

*Breathe
easy*
at home program



Mayor Thomas M. Menino, City of Boston

Web-based system links asthma clinicians to housing code enforcement

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ASTHO-NACCHO 2008 Joint Conference

The Breathe Easy at Home Team

- Margaret Reid, RN BA, Director, Division of Healthy Homes and Community Supports, Boston Public Health Commission
- Megan Sandel, MD, MPH, FAAP, Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Boston Medical Center
- Dion Irish, BS, MUA, Assistant Commissioner of Housing, City of Boston, Inspectional Services Department
- Amanda LaSane, BA, Breathe Easy at Home Program Coordinator, Boston Public Health Commission

Collaboration and Alignment of Resources

- Who are the key clinical, legal, housing and advocacy partners in your community?
- Are there asthma champions in your community?
- Who are the major landlords?
- What is covered under your sanitary code and who enforces?
- Do you have the data to target resources?
- Are there electronic medical records/electronic complaint system?

Boston Snapshot

- With @ 600,000 residents
 - @50% non-Latino White
 - @23% non-Latino Black
 - @14% Latino
 - @ 7.5% Asian/Pacific Islander
 - @ 20% of population living in poverty
- 33.7% of population age 24 or younger
- Active advocacy and health care presence

Asthma in Boston

- Highest rate of asthma hospitalizations for children under 10 in state of Massachusetts*
- 22.9% of adults in public housing/rental assistance report doctor diagnosed asthma compared to 9.% in market rate housing**

*Health of Boston 2006, Boston Public Health Commission Research Office

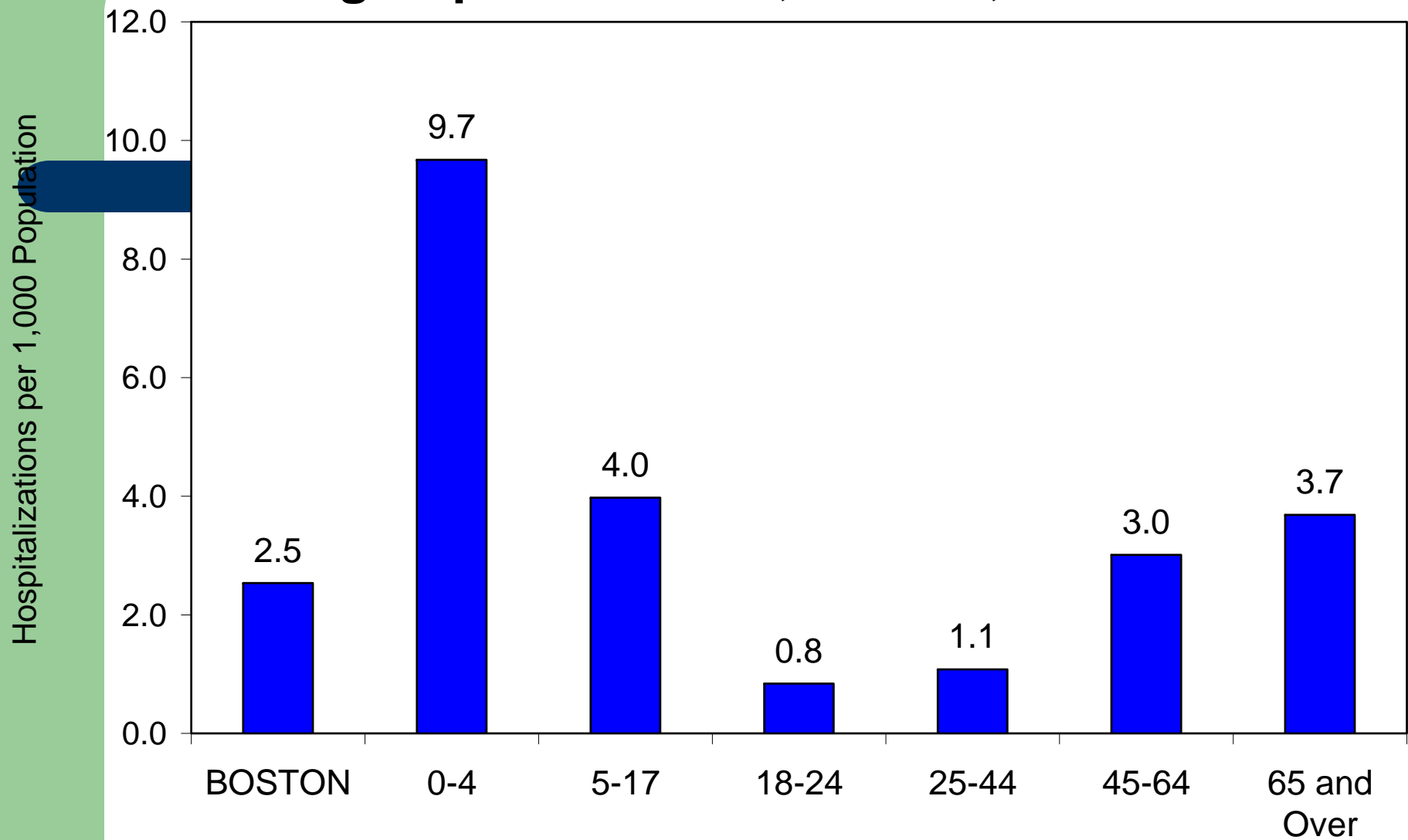
**2006 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Boston Public Health Commission

