

Community Partners 2014

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

Annual Report 2014

Greater Lowell Health Alliance of Community Health Network Area 10

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



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Professor, Department of Community Health and
Sustainability, University of Massachusetts Lowell

* Filling the position of Craig Slatin during his sabbatical leave
** As of July 2014



Back row: Leland Ackerson, Dorcas Grigg-Saito, Jean Franco,
Karen Frederick, and Susan Rosa. Front row: Denise Pruitt,
Michelle Davis, and Rachel Chaddock.

A LETTER FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

We are celebrating an exciting year of change and progress for the Greater Lowell Health Alliance. In January 2014 we were thrilled to welcome Kerrie D'Entremont as our new Executive Director. We are extremely fortunate to have Kerrie join our organization, bringing with her a high level of professionalism and spirit of collaboration.

Kerrie is working cohesively with the Board of Directors and our five health-focused, community-led GLHA task forces, each targeting an individual healthcare need in the community, to set the stage for long-term improvements in the health of the region. In her first months here, she has played a major role in successfully managing the distribution of nearly \$400,000 in grants to organizations targeting health priority areas of need.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to each and every member of the board and task forces for their active participation and unwavering support, commitment, and vision for this organization over the past year, as we strengthen a solid foundation for building capacity both financially and organizationally.

I also extend our deepest thanks to the many individuals, businesses, and community organizations that volunteer their time and services to enable the GLHA to sustain this collaborative coalition, 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



A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

In my first months as Executive Director of the Greater Lowell Health Alliance, I have come to fully appreciate the vital role the GLHA plays in this region, creating change and making our communities a better place to live, work, and visit.

The GLHA is 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. It serves as an advocate for non-profits, securing funding and sharing resources with the outstanding front-line 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.

It is truly a privilege to be part of the great work being done by the Greater Lowell Health Alliance. I am incredibly honored to collaborate with the outstanding members and leaders of our Board of Directors and five task forces that dedicate their time, talent, and energy to selflessly serve others.

It is the spirit of collaboration among our members, elected officials, leaders, businesses, and nonprofit organizations that enable the GLHA to facilitate changes needed to improve the overall health of our communities.

This is an exciting time for the GLHA, and I look forward to continuing to help the Alliance fulfill our mission and build capacity, both financially and organizationally, to create a strong, healthy, and impactful future.

Kerrie D'Entremont
Executive Director



STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2014

MERCY ANAMPIU
Lowell Community Health Center

CHRISTINE CONNOLLY
Lowell Health Department

MARILYN GRAHAM
Greater Lowell WIC Program

ANDREA GROSSKURTH
South Bay Mental Health

DANIEL BASIL HAMILTON
Center for Hope and Healing

HEATHER HILBERT
Lowell General Hospital

SHEILA OCH
Lowell Community Health Center

LINDA SOPHEAP SOU
Lowell Community Health Center

JENNIE WELCH
Tewksbury Police Department

NEYSHA WILKINSON
Lowell General Hospital

OUR MISSION

To sustain a strategic alliance of community organizations that improves the overall health and wellness of those living in the Greater Lowell Region.

GREATER LOWELL HEALTH ALLIANCE: CREATING IMPACT

The Greater Lowell Health Alliance brings together healthcare providers, business leaders, educators, and civic and community leaders with a common goal to improve the overall health of our communities. Over the past year, 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.

In the following pages, you will see this work in action, from the initiatives of the GLHA's five health-centered task forces to the distribution of nearly \$400,000 in grants to community organizations.

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 already 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.

GRANT DISTRIBUTION

Over the next 14 years, the GLHA will distribute nearly \$5 million in funds allocated by Lowell General Hospital through the hospital's Determination of Need 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. In 2014, nearly \$200,000 was awarded through the GLHA's first grant distribution cycle.

Through the hard work of State Representative Tom Golden (D-Lowell) and the Substance Use and Prevention Task Force, an additional \$200,000 was secured to fund Substance Use and Prevention efforts in our region.

GLHA TASK FORCES

On these pages is a brief description of the task forces and some of the initiatives they have undertaken to address specific health concerns in each of their target areas.



CULTURAL COMPETENCY

CHAIRS: DANIEL HAMILTON AND MERCY ANAMPIU

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 20 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 sponsored eight people to attend the training.
- Prepared to host the 3rd Annual Transgender Day of Remembrance in November 2014
- Began preparations for the 2015 Lowell Pride event
- Participated in cultural festivals in the Greater Lowell area

2015 Goals:

- Conducting cultural competency training
- Continuing with Bridging the Gap interpreter training
- Conducting a survey and preparing a resource guide for LGBTQ community
- Pursuing funding for the Lowell Connector project, seeking to create safe social experiences for LGBTQ individuals



HEALTHY EATING AND LIVING

CHAIR: MARILYN GRAHAM AND 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. Past programs and initiatives include a walking program event in partnership with UMass Lowell; International "Walk to School Day"; Safe Routes to School; "Lowell Gets Moving" resource guide; and a walking program with Middlesex Community College.

