



## CITY OF MANCHESTER HEALTH DEPARTMENT MONTHLY BULLETIN – APRIL 2010



### Chronic Disease Prevention & Neighborhood Health Division

#### Healthy Homes and Neighborhood Health

In 2009, the Office of the Surgeon General [www.surgeongeneral.gov](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov) released a national call to action to promote healthy homes. Concurrently, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development [www.hud.gov/healthyhomes](http://www.hud.gov/healthyhomes) issued its healthy homes strategic plan. Both directives have fueled local communities to create coordinated approaches utilizing multiple environmental health and housing disciplines to reduce related hazards and ensure healthy places to live, work and play.

In Manchester, the City of Manchester Health Department, in partnership with other community stakeholders, has been selected to receive technical assistance from the Asthma Regional Council (ARC) of New England, a program of Health Resources in Action, to design a local strategic plan which addresses poor housing conditions that contribute to asthma triggers, such as environmental tobacco smoke, rodents, mold, chronic dampness, carbon monoxide, lead and pesticide poisonings; unintentional injuries, and radon exposure. This effort will particularly focus on the environmental health and safety of low-income populations who are at greatest risk and disproportionately exposed to these home-based risk factors. As a City, Manchester over represents issues connected to poor housing conditions but has historically addressed them through singular, and often independent programs (please see below). This opportunity will combine local efforts within a comprehensive, holistic model. For more information, please contact Jaime Hoebeke, Chronic Disease and Neighborhood Health Division, at (603) 628-6003 x355.

**Asthma** – Asthma is among the most common cause of hospitalization for children ages 5-17 years, and among adults ages 18-64 years, Manchester has significantly higher rates of emergency department visits for chronic ambulatory care sensitive conditions (741 visits/100,000) than the Rest of New Hampshire (568 visits/100,000). Chronic ambulatory care Sensitive conditions may be an indicator of a lack of prevention efforts, a primary care resource shortage, or other factors that create barriers to obtaining timely and effective care.

**Lead** – Tragically, the most recent fatality due to lead poisoning in the country occurred in the City of Manchester. Since 2000, a total of 19,602 children under age six have been screened for blood lead and 583 children have been identified as having an elevated blood lead level > 10 ug/dl. The City of Manchester was declared a high-risk community for lead poisoning due to the abundance of older housing stock with lead paint, and is considered a universal screening site.

**Unintentional Injury** – Accidents or unintentional injury, which may result from an unsafe physical environment, are the leading cause of death among Manchester children ages 5 to 17. Unintentional injury is also the leading cause of death for Manchester adults aged 18-29 years (28.5 deaths/100,000).

**Tobacco Use** – In Manchester, there is a significantly higher proportion of adults age 18 to 64 who are currently smoking (32.8%) as compared with the Rest of New Hampshire (22.1%). Furthermore, smoking rates vary statistically by income. For example, 37% of Manchester adults age 18 and older with an income less than \$25,000 reported that they smoke compared to only 15.7% for those in the same age cohort with an income at or above \$75,000 annually. Lastly, over 35% of Manchester women of childbearing age (18-44 years) report that they are current smokers.

#### MISSION STATEMENT

*To improve the health of individuals, families, and the community through disease prevention, health promotion, and protection from environmental threats.*

## Community Health Division

### National Infant Immunization Week

National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) is being held April 24-May 1, 2010. This national health observance highlights the importance of protecting infants from vaccine-preventable diseases and focuses on the achievements of immunization programs in promoting healthy communities. The decline in vaccine-preventable diseases was one of the ten most significant public health achievements of the past century. In 2010, vaccination continues to play a critical role in safeguarding public health globally.

During the month of April, the Manchester Health Department will be introducing a new Immunization Initiative Program, made possible through funding from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA). ARRA funding will enable the Department to develop a variety of models to promote adult and adolescent immunization, enhance immunization preparedness within the region and mobilize community partnerships through assessment and education.

## Environmental Health & Public Health Preparedness Division

### Coordination Assists Residents During Natural Disasters

During natural disasters, the Environmental Health Division works along side other City Departments to execute the City's coordinated response and recovery activities. During the recent wind storm and flooding events, the Division obtained a list from the Manchester Fire detailing their calls for service which assisted Manchester residents in pumping out their basement or responding to other storm-related concerns. The Health Department prepared packets containing information on the following subjects: flood clean-up, loss of electrical power and food safety, well disinfection (if applicable), disinfection of surfaces and disposal of affected items which cannot be effectively disinfected and mailed these packets to all of the residents who requested assistance from the Fire Department. This information was also promptly made available on the City's website. During the February 25-March 1 wind/rain event, the Department sent out 136 packets to Manchester residents, fielded phone calls for information and provided on-site technical assistance to Manchester's residents. This was all possible due to the coordinated efforts with the Fire Department.

## School Health Division

### School Nurse's Office at MST "Open for Business"

The Manchester School of Technology (MST) offers career training in a variety of areas from culinary arts to automotive, electrical, and plumbing skills to child care and health occupations to high school students from Manchester, Goffstown, Londonderry, Bedford, and Pinkerton. These students, as well as the pre-school children who attend MST can now benefit from the services of a school nurse. Shirley Nelson, RN, BSN has opened her office at MST and has already made her mark. Students from 4 years to twenty-one now routinely stop in her new office for illness, injuries, emergent care or to seek information about personal health issues. Mrs. Nelson joins the thirty-two member School Health Division of the Manchester Health Department, providing school nursing services to the students in Manchester's public schools.

## Monthly Spotlight

*Congratulations* to Nancy Wells, School Health Supervisor on her election as the new President-Elect of the New Hampshire School Nurse Association.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit our website at <http://www.manchesternh.gov/CityGov/HLT/Home.html>, or call 624-6466