



Stemming the Flow. Addressing COVID-19 Regionally

NOVEMBER 2020

Region 3 HMCC
MAPC | 60 TEMPLE PLACE, BOSTON, MA

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November 2020 Stakeholder Meetings- Full Summary Report

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of the workshops was to highlight successes, acknowledge challenges and look at opportunities of improvement from the response efforts to COVID-19 response over the past eight months. Additionally, a goal was to further enhance relationships between local and regional partners while simultaneously continuing to build regional capacity and resiliency. This included identifying how stakeholders can leverage these relationships to address regional gaps during the second wave of COVID-19.

Format and Logistics

This workshop was held on three (3) days during November 2020 (November 17th, 18th and 19th). The meetings were two (2) hours in length and were limited to twenty-five participants per session. Due to COVID-19, these sessions were held virtually over Zoom.

Objectives

Three (3) objectives were developed for Q3 workshop:

Objective 1: Highlight success and areas to improve.

Objective 2: Further enhance relationships and continue to build regional capacity and resiliency.

Objective 3: Identify how stakeholders can leverage these relationships to address regional gaps during the second wave of COVID-19.

Agenda

The agenda for the workshops was as follows:

- Introductions and Objectives
- HMCC and MAPC Response to COVID-19
- Successes and Areas for Improvement
- Regional Partnerships and Collaboration
- “Outside the Box”
- Closing Remarks

Key Discussion Findings

The following is an overview of the discussions that took place during the three workshops facilitated by the HMCC Staff. The participants were encouraged to discuss their experiences over the past eight months in order to promote regional collaboration. This is a summary of those responses.

Discussion 1: Successes and Improvements

For the first discussion, HMCC staff provided an overview of their response to COVID-19 thus far. This included a look at the amount of resource requests and Duty Officer pages and emails that have been processed. Additional statistics were provided on the amount of PPE and other essential equipment that was procured by MAPC for Hospitals and Public Health Departments in the region.

From there, a discussion acknowledging the difficulties and hardships that have developed as a result of COVID-19 ensued. This conversation provided stakeholders the opportunity to reflect but also was a reminder to take a step back and allow for self-care.

Building upon the hardships discussed, HMCC staff went into a discussion around successes and improvements from the region's response efforts to COVID-19. Information was gathered prior to the workshops through a survey that was sent out to stakeholders. Stakeholders were asked about successes and improvements at both the local and regional level. The results of the survey were displayed during the workshops. Stakeholders were then asked to share any additional successes and areas for improvement they encountered during their response. These can be seen below:

1. Successes

- Planning
- Teamwork
- Cooperation from internal and external staff
- Ability to adapt
- Regional collaboration
- Strong partnerships
- HMCC support
- Strong leadership
- Knowledgeable and flexible staff
- Cooperation amongst internal and external sources
- Availability of the HMCC duty officers and their collaboration with the facilities
- Collaboration between local municipal health depts for regional consistency

2. Improvements

- Staffing
- Resources
- Keep politics out of decision making
- Improved leadership
- Staff fatigue and stress management
- Contact tracers
- Communication

- More regional collaboration
- More Public Health nursing staff needed
- Staff resiliency
- Clear guidance on PPE
- Keeping politics out of public health
- Cache of supplies to offer hospitals

Discussion 2: Regional Collaboration

For the second discussion, HMCC began with an overview of collaboration within Region 3. The conversation began with an image of two puzzle pieces being placed together. This image referenced how seamless collaboration can be within all disciplines. It also displayed how one discipline may be in need of one resource to solve a problem. With deeper relationships and collaboration across the region, one partner may have the missing piece needed to solve that problem.

Next HMCC staff began a discussion around resources and partnerships at the local level. HMCC staff explained that all incidents and events begin and end at the local level. With this being said, it is important for stakeholders to familiarize themselves and catalogue all local resources and potential partners. By doing this, a stakeholder will increase response time to an event, build resiliency at the local level and expand the number of resources they have.