Our major focus over the past year has been 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. By offering and promoting healthy options, the Corner Store Initiative makes it easier for residents in these neighborhoods to eat better. Over the past year we have engaged with several stores in Lowell and are planning to expand to surrounding towns in 2015.



MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH

CHAIRS: NEYSHA WILKINSON AND ANDREA GROSSKURTH

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

Over the past year we completed the Mom2Be website (www.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.

The task force also participated in another successful World Breastfeeding week celebration.

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.



SUBSTANCE USE AND PREVENTION

CHAIRS: CHRISTINE CONNOLLY, LINDA SOPHEAP SOU AND JENNIE WELCH

The Substance Use and Prevention Task Force works to strengthen collaboration in the Greater Lowell community to prevent and reduce substance abuse among youth and adults. Over the past six years, the Task Force has grown to include representatives from over 30 local health and human service agencies, as well as youth, parents, law enforcement officials, and elected officials.

Subcommittees under this Task Force include:

Environmental Strategies Working Group (ESWG), led by Lowell Community Health Center, which works to inform and educate youth, parents, and adults in the community about how substance abuse is affecting neighborhoods.

Massachusetts Opioid Abuse Prevention Collaborative (MOAPC), led by the City of Lowell Health Department (LHD), which focuses on a regional approach to reducing accidental overdoses from opioids as well as educating community members on the dangers of substance abuse.

Medicinal Marijuana Subcommittee, which focuses on potential ramifications of the 2013 statewide law allowing for the medical use of marijuana.

School Curriculum Subcommittee, which focuses on providing age-appropriate, evidence-based education to youth in grades K-12.

Over the past year, our initiatives included:

- Working with legislators to secure additional funding for substance use and prevention efforts in Greater Lowell
- Hosting October Drug Awareness month events in the region
- Securing \$100,000 in funds for Regional Substance Use and Prevention education efforts in the towns of Billerica Chelmsford, Dracut, Lowell, Tewksbury, Westford and Wilmington.



MENTAL HEALTH

CHAIR: SHEILA OCH

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 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.

Among our initiatives over the past year, in March 2014 the Mental Health Task Force hosted a Behavioral Health Roundtable sponsored by the Greater Lowell Health Alliance, State Representative Thomas Golden, and local, regional and state leaders. The discussion was focused on addressing the mental health and substance abuse crises in Greater Lowell and how we can work together to resolve the critical issues in our communities.

- Participating in "Drug Take Back" by local police departments
- Facilitating a presentation to gain a better understanding about the laws and regulations regarding medical marijuana.
- Facilitating approval by the Lowell City Council of an ordinance banning synthetic drugs, as well as the hiring of a health educator to focus on educating store owners and the public on the dangers of synthetic drugs.
- Participating in a pilot project to distribute nasal naloxone (narcan) that can temporarily reverse an opioid overdose.

2014 GRANTS: DETERMINATION OF NEED FUNDS

The GLHA awarded nine grants totaling \$200,000 to community-based organizations to address critical health issues in the Greater Lowell area. Grants were awarded around the priority areas of mental health, substance abuse, diabetes, obesity, respiratory diseases (e.g. asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease), cardiovascular disease, and Hepatitis B in the Cambodian community. Preference was given to projects that serve low-income, vulnerable, and/or at-risk communities.

Below is the list of grant recipients, award amount and a brief description of their projects:

LOWELL COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER – LOWELL IN MOTION (\$50,000)

The project will reach 500 Lowell residents, both children and adults, many of whom are low-income and represent Lowell's cultural and ethnic diversity. Key strategies include:

HEALTHY MARKETS

The goal of Healthy Markets is to improve access and affordability of healthy food options for neighborhood market program.

COMPLETE STREETS

The goal of Complete Streets is to improve the health of all 105,519 residents within 11 neighborhoods of 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.

SCHOOL NUTRITION

The goal of the School Nutrition strategy is to improve nutrition and physical activity for the 14,031 children enrolled in the Lowell Public Schools.

WAYSIDE YOUTH & FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK, INC - ACCESS TO SERVICES FOR SOUTHEAST ASIAN YOUTH (\$50,000)

Wayside will improve accessibility of Community Service Agency services, as well as other necessary mental health services to Southeast Asian families who need them. Direct services will be provided by Wayside CSA's culturally diverse team of Care Coordinators and Family Partners who are bilingual — fluent in English and Khmer — and bi-cultural. Clinical consultation and education in the community will be delivered by an independently licensed social worker.

UNITED TEEN EQUALITY CENTER, INC - PREVENTING SUBSTANCE ABUSE TO HELP YOUTH SUCCEED (\$20,000)

The funds will support UTEC's goal to establish a permanent, part-time Substance Abuse Counselor position onsite at UTEC.

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL - HEALTHY HOMES FOR CHILD CARE (\$20,000)

The project aims to reduce asthma in young children by providing interventions and education to families in Lowell that suffer from asthma, with the goal to improve the health of Lowell's residents and reduce the burden of asthma in this community. The target population for the proposed project is children age 0-5 from low-income families.

