

Community Health Network of Southern Worcester County
Community Health Network Area (CHNA) 5

Brimfield-Brookfield-Charlton-Dudley-East Brookfield-Holland-North Brookfield-Oxford-Southbridge-Spencer-Sturbridge-Wales-Warren-Webster-West Brookfield

Operating Principles

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health created the Community Health Network (CHNA), including the Community Health Network of Southern Worcester County, also known as CHNA 5, in May 1992. A Community Health Network is a local coalition of public, non-profit, and private sectors. Today this initiative involves all 351 towns and cities through 27 Community Health Networks. Continuous improvement of health status is the goal of this partnership between the Department, service providers, local health departments, consumers, and the general public in the 15 communities.

MISSION

To build healthier communities in the 15 community service area through community-based prevention planning and health **promotion using the Strategic Prevention Frameworks**

To fulfill this mission CHNA 5 will **use the Strategic Prevention Frameworks to:**

- Build and maintain the CHNA participation, ensuring that it is representative of the diverse organizations and individuals that CHNA 5 serves;
- Create opportunities for networking between public and private health providers, including individuals and businesses;
- Educate and raise awareness about health issues, focusing on effective program models and best practices;
- Assess current services offered in the 15 towns, including assets, needs and service gaps;
- Develop, implement, and evaluate initiatives, events, and projects that address community health.

VISION

Building healthy communities is a shared responsibility. The vision of CHNA 5 is to involve all sectors of our communities—community residents, health **and human service** professionals, government, business leaders, clergy, and schools—to improve the health and quality of life for all residents of Brimfield, Brookfield, Charlton, Dudley, East Brookfield, Holland, North Brookfield, Oxford, Southbridge, Spencer, Sturbridge, Wales, Warren, Webster and West Brookfield. Our efforts may replicate and/or follow similar projects in communities across the nation and around the world – people coming together to work cooperatively to solve problems and improve the health and quality of life for the entire community. A healthy community is one that is continually creating and improving itself to ensure a healthy environment for all residents.

CHNA 5 has adopted the Healthy Community Principles, which are:

- Broad definition of health
- Broad definition of community
- Shared vision and values
- Quality of life for everyone
- Diverse *resident* participation and widespread community ownership
- *Invests in youth leadership and development*
- Focus on "systems change"
- Capacity building using local assets and resources
- Benchmark and measure process and outcomes

(Source: Ayre, Clough, Norris Italics are Mass Partnership's modification of internationally recognized Principles)

Article I - Membership

Section 1. *Eligibility*: Membership is open to any person interested in furthering and supporting the mission and vision of the CHNA.

Section 2. *Identity*: Membership can include the following:

- A. All businesses, organizations, and individuals working or living in the 15 communities of CHNA 5 that support CHNA 5's mission and vision.
- B. Ex Officio members will be representatives of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and representatives of the Regional Center for Healthy Communities (RCHC)

Section 3. *How One Becomes a Member*: Once the eligibility of an interested person has been determined, membership in the CHNA becomes effective upon:

- A. Completing a required member registration form and receiving a membership packet
- B. Attending one meeting

Section 4. *Membership Categories*:

- A. General membership in the CHNA, with the right to voice at meetings, is granted to any eligible person willing to promote the purpose of the CHNA. Registered membership have voting privileges; one vote / one person

Article II - Meetings

Section 1. *General Meetings:*

- A. General Meetings will occur at least quarterly, but may occur more frequently as needed. Written notice of the meetings will be given to all members at least fourteen days in advance.
- B. Special meetings may be called by the Steering Committee with 72 hours telephonic or electronic notice to the members.

Section 2. *Steering Committee Meetings:*

- A. Will occur at least every other month and may be scheduled more often as needed

Section 3. *Workgroups:*

- A. Will meet as needed to conduct business in a timely fashion.

Section 4. *Annual Meeting:*

- A. Will be held in the fall of every year
- B. Written notice will be given to all members at least fourteen days in advance

Article III - Decision Making Process

Section 1. *Simple Majority Model:*

- A. CHNA 5 will use the simple majority model to reach agreement at meetings

Section 2. *Quorum:*

- A. Quorum for the annual meeting and all general meetings is to be twenty-five percent of the members. A quorum for Steering Committee meetings is a majority of Steering Committee members.

Section 3. *Voting:*

- A. A quorum must be present for a vote to be taken.
- B. Voting may be by paper ballot or show of hands, which will be decided by a simple majority.

