

Massachusetts Public Health Association



FOUNDED: 1879

CURRENT ORGANIZATION BUDGET: \$688,692

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The Massachusetts Public Health Association (MPHA) is a membership and advocacy organization that champions public health in the Commonwealth. MPHA focuses on eliminating health inequities and creating healthy communities for all.

Everyone in Massachusetts deserves the opportunities that come with a healthy neighborhood: good schools with healthy food and physical activity, safe places that promote walking and biking, affordable grocery stores, healthy housing, clean air and water, and economic opportunity. However, many residents in Massachusetts, especially those living in low-income communities and communities of color, have limited access to healthy food and stable housing, experience higher risk of obesity and chronic disease, and have lower life expectancy than their peers in more affluent communities.

For example, in Boston, the life expectancy for someone who lives between Shawmut Avenue and Dudley Street is 59 years; just across Massachusetts Avenue it is 84 years; and in Back Bay/Beacon Hill it is 92 years.¹

¹ Center on Human Needs, Virginia Commonwealth University. (2012). *Social Capital and Health Outcomes in Boston*.

Investment Opportunity

MPHA seeks an investment of \$1.1 million over two years to achieve state policy changes that will promote healthy eating, active living, and health equity statewide. This investment enables MPHA to expand the size of its field program by hiring three more field organizers to build coalitions and provide training and technical assistance to community-based organizations. Additionally, MPHA will increase its communications and marketing capacity, informing and mobilizing stakeholders to reduce disparities in health outcomes.

Two-Year Goals

- Secure financing for *Massachusetts Food Trust Program*
- Support state *Mass in Motion* funding
- Implement *Complete Streets Funding Program*
- Grow membership by 20%
- Expand marketing and communications capacity

Ways to Invest

FINANCIAL

- \$50,000 funds the salary of one field organizer
- \$25,000 funds the expansion of the communications associate to a full-time position
- \$10,000 funds the advocacy training for six community-based organizations

IN-KIND

- Graphic design support
- Development and grant-writing assistance
- Free meeting and/or special event space around the state
- Host a fundraising event

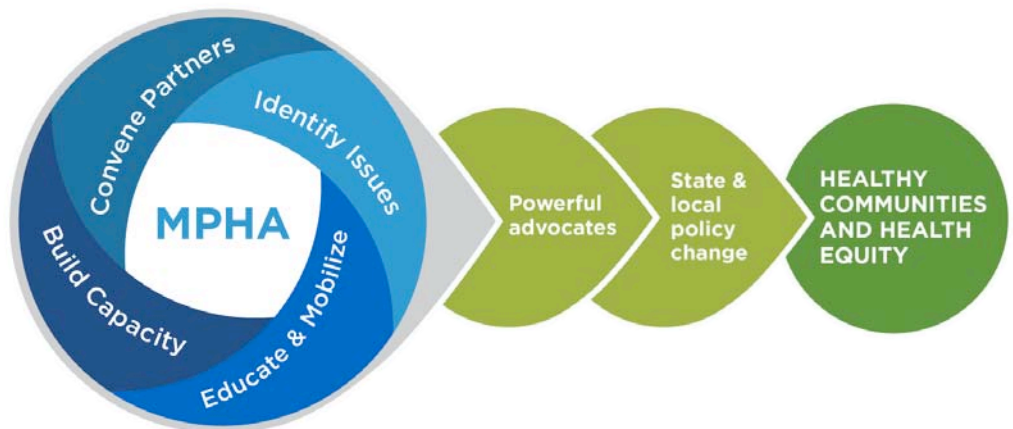


Leadership & Governance

Rebekah Gewirtz joined MPHA as executive director in January 2014. Prior to that she spent more than eight years as Director of Government Relations and Political Action at the National Association of Social Workers, MA Chapter. A strong advocate for social and economic justice, Rebekah also served her own community as Ward 6 Alderman in the City of Somerville for 10 years.

MPHA is governed by a 17-member board of directors led by President Deborah Dickerson, Director of Community, Family & Youth Programs for Children’s Hospital Boston.