Boston Housing Authority

- Houses 10% of Boston population
- 14,000 units, 64 Developments
- Average Income @ \$12,000
for a family of four
- Aging properties
pest infestation



Asthma Hospitalizations: Counts and Age-Specific Rates, Boston, 2006

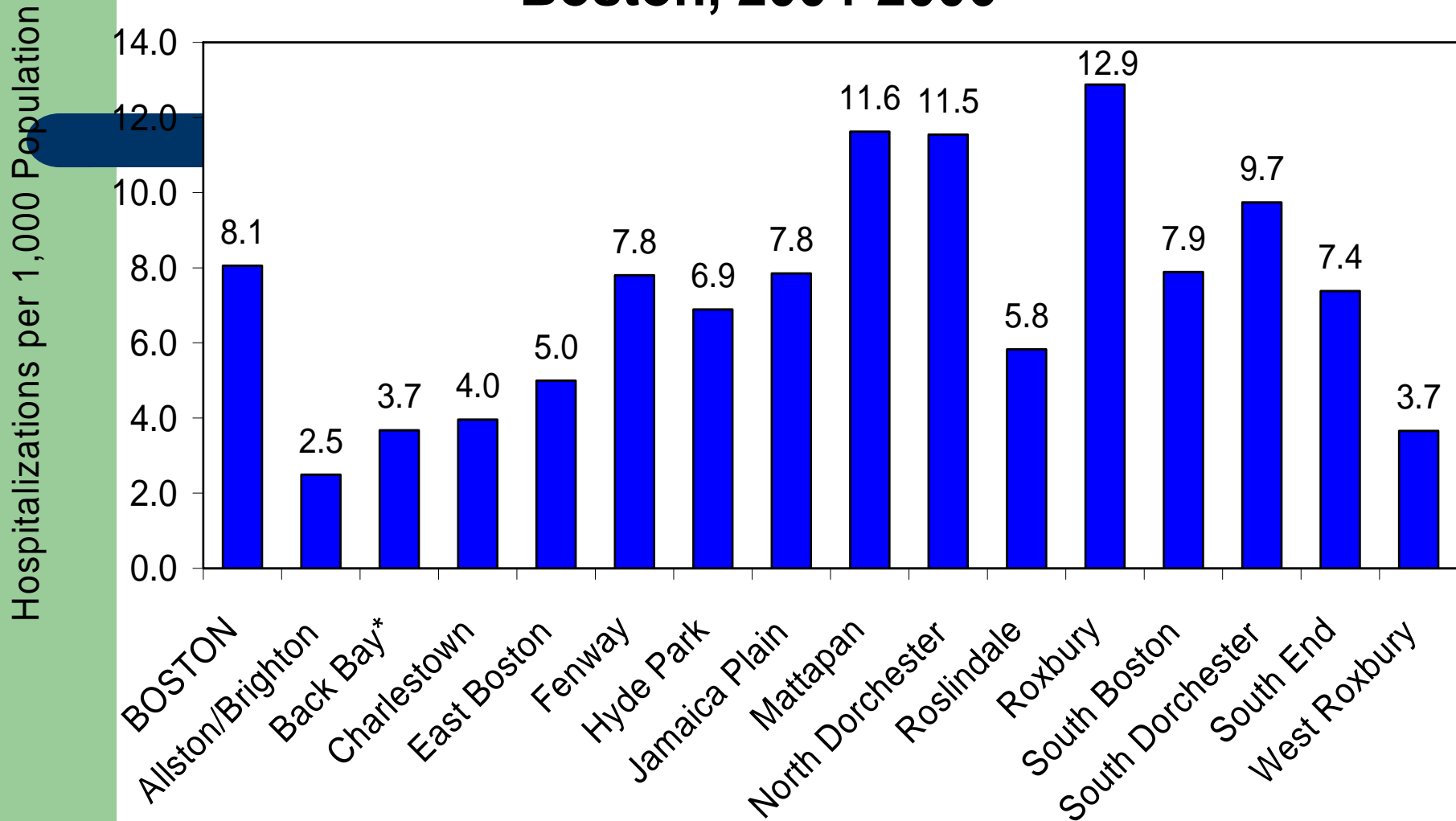


NOTE: These data do not include persons whose age was not reported, except in the Boston overall count

DATA SOURCE: Acute Case Mix Files, Massachusetts Division of Health Care Finance and Policy;

DATA ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission Research Office

Asthma Hospitalizations of Children Under Age 5 by Neighborhood: Counts and Rates Boston, 2004-2006

