



MRC In Touch

Volunteers Building Strong, Healthy, and Prepared Communities

November 2015

www.medicalreservecorps.gov

Featured Article

Kittitas County MRC Begins Youth for Truth Mentoring Campaign

When the Kittitas County MRC began brainstorming their application for the MRC Challenge Award in 2014, they thought about supporting an already existing program in their community that needed some revitalization. The Kittitas County Community Network & Coalition had formed a group aimed at preventing teens from marijuana use, which seemed like a great place to start. When the MRC unit won a Challenge Award, they partnered with the organization to create the Truth for Youth mentoring program.

The MRC and the Kittitas County Community Network & Coalition also partnered with the Kittitas County Youth Experience to develop a mission statement. The program will use the peer mentor program model to address topics relevant to the community's youth like bullying and tobacco and marijuana prevention. The MRC and its partners receive data through the Healthy Youth Survey that will help them keep a pulse on youth issues.

One of the program's key successes thus far is their work with the local school districts. Kasey Knutson, the Unit Coordinator, advises other units that this partnership is key in establishing a peer mentoring program. As they continue to transition fully to the Truth for Youth program, the MRC is adapting the curriculum of the original program to broaden it for future changes. They are hosting presentation skills trainings, buying supplies for youth presenters, and creating partnerships to sustain the program for the long haul.

If you are interested in applying for a Challenge Award, visit www.mrcnaccho.org.

MRC/NACCHO Connections

NACCHO Releases 2015 MRC Network Profile

The [2015 MRC Network Profile](#) is here! Thank you to the 801 units who responded to the survey used to complete this look into the MRC network. This year's profile builds on the 2013 edition of the publication, and further highlights the wonderful work of the MRC network. The Profile captures how the MRC network has changed in the two years since the first survey was completed and examines key opportunities and challenges for units.

This year's Network Profile includes two infographics, shareable infographics, and a [data visualization website](#). To help you use the Network Profile and its companion pieces, NACCHO created a [how-to guide](#) so your unit can share the great work the MRC network and your volunteers are doing.

Announcements

MRC Awards Request for Application (RFA)

NACCHO is pleased to announce that the 2015-2016 MRC Challenge Awards [Request for Applications document](#) is available.

NACCHO will offer a number of resources in preparation for the upcoming Challenge Award applications. Check out the awards website www.mrcnaccho.org and find learning resources to help you get ready for the awards, including a frequently asked questions tab. NACCHO will also hold a webinar with past award winners who will provide insights into their experiences, tips for planning a project, and answer questions about their funded projects. The webinar will be recorded and units will be able to access the recording if unable to attend. Watch the listserv for the webinar invitation coming soon!

As always, stay tuned to the MRC listserv for more information about this year's awards or email mrc@naccho.org with questions.

Flu Near You: A Guide to Engaging in Participatory Disease Surveillance

NACCHO has created the new guide, "[Flu Near You: A Guide to Engaging in Participatory Disease Surveillance](#)," to help local health departments and MRC units get started with the Flu Near You platform to benefit their community's flu awareness and tracking efforts. Through Flu Near You, thousands of volunteers answer a brief, weekly digital questionnaire about their health for crowd-sourced flu surveillance. Local health departments rely on surveillance systems and timely reports to detect diseases, and the Flu Near You online health reporting system offers a way to engage the community in participatory disease surveillance.

Local health departments can leverage the wealth of data available through Flu Near You as part of ongoing local influenza surveillance efforts. NACCHO is working with the Skoll Global Threats Fund in partnership with HealthMap of Boston Children's Hospital to explore how local health departments can work with people in their communities to enroll them in Flu Near You and how to use local data.

View this collection of resources and information to help your local health department begin or enhance the work with Flu Near You. Each chapter represents a step that individuals or organizations can take to engage with Flu Near You and includes articles, sample materials, and examples of work that others have done with this platform. [View the guide now.](#)

Register for the 2016 Preparedness Summit!

Registration is now open for the 2016 Preparedness Summit. [Early bird rates are available](#) until February 19. The Summit will be held from April 19-22 at the Dallas Hilton Anatole. This year's Summit will focus on the importance of building prepared and resilient communities that can recover quickly from disasters.

The MRC played a big role at the 2015 Preparedness Summit. MRC volunteers from across the country presented in more than seven sessions throughout the week. Almost 150 unit leaders joined the Preparedness Summit community on MRC Connect and the app was highlighted in a learning session.

Register today!

Webinar: Addressing Surge in Rural and Frontier Communities

NACCHO's Surge Management Workgroup invites you to participate in a webinar on **November 17, 2015 from 1:00pm – 2:00pm Eastern** to discuss and explore the experiences of local health departments (LHDs), MRC units, and healthcare coalitions as they take steps to address medical surge in low population density areas. During this webinar preparedness professionals from Montana, Utah, and the state of Washington will share what they have learned from medical surge exercises as well as real-life responses. To register now, please [click here](#).

The webinar will be moderated by Steve Rossberg, Regional Medical Surge Coordinator, Southwest Utah Public Health Department. Steve will be accompanied by two other speakers, Cindy Thompson, Public Health Emergency Preparedness & Response Specialist, Spokane Regional Health District and Linda Williams, Disaster & Emergency Services Coordinator, Chouteau County Disaster & Emergency Services.

NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

www.naccho.org



The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice with local health departments.

1201 Eye Street, NW, 4th Floor Washington, DC 20005

P 202-783-5550 F 202-783-1583

© National Association of County and City Health Officials

Please contact Alyson Jordan, NACCHO's MRC Communications Specialist, with any questions or suggestions for the newsletter at 202-783-5528 or at ajordan@naccho.org.