



# Minnesota Public Health Association

## Annual Report 2002-2003

June 2003



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## ***About the Minnesota Public Health Association***

The Minnesota Public Health Association (MPHA) is an all-volunteer, professional association representing public health professionals throughout the state. Our mission is to mobilize our diverse membership to enhance professional growth and contribute innovative approaches to improving the health of all Minnesotans. MPHA is Minnesota's affiliate of the American Public Health Association.

Our membership reflects the breadth of the public health profession, comprising people who work as environmental health specialists, epidemiologists, health educators, nurses, nutritionists, physicians, public health administrators, public policy specialists and more. Our members, too, work in a variety of settings - public and private sectors, academia and community-based non-profit organizations. We welcome as members all who have an active interest in promoting the public's health through the vehicle of MPHA.

*Our members are our greatest strength.  
It is through them and for them that MPHA is...  
Minnesota's Voice for Public Health.*

## ***Achievements During 2002 - 2003***

MPHA currently has four organizational goals to guide its activities:

- Goal 1      Identify, develop and nurture future leaders in the field of public health and in MPHA.
- Goal 2      Identify and develop a public health agenda, including priority issues for MPHA; develop knowledge and ability among members and as an organization to advocate for the identified public health issues.
- Goal 3      Identify and create opportunities for members to network and exchange information that leads to innovative approaches for public health.
- Goal 4      Strengthen the MPHA infrastructure to effectively support the organization's mission and goals.

This annual report describes activities taken by MPHA to work toward the four goals during 2002 – 2003.

## **Goal 1 - Identify, develop and nurture future leaders in the field of public health and in MPHA.**

### **Emerging Leaders Network**

The Minnesota Public Health Association is one of three sponsors of the Emerging Leaders Network (ELN) of Minnesota. The ELN is a pilot project funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Turning Point Program, National Turning Point Leadership Collaborative ([www.turningpointprogram.org](http://www.turningpointprogram.org)). This pilot project is seeking to build a network of emerging public health leaders prepared to step into both formal and informal leadership roles. In addition to the Minnesota Public Health Association, the other two sponsors are the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), and the Local Public Health Association (LPHA). Three MPHA members serve on the ELN steering committee and have contributed time and energy in developing the program. The Goals of the ELN are to:

- Develop a replicable leadership development model with tools and strategies for the identification and preparation of future public health leaders.
- Engage a diverse network of new leaders in public health in Minnesota.
- Generate excitement and energy around an alternative leadership development model.
- Apply collaborative leadership principles throughout the development of the ELN.

For more information on the ELN visit the MPHA web page [www.mpha.net](http://www.mpha.net).

### **Leadership Awards**

MPHA recognized four public health leaders at its June 12 annual meeting. The awards went to:

- **Pamela DeShaw** - winner of the 2003 Outstanding Student in Public Health Award, given to a student enrolled in a school of public health degree program who has demonstrated leadership skills contributing to the promotion of health of the community.
- **Roger Moe** - winner of the 2003 B. Robert Lewis Award, presented to an elected official who aggressively pursues establishing and maintaining health as a human right and seeks to secure optimal community and personal health.
- **Buddy Ferguson** - winner of the 2003 Paul and Sheila Wellstone Public Health Achievement Award (formerly the Public Health Achievement Award), presented to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to public health, displayed leadership and impacted the career and accomplishments of others in the field of public health.
- **Chris Follett** - winner of the 2003 Albert Justus Chesley Award, presented to a member of MPHA who has made a significant contribution to the association and is recognized as a leader in the field of public health for distinguished service in public health.