THE MASSACHUSETTS PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION MODEL



Our local coalition has learned a great deal over the past several years about how to be effective advocates. . . . We are more effective and powerful because of MPHA.

JESSICA COLLINS

Partners for a Healthier Community, Springfield



ADVOCACY AND POLICY WORK

A strong and growing body of research shows that the social, physical, and economic environments (known as the “social determinants of health”) have a far greater impact on how long and how well people live than medical care. These issues are complex and interrelated, and exist at the community level, making policy change an effective vehicle for addressing them. MPHA has a track record of successfully advocating for state-level policy change that can improve the social, physical, and economic situation for communities across Massachusetts.

BUILDING COALITIONS

MPHA is not a single issue organization, but an organization that utilizes its strengths at coalition-building and organizing individuals and organizations to effect policy change to improve the health of all communities in Massachusetts. The organization has built a network of activists, including local leaders, policy experts, and students from across the state. MPHA actively engages these individuals and groups in a collaborative process to identify important issues and set policy priorities, and then leads them in taking action (e.g., calls to legislators, writing op-ed pieces, postcard campaigns, etc.) to educate policy makers.

DEVELOPING THE ADVOCACY CAPACITY OF LOCAL LEADERS

Through its field program, MPHA builds the capacity of local leaders to effect policy change in their own communities. MPHA establishes relationships with leaders of community-based organizations—particularly those in areas most affected by health inequity—and provides them with one-on-one coaching and technical assistance to help them gain a deeper understanding of the policy process and develop tangible advocacy and organizing skills. These leaders then recruit and support others to take action on health policy issues.





At every turn in the campaign . . . we could count on MPHA’s highly engaged, well-trained members from every corner of the state taking action in the legislature, the media, and the community.

KRISTINA EGAN

**Director,
Transportation for Massachusetts**



Key Investors

- BAY STATE HEALTH
- BLUE CROSS BLUE SHIELD OF MASSACHUSETTS FOUNDATION
- BOSTON CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL
- THE BOSTON FOUNDATION
- MASSACHUSETTS DEPT. OF PUBLIC HEALTH
- PARTNERS HEALTHCARE

Coalition Partners

- ACT FRESH COALITION
- BUILDING BLOCKS COALITION
- COALITION FOR LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH
- HEALTHY PEOPLE/HEALTHY ECONOMY COALITION
- MASSACHUSETTS SMART GROWTH ALLIANCE
- ON SOLID GROUND COALITION
- SAFE TEENS/SAFE COMMUNITIES COALITION
- SNAP COALITION
- TRANSPORTATION FOR MASSACHUSETTS

POLICY AGENDA

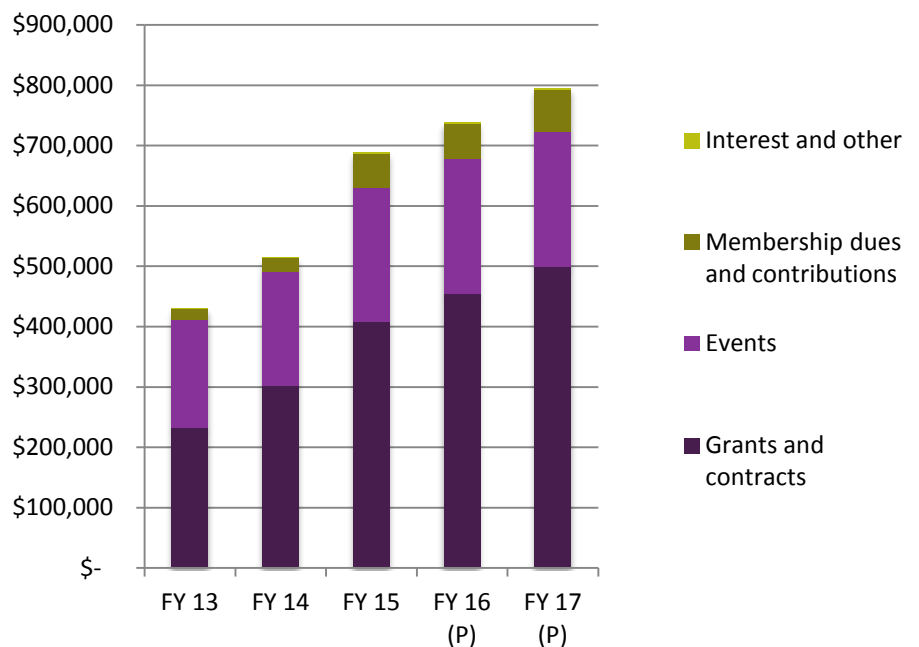
MPHA sets its policy agenda every two years in conjunction with its partners and then organizes a wide range of stakeholders to take action on these issues. Currently, MPHA is focusing its advocacy efforts in five key areas:

- **Healthy Eating and Active Living** – Ensuring that all communities have access to healthy, affordable food, safe places for physical activity, and a built environment that supports health.
- **Housing and Family Stability** – Advocating for access to healthy, stable, and affordable housing for all families.
- **Violence Prevention** – Promoting safe streets, homes, and schools that support positive youth development and thriving families.
- **Connecting Community Health & Clinical Care** – Expanding the reach of the healthcare system beyond the clinic walls by focusing on the well-being of patients, families, and neighborhoods.
- **Essential Public Health Services** – Strengthening the ability of state and local health departments to provide essential services such as communicable disease control and food safety.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

MPHA completed a strategic planning process in 2014. A key component is focusing on growing the organization’s financial resources by strengthening the membership program, seeking additional foundation support, and exploring potential new revenue streams.

Revenue by Source



Success Story: Massachusetts Food Trust Program

Twenty percent of Massachusetts residents live in communities with limited access to grocery stores. In response to this issue, the MPHA-led Act FRESH Coalition advocated for the Massachusetts Food Trust Program, a healthy food financing initiative. MPHA brought together 23 partner organizations and activated its individual member base to meet with legislators from across the state and send 2,000 postcards to policymakers in support of the bill.

The Massachusetts Food Trust was passed in July 2014 as part of the environmental bond bill, and, once funded, will provide the seed funding to bring supermarkets to underserved areas and enable corner stores and bodegas to upgrade their facilities to sell healthy foods.

The program is based on an effective and sustainable national model that has brought healthy food to millions of residents in New York, New Jersey, California, and other states, revitalizing blighted areas and creating jobs. Pennsylvania’s initiative spurred the development of 88 stores/markets, brought healthy food to 400,000 people, and created 3,000 jobs.



PROGRAM PERFORMANCE AND ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

Below is a summary of the key measures that MPHA will track to demonstrate progress, capture lessons learned, and make course corrections as needed. Note: Fiscal year April 1–March 31.

	FY 2015	FY 2016 (P)	FY 2017 (P)
PROGRAM PERFORMANCE			
Number of organizational and individual members	805	970	1,100
Number of partner organizations to whom MPHA provides coaching/technical assistance	28	33	42
Number of coalition partners	55	70	100
ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH/CAPACITY-BUILDING			
Staff	5.2 FTE	6.4 FTE	9 FTE
Strengthen membership program	n/a	Create and implement outreach plan	Assess and revise plan
Develop and implement marketing/communications plan to improve the visibility of MPHA and awareness of efforts	Develop	Launch website, branded materials	Refine and ensure consistent use
Total revenue	\$688,692	\$738,643	\$795,500

SOCIAL IMPACT

Achieving policy change often takes years, and in some cases decades, of work. While MPHA tracks its major policy victories, such as laws passed, the organization also tracks the interim progress towards these longer-term goals, including benchmarks such as favorable committee reports, amendments passed, agency commitments, and coalition partners taking action on an issue.

As part of its 2015 strategic planning process, MPHA formed a Metrics Committee of staff and board members to define key metrics and strengthen its capacity to measure impact.

INDICATOR	2014
Victories on policy objectives or benchmarks towards victory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$20M Complete Streets funding committed • Legislation passed to establish Massachusetts Food Trust Program
Number/percent of coalition partners taking regular action	87%
Number/percent of coalition partners reporting increased advocacy skills	Begin tracking in 2015
Number/percent of coalition partners mobilizing others	Begin tracking in 2015