CAMBODIAN MUTUAL ASSISTANCE ASSOCIATION OF GREATER LOWELL - HEPATITIS B EDUCATION AND SCREENING FOR THE CAMBODIAN COMMUNITY OF LOWELL (\$17,000)

The project will hold Hepatitis B education sessions, as well as offering one-on-one screenings and referrals.

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF GREATER LOWELL, INC. – OUTREACH SPECIALIST (\$15,000)

The funds will support the hiring of a master's level part-time Outreach Specialist to ensure that members of the community in need of mental health services are able to take full advantage of the mental health resources in the Greater Lowell area.

BRIDGEWELL, INC. - PATHFINDER OUTREACH PROJECT (\$13,000)

The Pathfinder Outreach Project will provide outreach and health-focused case management services to individuals living in homeless encampments found throughout the city.

TOWN OF CHELMSFORD AND THE TEWKSBURY POLICE DEPARTMENT – SUBSTANCE USE EDUCATION PREVENTION WEEKS (\$7,500 EACH)

The projects will fund the collaborative substance use and prevention weeks by the Chelmsford and Tewksbury police departments as they continue the work of fighting the increasing drug epidemic in their communities.

2014 GRANTS: SUBSTANCE USE AND PREVENTION

In the fall of 2014, the Greater Lowell Health Alliance awarded 10 grants totaling \$171,426 to community-based organizations to address the increasing issues surrounding substance abuse. Grants were awarded in the priority areas of building capacity of those working with children and youth on prevention services; addressing change in the social environment by promoting community norms and public policies that decrease substance use; and reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors among youth and families by providing substance abuse prevention, education, outreach programs and services. Emphasis was placed on building local partnerships to implement strategies that change community conditions and increase the community's capacity to sustain effective efforts.

Below is the list of grant recipients, award amount and a brief description of their projects:

LOWELL COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER - SUBSTANCE USE AND PREVENTION TASK FORCE REGIONAL INITIATIVE (\$100,000)

The project will build and expand the capacity of the region to provide substance abuse prevention education and create a heightened awareness on issues facing communities in the Greater Lowell region. The Task Force will collaborate with representatives from regional towns and hire a Regional Health Educator to assist in the coordination, implementation or expansion of existing prevention education efforts among all participating communities. The core target population of the initiative to receive primary prevention education will be children and young adults up to the age of 21 years old along with general outreach to parents, families, community residents and service providers.

BILLERICA SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION COMMITTEE - SUBSTANCE USE AND PREVENTION COLLABORATIVE (\$10,000)

The project will hire a coordinator to strengthen a comprehensive substance abuse program both within the school and in the larger community.

LOWELL HOUSE, INC. - PREVENTION OUTREACH PROJECT (\$10,000)

The "Prevention Outreach Project ("POP") project focuses on the need for increased access to services and support for disenfranchised members of the Lowell Community struggling with substance abuse and the disease of addictions.

LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS - ARTS IN SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION FOR LOWELL MIDDLE SCHOOLS (\$10,000)

Lowell Public Schools will bring school-based substance abuse prevention dramatic performances to all 7th and 8th grade students in school year 2014-2015 and hold a community-wide performance to engage parents and other adults in substance abuse prevention with the targeted students.

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION OF GREATER LOWELL, INC - SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION SPECIALIST (\$10,000)

The Substance Abuse Prevention Specialist will target clinical services to both parents and youth, with a clear overarching goal of decreasing the risk of substance abuse in youth.

TEWKSBURY POLICE DEPARTMENT- SUBSTANCE USE AND PREVENTION EDUCATION WEEK (\$10,000)

The project will use education to help remove the stigma that is attached to drug and alcohol abuse, let people know that it is a widespread problem that can affect anyone, and encourage people to talk to others and ask people for help.

TOWN OF CHELMSFORD – SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER EDUCATION AND PREVENTION WEEK (\$6,600)

The project will increase awareness about substance use disorder and provide students, teachers and the residents in the community with tools that will help them to identify prevention steps, warning signs, and interventions to deal with this epidemic.



DRACUT PUBLIC SCHOOLS/RICHARDSON MIDDLE SCHOOL - SUBSTANCE AWARENESS PROGRAM (\$6,226.10)

The Drug Awareness program will provide important information and coping skills for students

WESTFORD HEALTH DEPARTMENT, UTILIZING EVIDENCE-BASED PREVENTION PROGRAMS TO REDUCE SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN WESTFORD (\$6,100)

The project will implement two substance use and prevention programs, Table Talks and Guiding Good choices.

LOWELL POLICE DEPARTMENT – LPD LYDC DRUG AWARENESS EVENT (\$2,500)

The Drug Awareness Event hosted by Lowell Youth Development Collaborative (LYDC) with support from the Greater Lowell Substance Abuse Task Force will strive to teach children, teens, and parents about the dangers of drug abuse.

