

History

The Massachusetts Office of Health Equity was originally established by the Commissioner in 1989 as the Office of Minority Health to coordinate health disparities activities for the Department.

Health Priorities

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) identified the following health priorities for the people of Massachusetts, one of which focuses on eliminating racial/ethnic health disparities.

Health Priorities for the General Population
Eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities
Support the success of health care reform
Promote wellness in the workplace, school, community and home
Build public health capacity at the local and state levels
Manage chronic disease

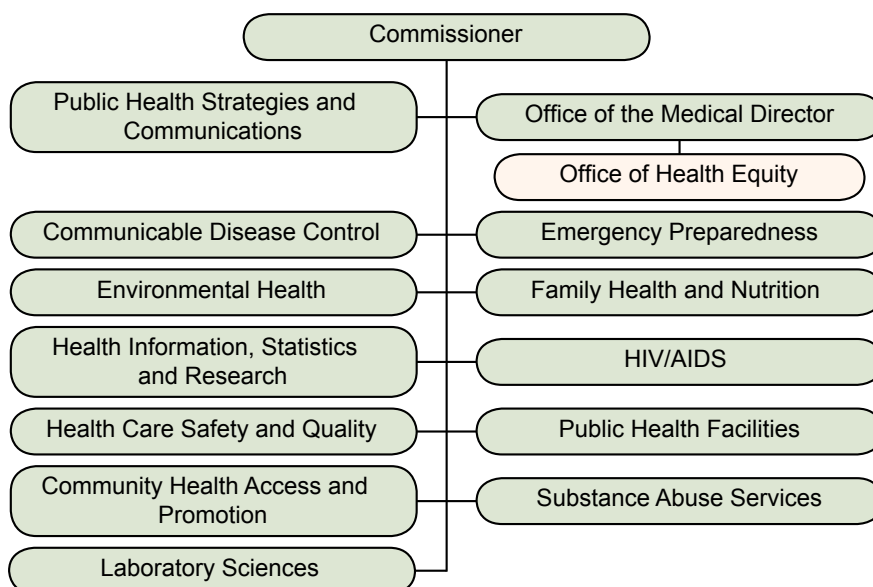
Overview

	Funding for MH/HD Activities	Personnel Dedicated to MH/HD	MH/HD Unit	MH/HD Advisory Body	State MH/HD Legislation or Mandate	MH/HD Strategic Plan	Evaluation of MH/HD Activities
Massachusetts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓
Total Affirmative Responses out of 46	30	38	36	36	27	36	39

Organization, Infrastructure and Resources

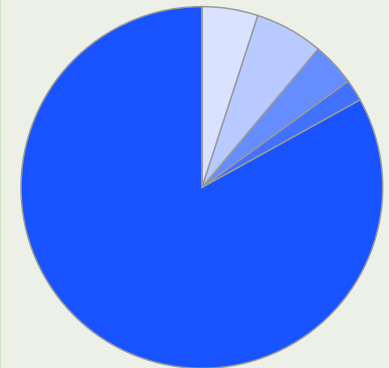
The following is a simplified organizational chart that demonstrates the location of the state's racial/ethnic minority health focal point in relation to the State/Territorial Health Official and other key public health offices:

Massachusetts Department of Public Health



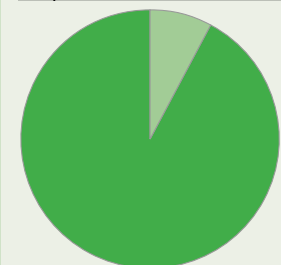
Total State Population:
6,437,193

Racial Distribution



- American Indian/Alaskan Native (0.2%)
- Asian (5%)
- Black/African American (6%)
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (0%)
- Other Race (4%)
- Two or More Races (2%)
- White (83%)

Hispanic/Latino Ethnic Distribution



- Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity (8%)
- Non-Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity (92%)

Note: People can self-identify as members of any racial group in the Census, as well as report having Hispanic/Latino ethnicity.

