

Maine Tobacco Prevention Success Story

HealthReach passes a comprehensive, statewide tobacco policy for all its 12 sites in rural Maine.

HealthReach Community Health Centers, otherwise known as Federally Qualified Health Centers, have 12 sites around rural Maine. These health care settings can be found in 6 Counties including Androscoggin, Franklin, Kennebec, Lincoln, Oxford. Together, they serve 28,000 patients and have 260 employees.

HealthReach Community Health Centers (HealthReach) have one overarching tobacco policy that is used at all sites. When Healthy Community Coalition made the decision to approach HealthReach, we focused on sites that are in Franklin County, quickly learning that because of this company-wide policy we would need to find the appropriate staff to work with to review the policy.



“HealthReach and Healthy Community Coalition have a long successful history of working together to improve the health of the Franklin County community. The implementation of a comprehensive smoke free policy at all of the HealthReach locations has a wide reaching benefit to many individuals in communities throughout the State. Healthy Community Coalition is proud to be part of this collaboration.”

Jennifer McCormack, Executive Director at Healthy Community Coalition

HealthReach updating their policy is a success for the protection of the many patients, staff, and anyone who is on or within the HealthReach grounds/properties'. HCC reached out to their fellow DTPP's across the state with Health Reach Locations in their counties to help provide implementation technical assistance and to assist with developing a relationship between each HealthReach location and their local DTPP Agency so that we can continue this partnership and support them with any tobacco policy assistance needed.

HealthReach Community Health Centers are available for every person in Maine, regardless of their ability to pay, and are strategically placed in parts of rural Maine where there are less healthcare options, people are medically underserved, and jobs that pay a decent wage can be difficult to obtain. We know that smoking among people in Maine that make \$25,000 or less a year is 5.6% higher than the National average meaning that the probability of many of the patients that HealthReach serves, are using tobacco. Knowing this makes it extremely important to secure a strong policy that protects patients, staff, and anyone else on the ground from secondhand exposure and litter, while encouraging tobacco users to quit in a supportive environment.

HealthReach's dedication to providing a healthy smoke-free environment for their staff and patients was clear to see through their already strong policy and by partnering with Healthy Community Coalition (HCC) they were able to make a few small changes to meet model policy criteria that not only strengthened this effort but put HealthReach in a great position to apply for the Health Care Gold Star Standard Excellence (GSSE) award. The staff in the Human Resource Department for HealthReach was extremely helpful and Connie Coggins, CEO, was instrumental in connecting HCC to the appropriate contacts to work with to accomplish the policy updates.

Healthy Community Coalition is continuing to partner with HealthReach Community Health Centers to provide technical assistance and implementation support as needed.

For More Information Contact Us At:

Healthy Community Coalition
Ashley McCarthy
amccarthy1@fchn.org
207-779-2463



Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services