### **Public Health Workforce Summit**

MPHA focused its 2002 annual meeting on public health workforce issues. The summit, an interactive forum for engaging MPHA members and other health professionals in dialogue, raised awareness, clarified issues, and generated energy to sustain and improve our public health workforce by 2013. It was the only statewide event that brought together the public, private and academic sectors to concentrate on the breadth of public health workforce issues to be addressed by the public health system and its partners in the coming decade. Following the Workforce Summit, MPHA:

- Posted a compilation of responses from the interactive exercises for use by the membership and public health community in specific public health workforce initiatives on the MPHA website: [:http://www.mpha.net/PHWorkforce.htm](http://www.mpha.net/PHWorkforce.htm).
- Prepared a videotape of the keynote presentations and placed them in the library of the Minnesota Department of Health.
- Aired the above videos on a local weekly cable television show, *A Public Health Journal*, which is co-sponsored by MPHA.
- Presented the process and outcomes of the summit at the 2002 Annual Educational Conference of the National Environmental Health Association.

### **Mentoring**

In an effort to enhance professional growth, MPHA continued its longstanding partnership with the University of Minnesota School of Public Health (SPH) mentoring program. The mentorship program has been in existence for over six years, has grown in participation of both students and public health professionals and is an important leadership development function of MPHA.

### **Center for Public Health Education and Outreach at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health**

In 2000, the University of Minnesota School of Public Health created the Center for Public Health Education & Outreach (CPHEO) and invited MPHA to be a member of the CPHEO Advisory Board. This collaboration has proved to be a beneficial relationship. CPHEO works with both members of academia and public health professionals in pursuit of lifelong learning. The CPHEO is involved in planning and assessment, coordination and management of outreach activities, building partnerships with the community, and development of lifelong professional learning activities. CPHEO also assists faculty to employ leading edge applications of technology to increase flexibility and accessibility for adult learners and improve the community's access to the school's educational resources. Currently MPHA and CPHEO are discussing joint support of a leadership internship for a student in 2003 - 2004. This position would provide essential staff support for the Governing Council, Past Presidents and Policy Committees.

### **Public Health Journal**

MPHA proudly co-sponsors *A Public Health Journal*, a weekly cable television program hosted by Dr. Ed Ehlinger, a past president and longtime member of MPHA. The program is aired on the City of Minneapolis Cable channel and on the Twin Cities Metro Cable channel 6. Other sponsors are the City of Minneapolis Office of Media Services, University of Minnesota Boynton Health Service, and the Hennepin County Community Health Department. The program provides a unique venue for Minnesota's public health professionals to gain experience being interviewed on television while also educating viewers on public health issues. During the last year 29 shows were produced and among these were programs that featured Commissioner Diane Mandernach outlining her perspectives on public health, past MPHA president Ellen Benavides discussing access to health insurance, Nursing School Dean Sandra Edwardson talking about the state of nursing, and Gloria Lewis providing an up-date on health disparities in Minnesota. In addition, the Gaylord Anderson Award and Lecture was videotaped and aired as a special program on *A Public Health Journal*.

### **Public Health Week 2003**

Public Health Week is celebrated nationally every year during the first full week of April. MPHA typically sponsors one or more events as part of Public Health Week. Many changes have occurred in Minnesota during the last year, including a large budget deficit, a major change the political climate and the need for a more diverse workforce. These changes prompted MPHA to use Public Health Week to focus on the wonderful people that make up public health in Minnesota. The planning committee - led by Nancy Franke Wilson - developed events around the theme "Meet the Faces of Public Health in Minnesota". A major networking social event featured the newly appointed Commissioner of Health, Diane Mandernach. Commissioner Mandernach not only attended the event, but spoke very supportive and motivating words about the work and the people of public health in Minnesota. In addition, MPHA compiled stories about a dozen people who work in public health in Minnesota and called the compilation, "Meet the Faces of Public Health in Minnesota." The booklet represented the many types of people and jobs available to anyone who is interested in making a difference in the health of Minnesotans.

**Goal 2 - Identify and develop a public health agenda, including priority issues for MPHA; develop knowledge and ability among members and as an organization to advocate for the identified public health issues.**

MPHA has an active Policy and Advocacy Committee that met monthly through the year, with participation from approximately 15 MPHA members. The committee is co-chaired by Ray Olson and Lindsey Fabian, with Phyllis Haag assisting with facilitation and serving as a link to the Governing Council.

