed its doors after 12 years providing clean needles and care to people using IV drugs, covering 40% of the need.. We need to make sure these services continue!

The organization's closing means that a population of folks who are IV drug users, who might be have Hepatitis C or HIV will not get services, endangering their own lives and risking the community's health. It is not possible for the other organizations in town to make up the difference without increased funding and staff.

We need the DC Department of Health and the DC City Council to provide the resources to serve all residents who need this program NOW.

The DC government manages to find millions of dollars for large development projects with questionable benefit to the most vulnerable. It has provided massive subsidies to the Marriott's Convention Center hotel (\$272 million), the baseball stadium (\$991.8 million), and the Adams Morgan hotel (\$46 million). Now Whole Foods wants the city to pony up \$8 million so they can open a store near the baseball park.

Tell the city to fund needle exchange!

City Council's Health Committee at:

(202) 724-8170 dcatania@dccouncil.washington.dc.us

Director of the DC HIV AIDS Office: gregory.pappas@dc.gov



MWPHA Interest Groups

"A means of sharing information and networking about diverse health topics and issues among MWPHA members."

Coming Soon!

:: 14TH ANNUAL HEALTH EDUCATION ADVOCACY SUMMIT—ELAINE AULD

March 5-7, 2011

Whether you're a first-time advocate or have been involved in health policy for years, there never has been a more critical time to promote the public's health.

Let the Health Education Advocacy Summit help you polish your advocacy skills in just 48 hours. Sponsored by the Coalition of National Health Education Organizations (CNHEO) and other groups, this event offers basic, intermediate, and advanced-level advocacy training, and features issue-specific seminars by skilled government relations staff. The Summit culminates with visits with legislators or key staff on Capitol Hill —either individually or in state/district delegations.

More than 200 students, faculty members, and practitioners are expected to attend.

Mark your calendars! March 5-7, 2011, Washington Court Hotel, Washington, DC. For more information visit www.healtheducationadvocate.org. See photos and read testimonials from past Summit attendees.

:: STAY CONNECTED TO YOUR METRO PUBLIC HEALTH SOURCE



www.groups.to/mwpha



www.twitter.com/mwpha



www.linkedin.com/groups

:: THE INTERSECTION OF HEALTH AND POLICY—*SHANA MCCLENDON*

"The Intersection is the first-ever George Washington University graduate student newspaper written for GW Law, Medical, and Master of Public Health students. Started in the fall of 2010 by a team of five editors, the mission to bring together students with similar passions in health, law, and policy became a reality. The Intersection will serve a purpose exactly as the paper's name indicates: it will connect students between multiple school programs to discuss, argue, and debate health policy related topics.



gw.intersection
Health news for GW Law, medical & public health students

The Intersection covers many events around GW and in the DC area. Even in its infancy, The Intersection has covered major DC events including the live C-SPAN broadcast of "Tavis Smiley Presents America's Next Chapter" hosted by PBS and sponsored by Nationwide. The paper also includes a series titled "Health Policy Reformer's Series", which highlights provisions of PPACA and maps the legislation without analyzing the provision making it easy for readers to draw their own conclusions.

Though GW graduate students operate the newspaper, all persons can contribute. The first online issue launched on January 17, 2011 and featured articles by the current GW Chair of the Department of Health Policy in the School of Public Health and Health Services, Sara Rosebaum, J.D. Also featured in this issue is GW Dean for Administration and Finance, Josef Reum, Ph.D.

Soon, The Intersection will be available biweekly in print. In the mean time, please take a moment to read the online newspaper at www.GWIntersection.com. Those interested in contributing to The Intersection as a guest writer are encouraged to contact the editors at GWIntersection@gmail.com.

MWPHA Bloggers Wanted!!



Looking for an additional way to keep your colleagues up to date on public health issues in the DC area? Is there new research you'd like to share and discuss with everyone without filling their inboxes? You're in luck; MWPHA is looking for bloggers for the official MWPHA Blog.

