

Georgia Mentorship Participants

Gwinnett County Environmental Health Department (GA)

Background

State: Georgia

LHD Population Size Served: ~1.127 Million

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 2,988

Retail Program Standards Met/Currently Working On: Met all 9 standards

Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2005

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8

Background

The Environmental Health Section of the Gwinnett, Newton, & Rockdale County Boards of Health are dedicated to preventing the spread of disease. Our agencies enforce state and local board of health regulations that have been designed for this purpose. Our most visible roles involve inspecting restaurants, public swimming pools, tourist courts, body art studios, and on-site septic management systems.

Our Mission Statement is to prevent disease, injury, and disability; to promote health and well-being; prepare for disasters.

Our Service Area:

- 830,000 residents in Gwinnett County
- 101,000 residents in Newton County
- 86,000 residents in Rockdale County

Overview of Mentorship Program Participation

Gwinnett County Environmental Health Department participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentor in the second and third cohorts and a mentee in the fourth, fifth, and sixth cohorts. In the second cohort, Gwinnett County Environmental Health Department mentored Chatham County Public Health Department (NC). In the third cohort, Gwinnett mentored Cass County Health Department (MO). In the fourth cohort, Gwinnett was mentored by Alexandria (VA) Health Department and by Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services (TX) in the fifth and sixth cohorts. In the eighth cohort, Gwinnett was participated as a mentor and mentored Angelina Counties & Cities Health District, TX; Chickahominy Health District, VA; and Trempealeau County Health Department, WI on Standards 3, 4, and 7.

Mentorship Program Lessons Learned/Tips

You can accomplish much more together than individually. When most people start out to meet the nine Retail Program Standards, they have high hopes of meeting them quickly and easily. However, once you get into the meat of the standards, it does not take long to see that there is a fair amount of effort needed to organize, evaluate, and meet them. This is okay, because you are quantifying that your program meets these "gold" standards in the food safety arena. Another true benefit of the program is that you meet and work with people who have already paved the way for these standards. The mentee doesn't have to re-invent the wheel. This saves time and resources, which

is huge when a department may already be strapped for money and manpower. I would greatly encourage any Health Department to get involved with this Mentorship Program as a mentee or mentor. Both roles will be beneficial.

Project Contact

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Northwest GA Public Health District 1-1

Background

State: GA

HD Population Size Served: 639,000 (10 counties)

Number of Retail Food Establishments Inspected: 1300

Retail Program Standards Met/Working On: 1, 4 and self-assessment

Enrolled in the Retail Program Standards: 2012

NACCHO Mentorship Program Cohort(s): 5 and 6

Our mission statement is inform, prevent, and protect. The Northwest Georgia Public Health District 1-1 is comprised of 10 counties regulating about 1300 food establishments with 20 employees in the local retail food regulatory program. District 1-1 has worked hard to maintain uniformity within our district and hope to improve our food program through the FDA program standards. The majority of the food establishments in our district are a risk type II, followed by risk type I and finally a handful of risk type III establishments which require a HACCP plan. We are currently using the 2013 FDA food code. Our regulatory authority comes from the state level through the official code of Georgia but legal actions are handled on the local level.

Role in Mentorship Program

Northwest Health District 1-1 participated in the NACCHO Retail Program Standards Mentorship Program as a mentee in the fifth and sixth cohorts. In the fifth cohort, Northwest was mentored by Harris County Health Department (TX) on conducting a self-assessment. In the sixth cohort, Northwest was mentored by Fairfax County Health Department (VA) on Standard 6.

Lessons Learned/Tips

- The value of self-assessment
- The need and value of organizing the parts and pieces of the program (years of good work, but very hard to compile into a solid training program)
- The value in learning from others (mentorship program)

Contact

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