In November 2002, Past Presidents of MPHA were invited to an informal gathering to talk about how the professional public health community could be effective in the current political and economic environment. Discussion focused on approaches and strategies to work together in two goal areas as follows: to build relationships with newly-elected and appointed leaders and leadership teams and to create support for public health goals and policies at state and local levels. Serving as a resource to the MPHA Governing Council, the Policy and Advocacy Committee, and membership, the Past Presidents group—facilitated by Donna Anderson - played an active role in bringing about a number of the actions and products described below.

**Communication with Public Officials**

- In Fall 2002, a questionnaire regarding public health issues was distributed to all major candidates for Governor and U.S. Senator. Responses were received from all but one candidate and distributed to all MPHA members through e-mail. The questions were also presented to the League of Women Voters for possible inclusion in their debates.
- A letter was sent to members of the Pawlenty Administration introducing MPHA and offering to serve as an active resource in addressing public health challenges and opportunities (Governor, Chief of Staff and Commissioner of Health).
- Meetings were arranged with Senator Becky Lourey and Representative Thomas Huntley to discuss approaches to the legislative session and proposed budget cuts. As a result of the meeting with Senator Lourey, MPHA and the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits made a presentation to the Senate Health and Family Security Committee on February 11, 2003. Titled *An Overview of the Variety of Entities that Provide Public Health Services in Minnesota* (PowerPoint) and offering testimony at the Senate Health and Family Security Committee, 14 presenters representing the scope of public health partnerships gave a presentation that demonstrated the values, complexity, and cost-effectiveness of public health and how the different players are complementary.
- An informational folder was created for policy makers, describing MPHA and highlighting the partnerships actively involved in delivering public health services, along with examples of services that are good investments.

- Four MPHA representatives met with the Commissioner of Health and key members of her leadership team to get acquainted and learn about each other's public health priorities.
- At the request of the SmokeFree Coalition, in May 2003, MPHA sent in the *Not One Penny* flier (which appeared in both the Star Tribune and the St. Paul Pioneer Press on April 28<sup>th</sup> and May 5<sup>th</sup> and that demonstrated Minnesota physician support of raising the tobacco tax) to Governor Pawlenty, along with a cover letter endorsing the message. The advertisement, "How much is a child's life worth?" is part of a larger statewide effort to increase the cigarette tax by \$1/pack.

### **Action Alerts**

The Policy and Advocacy Committee sent Action Alerts via email to members when an issue in the legislature required immediate advocacy action. During this legislative session, the following action alerts were sent:

- In April 2003, an action alert was sent to members asking them to oppose changes in the "conceal and carry" (Personal Protection Act) law. MPHA worked in collaboration with Citizens for a Safer Minnesota and the Million Mom March on this effort.
- In April 2003, an advertisement for an event recognizing the 5th Anniversary of the Tobacco Settlement was sent. The Minnesota Smoke-Free Coalition organized the event at the State Capitol on May 8.
- In April 2003, an action alert was sent to notify members that, out of the Tobacco Settlement, no funds were proposed for youth prevention. Members were encouraged to contact their elected officials.
- In May 2003, an action alert was sent regarding: the state budget crisis and the importance of increasing revenues to maintain vital public health services and health care for the uninsured, and maintaining a portion of the Minnesota tobacco settlement to be used for health promotion.
- In May 2003, an action alert was sent encouraging all members to contact their elected officials to urge them to support a budget solution that provides for vital public health services and those in our State who are most vulnerable. The email reminded members that MPHA supports a fair, balanced approach to Minnesota's projected 2004-2005 budget deficit, which includes tax increases for those most able to pay, so that vital public health services can continue.

### **Public Health Policy Networking: Collaborating for Advocacy**

MPHA has developed connections with organizations advocating for public health issues to create a process for collaborating on advocacy. The Policy and Advocacy Committee heard presentations from the following organizations:

- The Committee reviewed and recommended adoption of the "Guiding Principles for Children's Environmental Health" presented by the Coalition for Children's Health and the Environment. Many other health-related organizations have

adopted these principles. The Governing Council approved them at the March 2003 meeting.

