

**MAINE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION – PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**October 13, 2010**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Co-Chairs, Lani Graham M.D., and Norma Dreyfus M.D., Daniel Oppenheim M.D. (via phone), Stephen Sears M.D., Edward Walworth M.D., Robert Struba M.D. (via phone), Richard Jennings M.D., Ann Simmons M.D., John Garofalo, M.D. (via phone), Jo Linder, M.D. (via phone)

OTHERS PRESENT: Susan Manning, M.D., MaineCDC; Andrew Bossie, Executive Director, Maine AIDS Alliance; Gordon Smith; Andrew MacLean; and Jessa Barnard

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION/FOLLOW UP/RESULTS
<p><b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b></p> <p><b>Review of PHC meeting minutes</b></p>	<p>Dr. Graham asked for members to introduce themselves. Ms. Barnard introduced herself as the new MMA staff person for the Committee.</p> <p>Members reviewed the minutes, motion to approve. All in favor</p>	<p><b>A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010.</b></p>
<p><b>Old Business</b></p> <p><b>Annual Session Updates</b></p> <p><b>Health Implications of Climate Change</b></p>	<p>Dr. Graham reviewed the proceedings of the MMA Annual Session related to public health, including the passage of a resolution on the Toxic Controlled Substances Act and the New START and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. She explained that there is enthusiasm for Congress approving the New START Treaty this session. The Gubernatorial Forum on Public Health went very well, with good attendance and interesting answers by the candidates. The Committee Annual Report was distributed to members.</p> <p>Dr. Graham distributed a handout on climate change from the Natural Resources Council of Maine. Members discussed the use of the MMA climate change resolution by National Wind Watch and whether the Committee can ask them to remove the statement from their website that the MMA recognizes the adverse health effects from wind turbines.</p> <p>Ms. Barnard presented a letter from Environment Maine opposing Senator Jay Rockefeller’s amendment, S.3072, which would delay EPA action under the Clean Air Act. Dr. Graham had also received a request for individual members to sign a more general letter opposing delay of</p>	<p><b>The Committee is considering putting forwarding a resolution to the Maine legislature to support federal action on TCSA.</b></p> <p><b>Continue to monitor use of MMA resolution.</b></p> <p><b>A motion was made and seconded to approve signing on to a letter to</b></p>

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	<p>EPA regulation. Dr. Graham would also like to encourage members to bring public attention to this issue by writing op-eds and letters to the editor. Dr. Sears shared with the group that the MeCDC has been awarded a grant to study the health implications of climate change.</p> <p>Ms. Barnard reminded the Committee that there is a “Google Group” where members can find information about the health effects of climate change, including the proceedings from the April Climate Change and Public Health Conference. The web address to join the group is: <a href="http://groups.google.com/group/MEClimate/sub?s=f4r-GwwAAAC5Zdp8NjxP697ZsQc9JaBJ&amp;hl=en">http://groups.google.com/group/MEClimate/sub?s=f4r-GwwAAAC5Zdp8NjxP697ZsQc9JaBJ&amp;hl=en</a></p> <p>Dr. Sears reminded members of his proposal at the last meeting to address issues like Lyme’s Disease and anti-vaccination efforts, where scientific evidence is not being followed.</p>	<p><b>oppose S.3072. Dr. Graham will take names of individuals who want to sign the more general letter.</b></p> <p><b>Consider “scientific literacy” as topic for 2011 MMA Annual Session or incorporating into other CME activities.</b></p>
<b>Toxins</b>	<p>Marah Gleaton submitted testimony on behalf of Dr. Dreyfus and the MMA at an August DEP hearing on BPA. The Department continues to consider regulating BEP and is now also considering Nonylphenol and Nonylphenol Ethoxylates. PSR has asked MMA to co-sponsor an advocacy training centered around federal action on TCSA.</p>	<p><b>Committee agreed to co-sponsor PSR Advocacy Training. Bring to Executive and Legislative Committees.</b></p>
<b>Nuclear Weapons</b>	<p>Ms. Barnard updated the Committee that letters were sent to Senators Collins, Snowe and Inouye (Senate President Pro Tem) and President Obama, urging the Senate to approve both the New START and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaties.</p>	
<b>Public Health Infrastructure</b>	<p>Ms. Barnard informed the Committee that the Statewide Coordinating Council for Public Health continues to move forward with working to strengthen the public health infrastructure and is looking for ways to connect primary care providers and public health. Dr. Graham stated that the MMA needs more specific guidance from the SCC in how they would like the MMA/physician community to get involved with their efforts.</p>	<p><b>Ms. Barnard to discuss with SCC that we need more information on how they would like to involve physicians. Also suggest</b></p>