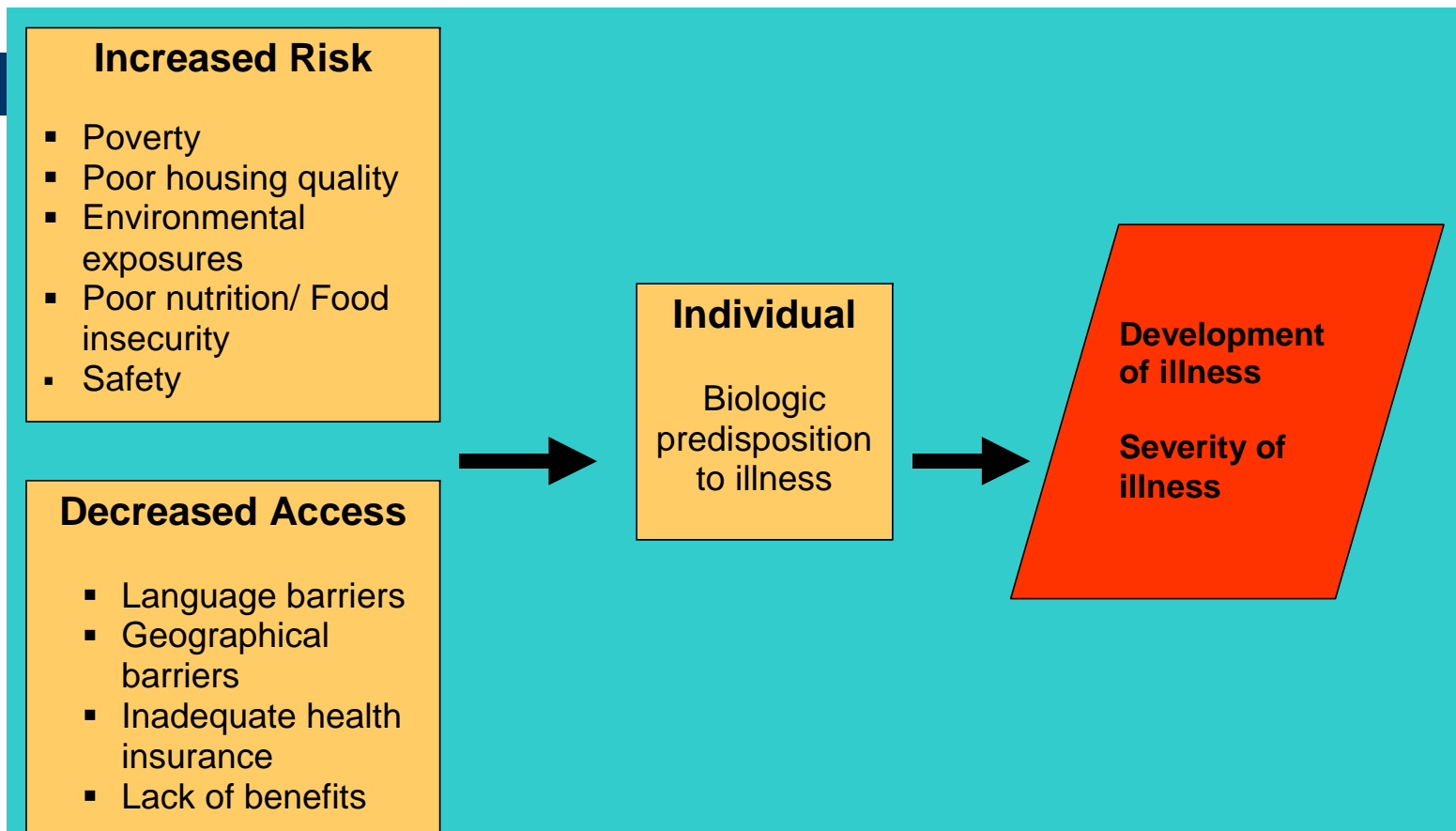


* Includes the North End

DATA SOURCE: Acute Care Hospital Case Mix Files, Massachusetts Division of Health Care Finance and Policy

