

SUCCESS



MAINE TOBACCO PREVENTION

Bangor Public Health and Millinocket Regional Hospital built a trusted relationship by partnering to fulfill a Community Health Partnership Agreement and Mini-Grant opportunity during the Covid epidemic.

NEED / ISSUE

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of death and disease in the country with over 443,000 deaths per year. 100% tobacco-free campus hospital policies that address staff, visitors and patients, serve as a model of health for their communities. The Covid epidemic, especially within hospitals, could have been reason enough for leadership to say no not now, but they understood the importance of promoting and supporting tobacco-free environments, lifestyles, prevention and treatment.



INTERVENTION

Bangor Public Health (BPH) tobacco prevention and control program team reached out to MRH leadership to propose a Community Health Partnership Agreement and Mini-Grant opportunity. The partnership agreement was tailored to the hospital-healthcare organization setting which asked that they apply for the statewide annual Gold Star Standards of Excellence (GSSE) Hospital and Healthcare Standards of best-practice program. The hope was to achieve the highest level, the Platinum recognition. Our staff provided technical assistance and guidance in reviewing and revising their tobacco policy to meet the best hospital standards for patients, staff, and visitors. Another important aspect of the GSSE standards, which MRH embraced, is the importance of having an implementation, communication, and enforcement plan. This was fulfilled by adding new Tobacco-Free Hospital Campus signs and realizing this is a teaching opportunity when reminding staff, and campus visitors about the policy and health for all. BPH provided MRH clinical and office staff a virtual "Quitting Tobacco Together" training which included new and emerging facts about the e-cigarette epidemic, and the Maine QuitLink for comprehensive evidence-based treatment resources for all ages.



Result/Success

The success and sustainability of this community health partnership is the trusted relationship developed between the two organizations. MRH updated its tobacco policy and obtained **platinum GSSE hospital recognition**. Members from 9 MRH Physician & Surgical Practices have attended an initial Maine Quitlink Referral training. Our long-term commitment to support MRH in implementing their policy standards includes ongoing training and resources, ensuring that staff continue to respond to tobacco-related patient needs. This partnership demonstrates the importance of combining evidence-based clinical practice guidelines with public health policy. In highlighting tobacco use, a social determinate of health, MRH has demonstrated tremendous leadership during this epidemic to do the right thing!

"BPH staff was instrumental in providing tobacco awareness, and treatment options to our patients. The best defense is not to start, but if our patients already use tobacco products, we must provide them the education, tools, environment and encouragement to quit".

Dr. Robert Peterson, CEO

Quote!

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CITY OF BANGOR