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<p><b>Universal Vaccination Program</b></p> <p><b>HPP Updates (anti-tobacco and obesity efforts)</b></p> <p><b>Volunteer Health Practitioners Act</b></p> <p><b>Antibiotics in Feedlots</b></p> <p><b>MeHAF Grant</b></p>	<p>The MMA nominated Dr. Larry Losey to the Vaccine Board but has not been notified yet whether appointments have been made. The Board is supposed to be running by January 1<sup>st</sup>. Dr. Sears thought nominations have been made and commented that this is an extremely important program for Maine and the MeCDC.</p> <p>Ms. Barnard explained that Health Policy Partners has now officially merged with the Maine Public Health Association and the HPP name will no longer be used. There are now tobacco and obesity policy committees of the MPHA. The priorities for the year include raising the tax on cigarettes, equalizing the tax between cigarettes and other tobacco products and increasing physical activity in schools. Mr. MacLean added that a tobacco tax is only likely to be successful as part of budget negotiations and not as an affirmative legislative campaign.</p> <p>Dr. Walworth is satisfied based on Mr. MacLean’s presentation at the last meeting that this issue does not need further action.</p> <p>Committee is satisfied that this issue does not currently need further action. Dr. Sears stated that there is reason to encourage the FDA to act on this issue but Maine has already addressed it fairly well.</p> <p>Ms. Barnard informed the Committee that the MMA received and is implementing a grant from the Maine Health Access Foundation to educate patients and medical professionals about new coverage options under health care reform.</p>	<p><b>central calendar of events.</b></p> <p><b>Confirm whether appointments have been made.</b></p>
<p><b>New Business</b></p> <p><b>Policy Priorities – Methods of Developing Priorities</b></p>	<p>The co-chairs stated that the Committee has done a good job of addressing the current four priorities (toxins, immunization financing, public health infrastructure and climate change) and these will continue as the priorities until new ones are developed. The Committee discussed ways to solicit additional ideas, including contacting all state specialty societies to solicit their public health policy priorities, asking all membership for ideas and tracking the MPHA and MeCDC priorities.</p>	<p><b>Mailing to all state specialty society presidents. Put call for priorities in MMA Weekly Newsletter. Monitor MPHA and MeCDC</b></p>