From that conversation, HMCC staff referenced slides with information pulled from a survey that was sent to stakeholders a few weeks prior to the workshop. Information on these slides were in reference to questions about who stakeholders have collaborated with locally so far, what they have collaborated on and what are some future partnerships and collaboration. Responses to these questions can be seen below.

1. Who do you collaborate with?

- MRC
- Council on Aging
- Hospitals
- Long-Term Care Facilities
- HMCC
- Public Health Departments
- Other Communities

2. What do you collaborate on?

- Contact Tracing
- Testing Supplies
- Sharing Information
- Food and Housing
- Sharing Staff
- PPE

3. Who would you like to partner with and what you like to collaborate on in the future?

- Work to increase staff resiliency
- Collaborate on Contact Tracing
- Maintain communication to improve workflow
- Develop MOU's for sharing resources
- Create smaller groups to work through issues locally

Discussion 3: Outside the Box thinking

For the third discussion, HMCC staff provided an opportunity for stakeholders to share any “Outside the Box” solutions they have utilize so far in their response to COVID-19. The idea behind this discussion was that the response is closing in on one (1) year. As a result, individuals are becoming tired with same day to day operations. HMCC staff noted the importance for stakeholders to continue to use their “creativity” and avoid becoming stagnant.

The goal of the discussion was that it would inspire and reinvigorate stakeholders to come up with creative solutions to issues that arise. Examples of this can be seen in the answers to the questions below.

1. What creative solutions have you utilized?

- Trinity EMS noted that they were able to obtain N95 masks from nail salons in town. The salons were closed due to COVID-19 restrictions. The salons were generous enough to give Trinity the N95 masks since they were not being used.
- Trinity EMS mentioned that they partnered with the Lowell Spinners and were able to obtain roughly 500 ponchos to use as gowns when they were not able to procure them.
- Fresenius Kidney Care mentioned that they partnered with a brewery who was able to pivot and make them hand sanitizer. The brewery was able to shift beer production and make the facility hand sanitizer when they were unable to procure it.
- Lynnfield Fire mentioned that the Massachusetts Fire Chief Association contributed money to reserve rooms at a local hotel. These rooms could be used by personal who were COVID-19 positive so they did not have to go home and potentially infect their loved ones.

2. What are some creative resources that are in your community that you can utilize moving forward?

- Schools (Specifically Tech Schools)
- Nail Salons
- Hotels
- MRC

3. In what situations might these resources be needed?

- Future Pandemic
- Terrorist Attack
- Natural Disaster
- Mass Casualty Incident

To tie the workshop together and further demonstrate different partnerships that exist within the region, HMCC staff invited Nancy Burns to discuss her role in the COVID-19 response. Nancy is the Upper Merrimack Valley, Medical Reserve Corps Unit Coordinator. Nancy was able to walk stakeholders through what her unit has done to assist communities over the past year. Nancy described assisting at COVID-19 Testing Sites, providing food services, assisting during outdoor public meetings and many other events as well. Nancy encouraged stakeholders to utilize the MRC for both medical and non-medical services while noting that volunteers in her unit are eager to help in any way they can.

Discussion 4: Debrief

For the final discussion, HMCC staff provided an opportunity to review the objective of the workshop and allow for any feedback from the stakeholders. During this time, HMCC staff briefed stakeholders on how guidance has come down from Massachusetts Department of Public Health- Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management (MDPH-OPEM) that all HMCC's will be required to create a PPE Cache.

HMCC staff shared their plans on the formation of the cache open to all HMCC Disciplines as well as the logistics associated with managing a cache. One concern a stakeholder voiced was that items would sit in the cache and potentially expire. HMCC staff shared how items will be constantly rotated out so they will not expire. Stakeholders were also asked if there were any items that they would like to see in the cache. Responses included:

- N95
- Gloves- multiple sizes
- Face Shields
- Gowns
- Tyvek Suits
- Surgical Masks
- Syringes- for mass inoculation

HMCC staff noted that during this process they would be soliciting feedback from stakeholders. Stakeholders were encouraged to reach out to HMCC staff with any idea or suggestions they may have.

