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Background

The University of New England (UNE), Portland Public Library (PPL) and Maine Medical Center (MMC) came together to promote health awareness and provide resources for underserved community members. The project exemplifies the collaborative leadership of three community stakeholders in support of a vulnerable population while teaching leadership to healthcare profession students.

Success of the project meant merging each stakeholder's goals:

UNE Westbrook College of Health Professions:

- provide health profession students with opportunities to work with and learn from vulnerable populations and instill a lifelong commitment to service

PPL:

- as a civic and cultural center, provide opportunities for citizens to become literate, informed and engaged

MMC:

- as a component of the tri-part mission, improve the health of the community and educate tomorrow's caregivers

Recognizing that 11% of Portland residents are foreign-born and a daily average of 502 individuals utilize homeless shelters, the project focused efforts on these vulnerable populations. Furthermore, as part of the 2018 City of Portland Minority Health Report, 7 of the 10 "most important health problems" were addressed during the project, including the top 3:

- *diabetes*
- *dental problems*
- *high blood pressure*

Purpose

The project had a dual mission:

- (1) To promote healthy behavior and provide resources to new citizens and refugees, homeless individuals, and other underserved community members in a comprehensive manner.
- (2) To connect health profession students with healthcare professionals and local support agencies, enhancing health topic knowledge, awareness of community service, and leadership through community engagement.



Project Design & Implementation

The intervention was an annual health fair utilizing all three stakeholders' collaborative leadership to provide appropriate health information and resources to vulnerable community members while incorporating a student learning experience.

Project Elements:

- (1) The library provided an environment where vulnerable community members were accustomed to receiving information and resources related to their health.
- (2) The university and the hospital provided experience in numerous community health fairs involving students and health care professionals respectively, as well as individuals to provide services at the event.
- (3) Communication among the three entities involved bimonthly meetings and ongoing emails. Tasks were assigned and reported back, including identifying health topics, recruiting professional staff, volunteers and community agencies, planning lay out and flow of rooms, and marketing.
- (4) Community support agencies provided additional expertise, resources and would receive referrals.

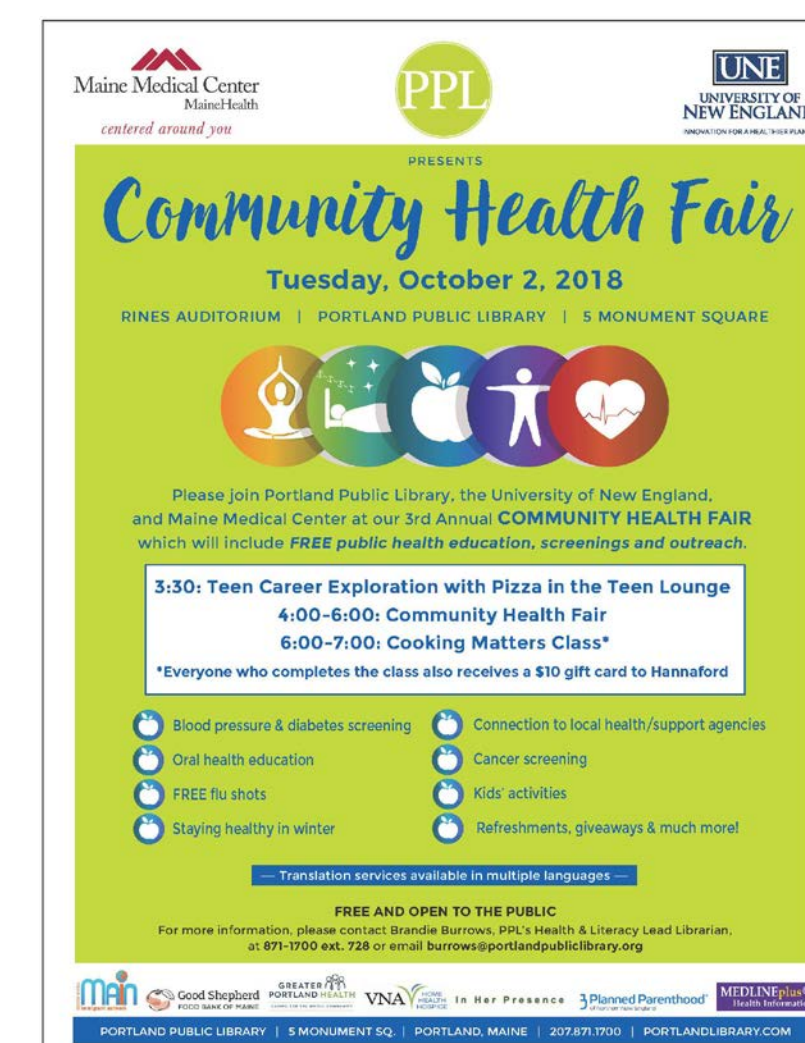


The October 2018 health fair resulted in the collaboration of:

- 18 professional nurses and social workers
- 21 health profession students
- 8 community agencies

Topics presented included:

- BP screening
- stroke awareness
- cancer and breast health
- diabetes and nutrition
- dental hygiene
- pediatric and lactation issues
- emergency department use
- a flu vaccine clinic



Outcomes

- Addressed top health concerns of target population:
 - ❖ Delivered valuable health resources such as oral health supplies and flu vaccines
 - ❖ Provided health information, education and screening
- Enabled rich mentoring/networking opportunities for students and professionals

How beneficial was the Health Fair to you as an attendee?



OUTCOMES	2017	2018
Individuals Surveyed	59 (out of over 100 in attendance)	43 (out of nearly 60 in attendance)
Flu Vaccines Given	47	27

Modifications for 2019

This year's health fair will be held October 15th from 4-7 p.m. at the Portland Public Library.

Following debriefing and review of participant and presenter surveys, modifications were made to improve the event:

- To avoid any one area being left out, all of the presenters, activities and booths will assemble in the same room.
- Additional partners have been invited to enhance the scope of information and resources presented at the fair, including the Learning Collaborative, the Needle Exchange, Opportunity Alliance and others.
- Additional Event Navigators will be recruited and will have a larger presence at the library entrance.
- Earlier and more robust marketing efforts will be undertaken in hopes of increasing participation in the event.

Acknowledgements

Portland Public Library, Maine Medical Center & University of New England Volunteers

Community Partners: Maine Access Immigrant Network, Greater Portland Health, Good Shepherd Food Bank, VNA Home Health, Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, Frannie Peabody Center, New Mainers Resource Center, Portland Public Health, Minority Health Program

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