DATA ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission Research Office

Social Risk Factors & Health



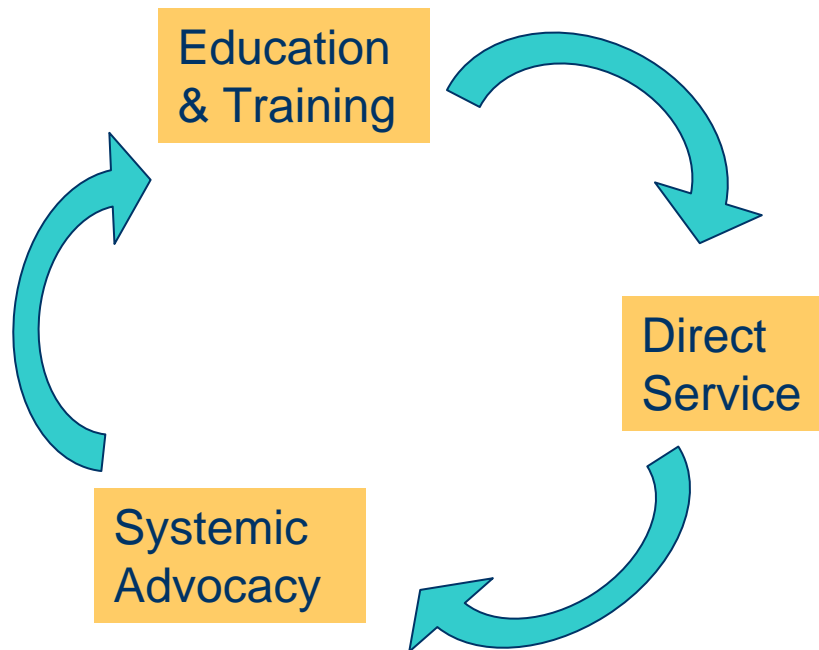
Health Impact of Substandard Housing Conditions

