

## **Michigan Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) Units Receive Challenge Award**

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Four Michigan MRC units each recently applied for and received a \$15,000 National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) Challenge Award. The Challenge Awards aim to focus on innovation in areas that are aligned with national health initiatives that are also significant at the local level. Community resilience, chronic disease prevention, partners for empowered communities, and mental and emotional wellbeing are four focus areas of which projects must align. The following four MRC units were Michigan recipients of this year's competitive Challenge Award:

- Newaygo County MRC: High Performance CPR Initiative
- Muskegon County MRC: Cardiac Health Awareness Program CHAP, A New Perspective on Blood Pressure Screenings
- Monroe County MRC: The Potassium Iodide (KI) Community Awareness and Education Program
- Livingston County MRC: Reunification Support Team

### **Newaygo County MRC: High Performance CPR Initiative**

As a project under Partners for Empowered Communities, the Newaygo County High Performance CPR Initiative aims to improve cardiac resuscitation outcomes both inside and outside the hospital within Newaygo County. According to an American Heart Association consensus statement released in 2013, in the United States more than 500,000 children and adults experience out-of-hospital cardiac arrests each year, and less than 15% survive. "This establishes cardiac arrests as one of the most lethal public health problems in the United States, claiming more lives than colorectal cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, influenza, pneumonia, auto accidents, HIV, firearms, and house fires combined." As Newaygo County is a large, rural community with one hospital and limited medical first responder coverage, cardiac arrest survival rates within the community are very low. Through collaboration with the Michigan Resuscitation Consortium, the Newaygo County High Performance CPR Initiative will strengthen partnerships with the local medical control authority, hospital, EMS agencies, medical first responders, law enforcement, medical reserve corps, and community organizations to standardize CPR policies, protocols, and standards, integrate High Performance CPR training as a standard, and expand upon community bystander CPR training.

### **Muskegon County MRC: Cardiac Health Awareness Program CHAP, A New Perspective on Blood Pressure Screenings**

High blood pressure, or hypertension, affects 1 in 5 Muskegon County residents and is a modifiable risk factor for heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease. Despite efforts to overcome barriers to high blood pressure detection and management, high blood pressure remains the number one significant health problem facing the residents of Muskegon County. A health officer for Public Health Muskegon County researched programs that would not only provide blood pressure screenings but have an advocacy or peer component built in since Muskegon County Medical Reserve Corps (MCMRC) was identified as the lead agency. A program in Canada with evidence based criteria was discovered. The Cardiovascular Health Awareness Program (CHAP) is a community-based program developed in 2000 in Canada that brings together family physicians, public health, and volunteers to work together to promote and participate in the prevention and management of heart disease and stroke. The CHAP Program is free of

charge, to the general population. CHAP offers opportunities for multiple blood pressure readings, promotion of healthy eating, and all modifiable risk factors for heart disease and stroke. CHAP implements a volunteer peer health educator program of cardiovascular awareness through blood pressure screenings.

#### **Monroe County MRC: The Potassium Iodide (KI) Community Awareness and Education Program**

The Potassium Iodide (KI) Community Awareness and Education Program aims to raise levels of community awareness, education, response, and resilience of radiation exposure for those persons living or working within the 10 Mile EPZ of the Fermi 2 Nuclear Power Plant in Monroe, Michigan. Potassium Iodide (KI) protects the human thyroid from radiation if it is ingested when directed to do so in a declared General Emergency. The benefits of KI, and how to request it at no charge, will be shared with the public in an awareness campaign by MRC Volunteers. Prior to a radiological event, KI must be procured from pre identified Meijer or Kroger pharmacies as it will not be dispensed during a declared General Emergency. Partnerships with other local organizations will increase awareness of radiological emergency situations and publicize the availability of free KI in the community and what to do with expired boxes. Partners will include Monroe County Health Department, Monroe County Emergency Management, DTE Energy, Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Meijer Pharmacy, Kroger Pharmacy, Monroe County Community College, school administrators, and local media outlets. Engagement from diverse partnerships will create a stronger, more prepared community in the unlikely event of a radiological emergency.

#### **Livingston County MRC: Reunification Support Team**

The Livingston County Medical Reserve Corp will develop a Reunification Support Team to assist in the whole community inclusive planning approach to family reunification. Natural/man-made disasters are more prevalent and mass shootings are increasing at an alarming rate (1 mass shooting/day in the US in 2015). Both of these emergency events result in an increased possibility for children to become separated from their parents. A parent's worst fear is not being able to find their child. A 2013 study by Wright State University states that family reunification is one of the most frequently overlooked aspects in emergency planning, yet is most critical to successfully prepare and respond to an emergency. The Livingston County Safe Schools Committee is a partnership between county schools, law enforcement, emergency management, and public health that work together to promote a safe and secure environment for students, staff, and community. The 2016 focus of this committee is family reunification. Livingston county schools have emergency plans; however, their resources are limited and do not effectively address reunification. Public Health can play an important role and the Livingston County MRC can fill this gap. Through partner collaboration, best practices will be gathered to implement a training program to develop a MRC Reunification Support Team for the county.

To learn more about the NACCHO Challenge Awards and Michigan's MRC programs, visit <http://mrcnaccho.org/challenge-award> or [www.MedicalReserveCorps.gov](http://www.MedicalReserveCorps.gov).