Q3 Workshop Survey Results

Once the Q3 Discussion Based Workshop was completed, the participants were given the opportunity to complete a short survey. The survey consisted of ten (10) questions and was intended on providing HMCC staff feedback on the value of the event and will be used to help shape future events.

Stemming the Flow. Addressing COVID-19 Regionally Survey Narrative

Once the Q2 Discussion Based Workshop was completed, the participants were given the opportunity to complete a survey. The survey consisted of ten (10) questions and was intended on providing HMCC staff feedback on the value of the event and will be used to help shape future events.

The first question asked stakeholders to identify which of the workshop sessions they attended. Of those who completed the survey, five (5) attended on November 17th, three (3) attended on November 18th and three (3) attended on November 19th.

The next question asked stakeholders to identify the discipline they represent. Of those who responded, three (3) were from Public Health, two (2) were from Hospitals, one (1) was from a Dialysis Center, one (1) was from a Community Health Center one (1) was from Long Term Care, one (1) was from a Behavioral Health facility and two (2) represented EMS.

Next, we asked stakeholders what the strengths of the event were. Stakeholders noted the material and subject matter presented during the workshop was a strength. Stakeholders mentioned that having small groups allowed for better conversation as well as being able to hear what other disciplines have done during the response was helpful. Additionally, hearing the response from the MRC's perspective was well received by all.

Next, we asked stakeholders what the HMCC could have done better for the event. Overall, stakeholders were happy with the delivery of the event. Some stakeholders noted that participants were silent at times and not providing much input.

Stakeholders were then asked if there was a specific local partnership they would utilize during the next surge of COVID-19. Stakeholders mentioned that they would utilize their local Council on Aging, EMS, MRC units, schools and possibly look into local manufacturing for PPE.

Stakeholders were then asked if there was a specific regional partnership they would utilize during the next surge of COVID-19. Numerous stakeholders mentioned utilizing the HMCC, MRC units, other Hospital Systems and The Massachusetts Ambulance Association.

Next stakeholders were asked if they would find it valuable if the HMCC offered follow-up discussions or informational sessions on COVID-19? If so, are there any specific topics you would like to see discussed. Numerous stakeholders responded yes; they would find it useful. Topic areas suggested include, Lessons Learned, EMS Task Force suggestion for interfacility transfers, partnerships and operational information beyond the HMCC core disciplines and additional workshops for stress management.

Next, stakeholders were asked based on their experience at this event how likely are you to attend future HMCC events. Of those who replied, seven (7) replied extremely likely and four (4) replied moderately likely.

Stakeholders were then asked what could the HMCC do to improve future sessions of this event. Stakeholders mentioned asking members from disciplines to present more. Stakeholders also noted that two (2) hour meetings are too long.

Stakeholders were then given the opportunity to provide any feedback on the event. Overall, stakeholders appreciated the event and were very happy with the content that was presented.

Q3 Meeting Attendance

Chart below displays the agencies that attended the Region 3 HMCC's November Stakeholder Meeting. In total, there were 39 attendees representing 31 agencies from across the region.

Public Health	Hospitals	Nursing Homes/Long Term Care	Other	EMS
Lawrence	Melrose-Wakefield Hospital	Genesis Healthcare	Mass DPH-OPEM	Trinity EMS
Peabody	North Shore Medical Center	Bane Care	BME Strategies	Cataldo Ambulance
Andover	Lowell General Hospital	New England Homes for the Deaf	South Bay Community Services	Lynnfield Fire/EMS
Wenham	Holy Family Hospital	Nevens Nursing & Rehab Center	UMV MRC	Northeast EMS
North Andover			Fresenius Medical Care	
Westford			MassMAP	
Chelmsford				
West Newbury				
Malden				
Reading				
Ipswich				
Topsfield				
Medford				