The blog will serve the above purposes, and also provide a new space for public health professionals to connect to affect change in the state of the region's wellbeing.

If you are interested in writing for the blog or have a topic you'd like to see covered, please email mwpha.communications@gmail.com.

:: THE INSTITUTE OF MEDICINE LAUNCHES ON FORUM GLOBAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION—*RACHEL TAYLOR*

Violence is a major public health problem worldwide, but one that is preventable. Thus, the Institute of Medicine has established the Forum on Global Violence Prevention, with the goal of reducing violence through research on both protective and risk factors and encouraging evidence-based prevention efforts. Realizing that violence prevention is an interdisciplinary area of research that can benefit greatly from multisectoral efforts, the Forum aims to facilitate dialogue by bringing together a broad group of stakeholders.

The Forum's first workshop was held on January 27-28, 2011, and focused on the prevention of violence against women and children. Participants shared the measurable successes of their policies and practice to address gender inequality, the cycle of violence, and violence-associated trauma, as well as lessons learned and opportunities for implementation in different contexts. Speaker presentations and webcast are available at <http://iom.edu/Activities/Global/ViolenceForum/2011-JAN-27.aspx>. More information about the Forum, including its April 28-29, 2011, workshop on the social and economic costs of violence and how to sign up for the listserv, can be found at: <http://iom.edu/Activities/Global/ViolenceForum.aspx>.

**:: MWPHA ENGAGING ACTIVISTS ACROSS BOUNDARIES:
TOOLS FOR SOCIAL ACTION NOW' - SESSION FOLLOW-UP**

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the Cameroon American Council are partnering to educate African Immigrant Groups about the Medicare, Medicaid, and Children Health Insurance Programs. The purpose of this initiative is to provide African immigrant groups with accurate, consistent, and credible information from official sources.

The Cameroon American Council are looking for volunteers to assist with the National African Immigrant and Refugees Health Advocates Training and Health-Fair on Saturday, March 12th 2011 (9AM to 3PM) at the Omega Gospel Ministries(next to Fort Totten metro).

If you are interested please contact Sylvie Bello at sylvie-bello.dc@gmail.com. Please Include "MWPHA Volunteer for AIR" in the subject line.

Want to be more involved in MWPHA?

**Join a MWPHA
Administrative or Program Committee**



Visit www.mwpha.org to learn how!

:: ACTIVIST HOLD "NURSE-IN" AT DC MUSEUM — APHA NEWSLETTER, MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

The Hirshhorn Museum in Washington, D.C., was the scene of a gathering of about 100 parents and babies on Saturday, Feb. 12 as local "lactivists" acted to make the public aware of a mother's legal right to breastfeed in public.

It all started on Jan. 30 when Nori Aita of Rockville, Md., sat down on a bench at the Hirshhorn to breastfeed her daughter during a visit to the federally owned museum. A security guard told her to move to the ladies' room, but finding no place there to sit, Aita returned to the bench. The guard continued to harass her, telling her to sit on a toilet in the restroom. Aita tried another bench, but was soon confronted by another guard. Aita and her family were finally forced to leave the museum.

When she returned home, an Internet search quickly found the Right to Breastfeed Act, which guarantees a woman the right to breastfeed her child on federal property if she and her child are allowed to be there. These provisions were incorporated into an appropriations bill and signed into law by President Clinton in 1999. Also, there are many state laws that provide additional protections to nursing mothers, and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act amends the Fair Labor Standards Act to require an employer to provide reasonable break time for an employee to express breast milk for one year after the child's birth.

The Hirshhorn, which displays international and modern contemporary art, apologized to Aita and her family, and quickly moved to retrain their security personnel. But the organizers of the "nurse-in" said they wanted to support the benefits of breastfeeding and to educate the public to remove the stigma associated with nursing a baby in public.