- Million Mom March gave a presentation on the work of the Brady campaign to oppose the law to make it easier to get a permit to carry a loaded and concealed handgun in Minnesota. The Committee agreed to publicize their activities through our network and action alerts.
- The Minnesota Alliance for Safe Highways presented on highway safety and the Committee recommended rejoining the alliance. A resolution regarding safe highways and truck-trailer length limits was approved and presented to the Governing Council in March 2003.
- Two bills in the U.S. Congress on the overuse of antibiotics were reviewed and recommended for endorsement based on previous MPHA resolutions.
- The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy presented a resolution on the use of PVC (polyvinyl chloride) in plumbing and the dangers to public health from producing this material. The resolution recommends eliminating the use of PVC in piping in public water and sewer systems. The committee reviewed the resolution, requested additional information and suggested changes to the “resolved” portion. The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy will report back with a revised resolution.
- The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy presented a resolution on mercury in food as a health hazard. Methyl mercury is a well-documented toxic substance that poses health problems because of its toxicity, especially to developing brains. The Committee reviewed the resolution and suggested some revisions. The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy will report back with a revised resolution.

### **Minnesota Health Improvement Partnership (MHIP)**

MHIP is one of a number of organizations that work to coordinate health improvement activities among Minnesota’s public, private and nonprofit sectors. MHIP advises the Commissioner of Health on ways that MDH can facilitate public/private/nonprofit health improvement efforts and advance the vision of health as a shared responsibility. MPHA past president Ellie Garrett and member Mary Wellik both serve on MHIP’s Executive Committee, and many other MPHA members participate in MHIP and its subgroups. During 2002 MPHA was also represented on the MHIP Health Impact Assessment (HIA) Action Team. The HIA Action Team was established to develop a shared understanding of the uses of an HIA process and tool, and the potential application for developing healthy public policy and illuminating the potential effects of policy decisions on health disparities. Currently, the focus of MHIP activity is on updating the *Healthy Minnesotans Public Health Improvement Goals*.

### **Cover All Kids (CAK) Coalition**

MPHA members have provided leadership on the CAK Coalition since its inception. CAK’s *Eliminating Health Disparities* work group was co-chaired by MPHA members Gayle Hallin and Jane Liu. Janny Brust, MPHA president, has served as interim co-chair on the Steering Committee and was a co-chair for the Evaluation committee. Many

MPHA members have participated on CAK's committees and projects. MPHA has submitted an application to the APHA-GlaxoSmithKline Partnership for Healthy Children Award on behalf of CAK. Recently, CAK Steering Committee members decided to primarily focus their efforts in the next year on improving health care coverage for children and adolescents, with special attention to the underserved and populations that experience the greatest health disparities.

### **Additional Activities**

The Policy and Advocacy Committee and the Past Presidents group followed multiple public health issues at both the State and Federal Level throughout the legislative session, monitoring and evaluating proposed legislation impacting public health policy, programming and funding. Issues followed included gun control, minor's consent, environmental health, tobacco, and alcohol.

- Resolutions for the 2002 American Public Health Association (APHA) annual meeting were reviewed and recommendations were made to our representative to the meeting, Malcolm Mitchell.
- The proposed Minnesota Department of Health rules for administrative billing data for health services were reviewed and a letter expressing the support of MPHA was prepared and sent.
- The Committee worked toward sending targeted action alerts, by legislative district, to members. Buying software to do targeted action alerts was discussed. A final proposal will go in front of the Governing Council.
- A letter was written, with the assistance of Sara Welch of the Izaak Walton League, in support of Xcel Energy's proposed Emissions Reduction Projects for power plants in Minnesota. The letter of support for the Xcel Energy emissions reduction project was delivered to the Public Utilities Commission on February 7, 2003, as a part of the open comment period on the proposed project.
- Support was renewed for the National Coal-Fired Power Plant campaign to support reduced emissions.
- Support was offered to the U of M School of Public Health students to plan legislative lobbying days at the Capitol.
- The Past Presidents group developed a conceptual framework and first draft of two papers: advocating for public health policy issues and a guide to public health expertise.

