



#HealthierMO

Transforming the Future of Public Health in Missouri

Stakeholders Express Optimism

Key public health stakeholders expressed optimism toward working collectively to improve the public health system in Missouri, stating "We are stronger together than we are individually."

On January 10, 2018, representatives from several professional organizations focused on public health in Missouri met to discuss how to work together better in order to transform the public health system in Missouri. The group identified one of the main challenges of the current system as having too many voices – multiple agencies and organizations advocating for a "wish list" of public health issues, rather than collaboratively focusing on two or three priorities that would benefit public health across the whole state.

The group agreed to the need for better communication statewide, as well as the need to work together to develop a more unified approach. They identified other key focus areas for discussion in the process of transforming the public health system as workforce development, education, accreditation, policy development, and legislative advocacy.

Hosted by the #HealthierMO initiative, the meeting included representatives from the Missouri Public Health Association (MPHA), Missouri Center for Public Health Excellence (MoCPHE), Missouri Association of Local Public Health Agencies (MoALPHA), Missouri Institute for Community Health (MICH), and Missouri Environmental Health Association (MEHA). Representatives from Missouri Milk Food and Environmental Health Association (MMFEHA) and the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (MoDHSS) were invited but were unable to attend.

The DHSS Director's meeting with local public health agency administrators and directors on January 10th also featured a discussion on legislative advocacy. The discussion highlighted the need for a more organized approach from public health stakeholders to advocate for or against specific legislation. The suggestion was made to engage professional organizations focused on public health in working together to set key public health priorities.

These early meetings reiterate the sentiment that prompted development of the #HealthierMO initiative: Missouri's public health system needs transformation, and the time is now!

The Missouri Public Health Association is leading the #HealthierMO initiative in partnership with Support KC. Funding for the first phase of this multi-year initiative was provided by the Missouri Foundation for Health and the Health Care Foundation of Greater Kansas City. To learn more, visit www.HealthierMO.org.