In other news, the city council of Alexandria, Va., outside Washington, D.C., voted unanimously to amend their indecent exposure law to exclude breastfeeding. They plan to follow up with a special proclamation later in the month, to educate the public about the public health benefits of breastfeeding and the rights of mothers to breastfeed in a family friendly community.

Story referred by Mary-Frances Kornak (MWPHA Women, Children, & Youth Committee Chair)

:: HAIR, HEART, & HEALTH PROGRAM — THERESA HUDNALL

Hair, Heart & Health program of Washington, DC (HHH) is a non-traditional approach to cardiovascular health screening, education and treatment. The program uses the trusted neighborhood institutions of barbershops/hair salons to provide a culturally tailored venue to stem the disproportionate incidence of cardiovascular disease and its risk factors affecting many District residents. Barbers and hair stylists are educated about the cause and effect of cardiovascular disease risk factors. They are trained by licensed medical staff to take blood pressures using the American Heart Association curriculum, and then to follow a written referral protocol for those in need of education and treatment for high blood pressure. The cosmetologists are also trained by a Diabetes Educator to recognize acanthosis nigricans, a darkening of the skin that may appear on the neck area. This discoloration can be a sign of developing diabetes, which is common in this community. It is not used as the basis for a diagnosis, but rather to promote a positive attitude toward prevention practices and encourage patrons to get screened for diabetes.

A certified nurse practitioner visits the shops on a regular basis to screen for diabetes and high cholesterol with fingerstick tests, and to provide CVD risk factor treatment if requested by the patron. The program also assists qualified patrons to apply for health insurance. HHH seeks to establish complimentary interventions for improving ambulatory care by re-enfranchising District residents in the health care delivery system, making access to care more convenient and promoting health education and facilitation of health care navigation.

HHH has screened over 1000 participants for high blood pressure and found it present in almost half of these people. The barbers and hairstylists have an essential role in encouraging their clients to have their blood pressure measured and treated, if necessary.

HHH is currently funded by the DC Department of Health through the Chronic Care Initiative, to operate in Wards 5&8. The program is implemented in the community by MedStar Health Research Institute and the Washington Hospital Center. HHH continuously seeks partners and support. To receive additional information contact, Angela Silverman, CNP, Program Director, 240-416-3268.

The Hair, Heart & Health pilot study was featured in the November 16th edition of *USA Today*. Access to this article can be found at: [http://www.usatoday.com/yourlife/health/medical/heartdisease/2010-11-16-](http://www.usatoday.com/yourlife/health/medical/heartdisease/2010-11-16-barbershop-hypertension_N.htm)

[barbershop-hypertension_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/yourlife/health/medical/heartdisease/2010-11-16-barbershop-hypertension_N.htm).

The program was also featured in a November 18th WJLA ABC-7 newscast locally. To view this video link, go to: [http://www.tbd.com/search/v/35424873/hair-heart-and-health-](http://www.tbd.com/search/v/35424873/hair-heart-and-health-1122.htm?q=Hair+Heart+Health)

[1122.htm?q=Hair+Heart+Health](http://www.tbd.com/search/v/35424873/hair-heart-and-health-1122.htm?q=Hair+Heart+Health).

Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association 2011-2014 Nominations

Extended to Monday, March 7th

We are now accepting nominations for the 2011-2014 term of the MWPHA Governing Council. The MWPHA Governing Council is responsible for setting the strategic agenda and managing the internal and external operations of the association, so all levels and skill sets are encouraged. The Council consists of 5 officers and 10 at-large members. Meetings are held once a month in the evening at a metro-accessible location.

For the 2011-2014 term the following positions are open:

President

Vice-President

At-Large Members: 2 positions available.

Please email Sarah Jackson at ssjac79@gmail.com to express your interest in serving on the council, or to nominate a colleague or friend. A nominations form is available by email or at www.mwpha.org/nominations, and will be due March 7, 2011. Election results will be announced at the MWPHA Annual Conference on April 12, 2011.