- Rodent and cockroach infestation
- Water leaks and resultant mold
- Exposed wires and uncovered radiators
- Insufficient heat or running water
- Overcrowding
- Increased asthma
- Injuries
 - Radiator burns
 - Fires from improper wiring, lack of smoke detectors, use of space heaters
- Increased infectious diseases

Medical-Legal Partnerships: Lawyers – the new subspecialist

- Combine concepts of preventive medicine and “preventive law”
- A powerful strategy to ensure people’s basic needs are met to improve health and address disparities
- Recognizes that every poor individual has minimum of one to two unmet legal needs -- housing, immigration, denial of public benefits, family law etc

The Role of Medical-Legal Partnerships



Foster interdisciplinary collaboration to ensure that people's basic needs are met

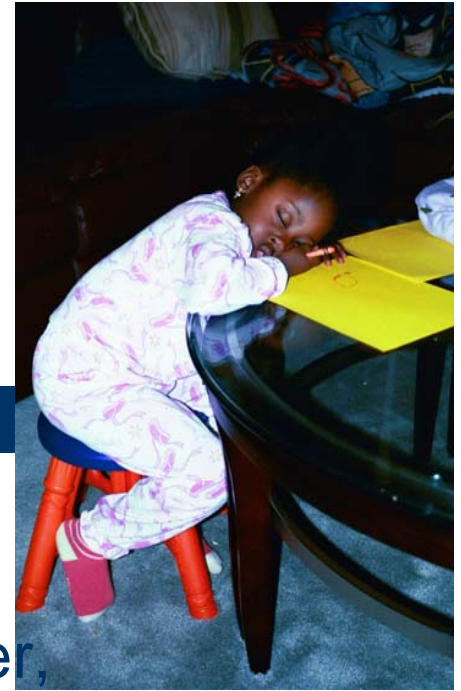
Breathe Easy at Home Overview



- Breathe Easy at Home (BEAH) is a public/private partnership to improve the health of Boston residents with asthma
- Doctors or nurses screen for housing problems among their patients with asthma
 - Log onto the BEAH web-based referral system/database
 - Refer families for housing code inspection and sign up for updates
 - Housing code inspectors put results up on website, automatically emailed to referrers
- BEAH's design allows for evaluation and data collection
- Patient consent is required for referral and at the time of inspection

BEAH Background

- Launched May 2006
- Founding partners: Boston Medical Center, Medical Legal Partnership, Boston Inspectional Services Department, Boston Urban Asthma Coalition, The Bowdoin Street Health Center, the Boston Public Health Commission, New England Asthma Regional Council
- Children's Hospital Boston and Boston Housing Authority soon joined



BEAH Inspectors

ISD Housing Inspectors trained on in-home environmental asthma triggers

- Mold and chronic dampness, leaks
- pest infestations, overcrowding
- drafty doors and windows
- proper ventilation, lack of heat
- other code violations/ asthma triggers

Inspector “buy-in” is critical!



BEAH Inspections



Once a referral is received from a Clinician:

- Patient contacted within 24 hours to schedule a home inspection.
- Inspections are conducted, asthma triggers and other code violations are given to the property owner.
- Property owners are provided a compliance deadline & inspectors are instructed to work with them.
- Property owner retaliation is a critical factor.
- Non-compliant owners are taken to court.