Article IV - Governance

Section 1. *Steering Committee:* Governance of the CHNA is conducted through a Steering Committee, which reflects the views and needs of the General Membership. The Steering Committee is charged with setting the program of the CHNA. The Steering Committee is vested with:

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- A. All administrative and fiscal oversight of the organization
- B. Execution of all contractual arrangements for the organization

The Steering Committee is composed of a minimum of nine and a maximum of 15 CHNA members with a minimum of two of who must be community members, one business representative and one representative from Harrington Memorial Hospital. Representatives from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Regional Center for Healthy Communities (RCHC) are ex officio non-voting members of the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee is committed to represent the diversity (inclusive of cultural, linguistic, geographic and economic) of our communities. Annually the Steering Committee will undertake a review of the diversity and inclusion of its membership.

All business conducted by the Steering Committee will be reviewed at the next General Meeting of the CHNA and voted upon, as required.

General membership elects the Steering Committee at the Annual Meeting.

Steering Committee members must be voting members of the CHNA at the time of nomination and may not hold any other elective office within the CHNA. Terms of Steering Committee members is two years with half of the Steering Committee members elected each year for a 2 year term. Terms begin at the first Steering Committee Meeting following the Annual Meeting.

Section 2. *Removal of Steering Committee Members:* A two-thirds majority of the members present at a General Meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose, provided proper notification has been given and a quorum is present, may remove any Steering Committee member.

Section 3. *Officers:*

A. Chairperson: Duties include the following:

- Set the agenda and preside at all Steering Committee Meetings and General Meetings
- Represent the CHNA when called upon by the membership to do so

B. Vice-Chairperson: Duties include the following:

- Conduct General Meetings and Steering Committee Meetings at the request of the Chairperson or in the Chairperson's absence.
- Will assist in the duties and functions of the Chairperson.

C. Clerk/Treasurer: Duties include the following:

- Keep and publish an accurate record of all General Meetings of the CHNA
- Keep a record of all Steering Committee Meetings
- Post notice of all meetings

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- Oversight of all correspondence, official reports, and other valuable papers
- Work with any designated Fiscal Agent to keep an accurate account of all receipts and disbursements
- As the Steering Committee may require, present a monthly statement of the financial status of the CHNA to the membership at all General Meetings.
- Work with the designated Fiscal Agent to prepare an annual accounting of all fiscal activity for the preceding year.

Section 4. *Replacement of Officers:* In the event that an officer resigns or fails, without notice, to attend three consecutive General Meetings or Steering Committee Meetings the Steering Committee will elect a replacement from the membership to serve until the next Annual Meeting.

Article V – Committees: There will be two standing committees; Steering and Nominating/Membership and as many workgroups as is deemed necessary.

Section 1. *Composition:* Committees are composed of CHNA members. No person may chair more than one committee at a time.

Section 2. *Nominating/Membership Committee:* Immediately following the Annual Meeting the Steering Committee will recruit three to five members from the Membership to serve on the Nominating/Membership Committee for the next year. The Nominating/Membership Committee is charged with monitoring the membership of the CHNA, recruiting general members and nominating a slate of active members and officers to the Steering Committee. Its members determine times of their meetings. The Nominating/Membership Committee:

- A. Accepts and solicits nominations for the Steering Committee who are reflective of the composition of the CHNA communities;
- B. Presents a slate of candidates for election to the General Membership 15 days prior to the Annual Meeting;
- C. Recruits general membership

Section 3. *Work Groups:* Workgroups are designated by the Steering Committee, as needed, to fulfill time-limited objectives. Chairpersons are appointed by the Steering Committee and report to the Steering Committee for the duration of their appointment.

Article VI – Administration

Section 1. *Fiscal Agent:* The Fiscal Agent is responsible for administering all CHNA funds according to contract specifications and generally accepted accounting principles.

Article VII - General

Section 1. *Conflict of Interest:* Should funding become available, representatives of organizations or individuals who request funding are expected to exempt themselves from voting on their own funding proposals and shall sign a conflict of interest form.

Section 2. *Contributions:* Any capital contribution of money in any amount or any other property of value shall not be repaid to any member upon dissolution of the CHNA. Funds or property remaining in the holdings of the CHNA upon its dissolution will be donated to a charitable organization of the membership's choosing.

Section 3. *Amending the Operating Principles:* These Operating Principles will be reviewed annually and may be altered, amended or repealed by a 60% majority of the members present at the Annual Meeting or at a special meeting called for that purpose, provided a quorum is present.

Any proposed changes to the Operating Principles will be sent to membership via e-mail 30 days before the Annual Meeting or special meeting.

Adopted by the Steering Committee on December 4, 2006

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