**Goal 3 - Identify and create opportunities for members to network and exchange information that leads to innovative approaches for public health.**

In order to enhance professional growth and contribute innovative approaches to improving the health of all Minnesotans, MPHA provided the following networking opportunities and information for members:

**MPHA Update**

The opportunity to communicate with members has been significantly enhanced by technology. MPHA members receive email updates that bring timely information about MPHA activities, public health events, job opportunities and other information.

**Annual Public Health Luncheon (Duluth)**

In what is becoming an annual ritual, MPHA hosted a public health luncheon in Duluth in September 2002. Approximately sixty people attended, including both professionals working in health related fields and health major students from the University of Minnesota-Duluth and the College of St. Scholastica. The health professionals came from area hospitals, county and tribal health public health departments, health plans, non-profit organizations and other fields. Our purposes were to provide an opportunity for networking and to recruit for public health careers, advocacy and MPHA membership.

**MPHA Website**

MPHA continues to enhance its website, using it and our emailed updates as primary tools for communicating with MPHA members.

**Dinner Cruise**

MPHA organized a sunset dinner cruise on the evening of June 12, immediately following MPHA's annual conference and business meeting. The dinner cruise offered a pleasant and relaxing environment for MPHA members to visit.

**APHA Affiliate Activities**

MPHA participated in the APHA Committee on Affiliates meeting, as well as meetings of the Great Lakes Coalition, which comprises APHA affiliates in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin.

**Goal 4 - Strengthen the MPHA infrastructure to effectively support the organization's mission and goals.**

MPHA is an all-volunteer organization. While this creates abundant opportunities for volunteers to become engaged in the organization, it also poses significant challenges. We are looking at a number of opportunities to improve our membership services and organizational structure.

**APHA Affiliate of the Year Award**

For its outstanding work promoting public health throughout the state, the Minnesota Public Health Association was given the Outstanding Affiliate Award by APHA's Committee on Affiliates at the APHA 130<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting in Philadelphia in November. MPHA was chosen because it provides a model for fellow affiliates on how to promote public health issues on a statewide level. Specifically, MPHA was recognized for:

- Co-producing and disseminating the *Public Health Resource Guide for Minnesota Public Officials*
- Advocacy on public policies impacting public health
- Co-sponsoring the cable TV program, *A Public Health Journal*
- Organizing the 2002 Public Health Workforce Summit: What's the Work? Who's the Force?
- Supporting the SPH mentoring program for public health graduate students

**APHA Highway Safety Grant**

MPHA was awarded a \$5,000 APHA grant to conduct a highway safety campaign in one or more communities in Minnesota. The project will be undertaken in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Public Safety, which is donating staff time to undertake the project as an in-kind donation.

**Membership Committee**

Heather Britt and Deb Hill are the co-chairs of the Membership Development Committee. Their focus for the year was involving public health students in the organization. They began this effort by giving first year public health students a free one-year membership to MPHA. They hosted a Welcoming and Networking Event for students, MPHA members, and faculty from the School of Public Health in the fall of 2002. Over 125 people attended the event. They also hosted an after work event in the fall, attended by a few students and professionals.

The membership committee has also been present at a number of events throughout the year in an attempt to recruit new members.

A resume review session for students and public health professionals was held in April of 2003. This event was a collaboration with the School of Public Health Career Services. Fifteen students and public health professionals had their resumes reviewed by MPHA members.

Currently, the committee is working on updating and revamping the membership database and renewal/orientation process. The hope is to move most administrative services from personal management by MPHA members to company management by the organization currently managing the membership database. These changes should be in place by fall 2003.

### **Past-presidents/Governing Council Meeting (Duluth)**

Following the public health luncheon in Duluth last September, members of the Governing Council met with several past presidents of MPHA. MPHA past president Hal Leppink graciously hosted the dinner meeting. Discussions centered on how MPHA as an organization can move forward and improve its support for members, in the face of major changes confronting public health in the coming years.