Registering with BEAH

- Clinicians join BEAH referral network through the website:
www.cityofboston.gov/isd/bmc
- Clinical sites have a “super-user” and the ability to add other site users.
- Clinical sites are password protected for HIPAA protections

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Internet Explorer browser window displaying the City of Boston website. The address bar shows the URL: <http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd/housing/bmc/register.asp?agree=yes>. The page title is "City of Boston.gov" and the subtitle is "Official Web Site of the City of Boston". The navigation menu includes: Home, Online Services, Residents, Business, Visitors, Students, Government. The main content area is titled "Housing Division - Breathe Easy Program" and contains a "Registration" form. The form fields are: * Contact: [text input], * Title: [text input], * Facility: [text input], * Address: [text input], [text input], [text input] (with a dropdown arrow), * Phone: [text input], * Email: [text input]. Below the registration form is a "Comments" section with a large text area and "submit" and "reset" buttons. The left sidebar contains a "Inspectional Services Department" menu with items: ISD Home, Building, Housing (selected), Sanitary Code, FAQ, Bed Bugs, Rental Inspections, Breathe Easy, Health, Environmental Services, Weights & Measures, and Contact Us. The right sidebar contains a search box, "News & Press Releases" link, and "Related Links" section with a "Get Adobe Reader" link. The status bar at the bottom shows "Done" and "Local Intranet".

City of Boston - Microsoft Internet Explorer

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Back Forward Stop Refresh Home Search Favorites

Address <http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd/housing/bmc/admin/login.asp> Go Links

City of Boston.gov
Official Web Site of the City of Boston

Home Online Services Residents Business Visitors Students Government

Inspectional Services Department

- ISD Home
- Building
- Housing**
 - Sanitary Code
 - FAQ
 - Bed Bugs
 - Rental Inspections
 - Breathe Easy
- Health
- Environmental Services
- Weights & Measures

Contact Us

- Boston Inspectional Services
- City Hall Hours & Directions
- Mayor's Online Constituent Service

Housing Division - Breathe Easy Program

Login is required. Please sign in:

User Name:

Password:

Search:


[Expanded Search >>](#)

News & Press Releases >>

[News & Press Releases](#)

Related Links

[Get Adobe Reader](#)
Many forms are available in PDF format. To view and print in PDF format, you must download and install the reader.



Local intranet

City of Boston - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Address: <http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd/housing/bmc/admin/newcase.asp>

City of Boston.gov
Official Web Site of the City of Boston

Home | Online Services | Residents | Business | Visitors | Students | Government

Inspectional Services Department

- ISD Home
- Building
- Housing
- Breathe Easy**
 - Case List
 - New Case
- Health
- Environmental Services
- Weights & Measures

Contact Us

- Boston Inspectional Services
- City Hall Hours & Directions
- Mayor's Online Constituent Service

Housing Division - Breathe Easy Program

New Case Referral

Patient Information hide

- * **Salutation:**
- * **First Name:**
- * **Last Name:**
- * **Language:**
- * **Gender:**
- * **Phone (a):** Home Cell Other
(primary phone)
- * **Phone (b):** Home Cell Other
(alternate phone)
- * **Under Six?** Yes No

Address Information hide

Referral Information hide

- * **Clinic:** Public Health Commission
- * **Group Email:** Emily_Litonjua@bphc.org
- * **Referred By:**
- * All updates to this case are returned to the above address. Would you like to be notified of any case changes?
Yes No

Search:


[Expanded Search >>](#)

News & Press Releases >>

[News & Press Releases](#)

Related Links

[Get Adobe Reader](#)
Many forms are available in PDF format. To view and print in PDF format, you must download and install the reader.



City of Boston - Microsoft Internet Explorer

Address: <http://cityofboston.gov/isd/housing/bmc/admin/viewcase>

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City Departments

Select Department

Housing Division - Breathe Easy Program

View Case Referral

Patient Information [show](#)

MICHELLE STRAW
(617)459-9745

Click the "show" link to view the Patient information.

Address Information [show](#)

37 - 0 MSGR REYNOLDS WAY
Ward: 09

Click the "show" link to view the Address information.

Nature of the Problem and Inspection Information [show](#)

WAS AN OPEN CSAE, AND NEEDS REOPENED CHILD WITH ASTHMA

Click the "show" link to view the Problem information.

