

COALITION ASSESSMENT AND ACTION TO REDUCE ASTHMA BURDEN

Members and leadership highly regarded; recommended changes will improve capacity

Public Health Problem

- Asthma is estimated to affect over a half million children and adults in Indiana.
- The Indiana State Department of Health Asthma Program seeks to reduce the burden of asthma in the state and works closely with the Indiana Joint Asthma Coalition to develop and implement interventions that improve the health and quality of life for residents with asthma.

Program

- The Indiana Joint Asthma Coalition is a voluntary, statewide network of people and public and private organizations which helped develop *A Strategic Plan for Addressing Asthma in Indiana*, the State Asthma Plan. The Coalition helps identify resources, create collaborative relationships with internal and external partners, implement activities of the State Asthma Plan including specific interventions, and support a comprehensive asthma data and surveillance system.
- With funds from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention the Indiana State Department of Health Asthma Program assessed Coalition leadership, resources, decision-making, internal communications, perceived value and sustainability in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- Overall, the assessment revealed positive regard for leadership, resources, functions and value of the coalition and identified state staff and coalition leaders as knowledgeable, capable, and effective. Coalition members described the benefits of membership as staying informed in a rapidly changing environment, better professional skills and knowledge, and development of collaborative relationships with other agencies.

Impact

Assessment of the state asthma coalition revealed positive regard for the leadership and identified member benefits. Areas for change were identified that will improve the coalition's capacity to reduce the burden of asthma in Indiana. These include:

- Consideration of multi-year terms for leadership to improve continuity
- Systematic assessment of coalition membership to maintain strengths
- Provision of regular updates on activities to members and partners to maintain interest
- Regular assessment of progress towards reaching objectives and development of action strategies
- Maintenance of momentum to accomplish objectives through encouragement of a more regular schedule of workgroup meetings
- Examination of the benefits and drawbacks of attaining 501(c)3 status before taking this step

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