### **Minnesota Council of Nonprofits**

MPHA joined the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, both to gain access to its extensive knowledge base on nonprofit infrastructure issues and to enhance MPHA's advocacy on policy issues related to social determinants of health.

### **Nominating Committee and Leadership Discussion**

A major focus of conversation at the 2002 Annual Meeting revolved around alternative leadership structures and roles within MPHA that creatively challenge our assumptions about leadership while still complementing and advancing MPHA's mission and vision of improving the health of Minnesotans and the capacity of public health professionals. That discussion was precipitated by difficulties that the Nominating Committee had in recruiting MPHA members to serve in leadership positions in the organization. As a result, the 2002-2003 president's post was staffed with a creative, but fallback option of alternating governing councilors. Deb Hendricks and Paul Terry agreed to co-chair the Nominating Committee again and to work with past presidents and others to take a serious look at MPHA structure, organization, and succession planning.

In late July, MPHA convened a small focus group of young public health professionals to talk about their needs and the challenges they encounter and how organizations and associations can help to address those needs. The focus group also provided the MPHA leadership with information on organizational and leadership changes that must be considered to make MPHA more relevant to the needs of young professionals. Subsequent meetings were held with this core group of young professionals with the addition of current and past MPHA leaders. This larger group discussed issues within MPHA and seriously considered the importance of MPHA's organizational structure, products, and services as they relates to its relevance. [PC1]

MPHA's leadership determined that it was critical to revisit and refresh the Strategic Plan, which was originally created in 2000 to better ensure MPHA's success. Consensus was reached that MPHA's current mission is appropriate and relevant – to mobilize our diverse membership to enhance professional growth and contribute innovative, cooperative and interdisciplinary approaches to improving the public's health. However,

the MPHA leadership questioned its relevance and recognized that the organization was not diverse in the broadest sense. In general, people agreed that MPHA had been very general in nature, which was not well sustained. Most importantly, MPHA committed to developing a common, focused agenda that enables us to reenergize activity and create momentum.

A consultant was hired and charged with facilitating the process of “renewing the energy and success of the MPHA”. A group of seven, (current, past, and future leaders) worked closely with the consultant from March to June to help plan a process that would engage all current and potential MPHA constituents. The extensive renewal process had two major components: 1) focus groups and phone interviews with current MPHA leaders, lapsed members, and people who had never been members but were actively working in public health-related positions and 2) a half-day facilitated discussion with annual meeting attendees.

The purpose of the half-day facilitated discussion at the annual meeting is to brainstorm and arrive at consensus on the top five to six critical actions that the MPHA membership needs to do (or continue to do) to be more successful in achieving MPHA’s mission in the next 18-24 months.

In short, this intense collaborative effort of engaging multiple constituents and key stakeholders is providing clear and concrete direction for MPHA, which will lead to the continued and future success of the organization.

## ***MPHA's Leadership Team***

### **Officers and Governing Council Members:**

Janny Brust, President Elect  
Deb Burns, Secretary and Co-president  
Becky Felling, Governing Council Member-at-Large  
Chris Follett, Treasurer and Co-president  
Renee Frauendienst, Governing Council Member-at-large  
Ellie Garrett, Past President  
Phyllis Haag, Governing Council Member-at- Large  
Rhonda Jaster, School of Public Health Student Representative  
Jamie Martinez, Governing Council Member-at-Large and Co-president  
Malcolm Mitchell, Affiliate Representative to APHA's Governing Council  
Jodell O'Connell, Governing Council Member-at-Large  
Lisa Pogoff, Governing Council Member-at-Large  
Mickey Scullard, Governing Council Member-at-Large

### **Committee Leadership:**

#### **Annual Conference**

Michelle Hanson  
Resa M. Jones

#### **Membership**

Heather Britt  
Deborah Hill

#### **Nominating**

Deb Hendricks  
Paul Terry

#### **Policy and Advocacy**

Lindsey Fabian  
Ray Olson