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<p><b>Brain Trauma</b></p>	<p>Dr. Graham mentioned that a neurologist recently brought to her attention the issue of sports-related brain injury and the impact of small trauma on the brain. The Committee discussed this as a possible future topic. Dr. Simmons stated that Colby College has a program to evaluate when athletes are ready to return to play. Dr. Walworth shared a Dartmouth Medicine article about sports and head injury: <a href="http://dartmed.dartmouth.edu/fall10/html/fourth-down.php">http://dartmed.dartmouth.edu/fall10/html/fourth-down.php</a>. Mr. Smith stated that in 2009, the Maine Legislature passed a Resolve creating a Working Group on the Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment of Concussive Head Injury in Student-Athletes, <a href="http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/chapters/RESOLVE79.asp">http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/bills/bills_124th/chapters/RESOLVE79.asp</a>, that was supposed to draft a report. Another bill (SP 247) was introduced in 2009, but was not voted on, to study the feasibility of instituting the ImpACT test. The Committee would want to partner with neurologists on this issue. Dr. Bruce Sigsbee is currently the president-elect of the American Academy of Neurology and should be consulted, along with other Maine neurology and sports medicine specialists.</p>	<p>priorities.</p> <p><b>Research report of legislative Working Group. Connect with neurologists and sports medicine physicians to determine their interest in this issue.</b></p>
<p><b>Immunization of Health Care Providers</b></p>	<p>Dr. Sears raised the issue of low flu vaccination rates among Maine health care providers. The Committee agreed to support an education campaign urging physicians to get vaccinated.</p>	<p><b>Include message in MMA Weekly Update to all MMA members from Committee and MaineCDC urging physicians to get vaccinated.</b></p>
<p><b>Testing Pregnant Women for HIV</b></p>	<p>Mr. Andrew Bossie of the Maine AIDS Alliance presented on their effort to change Maine’s HIV-testing consent laws for pregnant women from “opt in” (MD needs to ask pt consent to test) to “opt out” (MD will routinely test unless pt refuses). Members discussed the changes in HIV treatment and perception and how barriers to testing should be removed.</p>	<p><b>The Committee moved to support changing Maine’s consent law. Mr. Bossie to be invited to MMA Legislative Committee.</b></p>
<p><b>Imaging Centers</b></p>	<p>Dr. Sears raised the issue of patient screening centers (that provide stroke screening, osteoporosis screening, etc) without referral from a physician. Mr. Smith stated that he researched this issue several years ago and that if a licensed physician is reviewing the results these centers meet the legal requirements. However, he stated one option would be to work</p>	<p><b>Mr. Smith to discuss further with AAAs/AARP.</b></p>

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<p><b>Smart Meters</b></p> <p><b>Dental Bond</b></p> <p><b>PSR DV Grant</b></p> <p><b>MOA “mini med school”</b></p>	<p>with consumer groups to require disclosure that these tests do not meet preventative guideline recommendations.</p> <p>Dr. Graham was approached recently by a woman concerned about the health impacts of “smart meters” installed by electric companies in user’s homes and that transmit use information wirelessly to the company. Dr. Graham suggested she ask for an “opt out” from the company. This was raised as an emerging issue that Committee members may hear more about.</p> <p>Mr. Smith distributed information to members about Question 2 on the November ballot, which will support funding of dental clinics.</p> <p>Ms. Barnard shared that the MMA submitted a letter of support for the PSR DV program, which in part educates physicians about screening.</p> <p>Ms. Barnard stated that the Ostopathic Association has funding to offer “mini medical school” sessions in primary and secondary schools, focusing on wellness and prevention. MMA members are welcome to participate.</p>	
<p><b>Upcoming Events</b></p> <p><b>The Next Meeting is December 8<sup>th</sup> from 4:00-6:00 pm.</b></p>	<p>Dr. William Hsiao to lecture on healthcare reform; Bates College, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 pm, Muskie Archives</p> <p>MeCDC Annual Infectious Disease Conference; Augusta Civic Center, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 8:00 am – 3:30 pm, register at <a href="http://www.mcdregistration.org/signup.asp?ID=228">http://www.mcdregistration.org/signup.asp?ID=228</a></p> <p>Improving Tobacco Treatment Coverage for MaineCare Recipients: Summit on Maine’s Medicaid tobacco treatment benefit; Senator Inn, Augusta, December 8<sup>th</sup>, 11:30 am – 3:00 pm, RSVP to Amy Olfene by November 19, <a href="mailto:aolfene@lungne.org">aolfene@lungne.org</a> or 207-624-0325</p>	<p><b>Proposed 2011 meeting schedule to remain the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month: Feb 9<sup>th</sup>, April 13<sup>th</sup>, June 8<sup>th</sup>, Aug 10<sup>th</sup>, Oct 12<sup>th</sup> &amp; Dec 14<sup>th</sup></b></p>

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