Referral Information [show](#)

Search: [GO](#)


[Expanded Search »](#)

News & Press Releases »

[News & Press Releases](#)

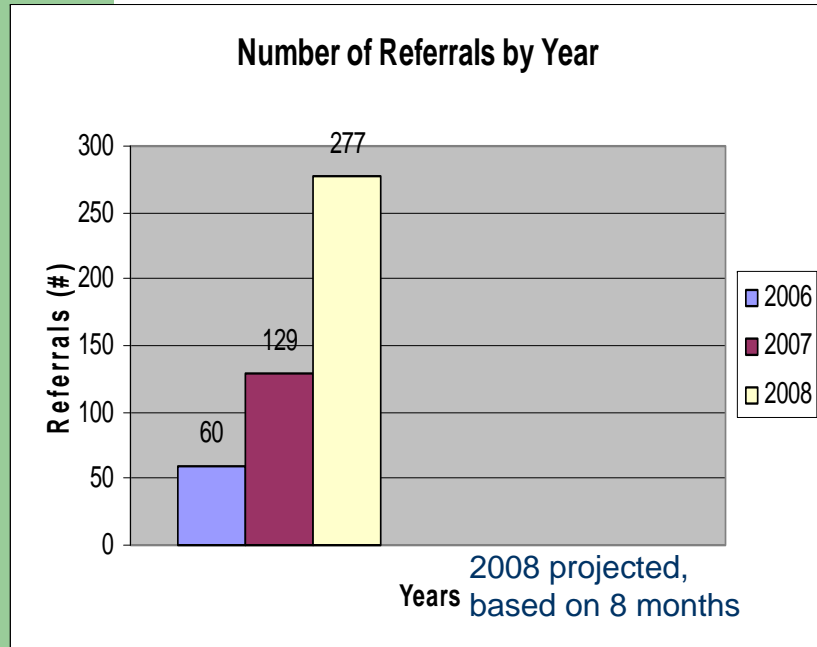
Related Links

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Internet

BEAH Data 2006-2008



Total cases since launch: 281

Neighborhood	Referrals	Percentage	Hospitalizations Under Age 5
Dorchester	91	32.38%	10.6
Roxbury	59	21.00%	12.9
Mattapan	8	2.85%	11.6
South Boston	24	8.54%	7.9
South End	39	13.88%	7.4
East Boston	11	3.91%	5
Roslindale	7	2.49%	5.8
Charlestown	11	3.91%	4
West Roxbury	13	4.63%	3.7
Jamaica Plain	2	0.71%	7.8
Back Bay	2	0.71%	3.7
Hyde Park	6	2.14%	6.9
Allston/Brighton	8	2.85%	2.5
TOTAL	281	100.00%	89.8

BEAH Status

- BEAH has a full time coordinator
 - 28 Boston health institutions are registered
 - Quarterly newsletter keeps clinical sites engaged
 - Educational materials for residents (legal rights, BEAH process)
 - Rapid response agreement with Boston Housing Authority
 - Using data to plan prevention efforts (outreach to landlords, pest control contractor training)
- 70% of cases have violations solved without housing court!

BEAH Findings

2006	#	%
Carpet	4	7%
Rodents	25	42%
Mold	11	18%
Roaches	8	13%

2007	#	%
Carpet	6	5%
Rodents	48	37%
Mold	18	14%
Roaches	25	19%

2008	#	%
Carpet	5	5%
Rodents	31	34%
Mold	17	18%
Roaches	24	26%



BEAH Case Example

- SG is a mother of two children, 4 y/o daughter and 15 month old son
- Lives in Public Housing
- Apartment infested, water leaking form pipe exposed in wall
- Family living doubled up with grandmother to avoid apartment
- Mom travels an hour each way to job,

BEAH Case Example, continued

- After referral to Breathe Easy, code inspectors come and write up violations
- BHA Staff close the hole in wall and do Integrated Pest Management, after 1 month, violations resolved, case closed
- 4 year old says at the next office visit “I get to sleep in my own bed now”
- Mom gets job closer to home, happier

THANK YOU!
Questions/Comments/Discussion?