Source: 2006 American Community Survey, US Census Bureau

Strategic Planning

The Massachusetts Department of Health (MDPH) addresses the elimination of health disparities through goals and action steps in its Departmental strategic planning:

Goal: Eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities
Tracking Methods: Amount of funding allocated to support innovative health disparities efforts across state, quantity of data collected by race/ethnicity at each MDPH health program, number of MDPH health programs that adapt to reflect focus on health disparities, number of people of color hired at MDPH, number of reports produced that specifically focus on health disparities

Goal: Manage chronic disease
Objective: Promote community health workers to bridge cultural gaps in self management
Tracking Methods: Not reported

Partnerships

- The MDPH MH/HD priorities are led by the Commissioner’s Office which works with the bureau directors and a Diversity Council to strategize around solutions for addressing health inequities.
- The MDPH coordinates its inter-agency and cross-secretariat work with Dr. JudyAnn Bigby, Secretary of Health and Human Services so as to also work on areas such as transportation, urban planning, and education.
- MDPH has seats on numerous external groups that are focused on eliminating health disparities, such as the legislatively mandated Disparities Council, the Quality and Cost Council, and the Health Connector.
- MDPH maintains partnerships with an array of external entities active in MH/HD including: local health departments, local, tribal, other state and federal government agencies, MH/HD advisory bodies, community- and faith- based and non-profit organizations, corporations, health systems, foundations, schools, universities, professional associations, clinical networks and the media.

Human Capital Investments

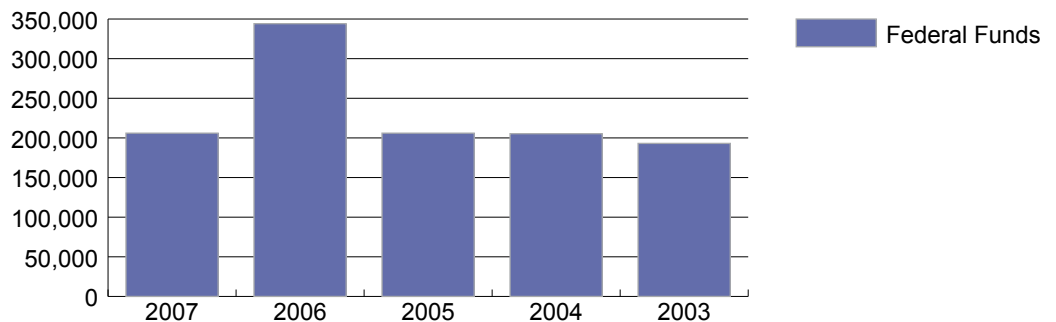
The following staff dedicate all or part of their work hours to MH/HD activities at the MDPH:

Job Category	Total Number Dedicated to MH/HD	% of Work Hours Each Spends on MH/HD Activities
Administrator/Director	2	30% - 70%
Program Specialist	5	10% - 100%
Epidemiologist	2	20%
Public Health Educator	1*	20%
Public Information Specialist	1	50%
Administrative/Clerical Staff	1	10%

* The MDPH reports that the actual number of MH/HD health educators is difficult to quantify because there are a number of health educators throughout the Department not counted here that may be addressing MH/HD in their work.

Financial Investments

MDPH reported an annual budget for racial/ethnic minority health and health disparities (MH/HD) activities for fiscal years 2003-2007. It should be noted that the totals reported below may not include investments in specific MH/HD activities, such as those reported in the following section, and may therefore be an underestimate of the total annual investment in MH/HD activities in the state.



Activities

Creation of the MDPH Office of Health Equity

The MDPH recently reorganized and consolidated its racial and ethnic health disparities coordination and activities under its Office of Health Equity (MOHE). MOHE is in the process of developing comprehensive strategies, partnerships and activities to eliminate health disparities in Massachusetts for itself and the MDPH.

Partners and Funding

Executive leadership and bureaus within MDPH, Executive Office of Health and Human Services, community health centers, hospitals, insurers, community-based organizations

Activity Outcomes

Measurable, sustainable reductions in racial/ethnic health disparities across the state

Evaluation Methods

Secretariat-level dashboard (evaluation metric) and evaluation of wellness and disparities grantees conducted by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

Multicultural Health Data Collection and Standardization Initiative

The MDPH has partnered with the Massachusetts Division of Health Care Finance and Policy to create and promulgate standardized health data indicators and forms that collect and aggregate data on health and socio-economic status, health outcomes and health care utilization by race and ethnicity. Data will be used to identify the occurrence and contributing factors to racial/ethnic health disparities and guide development of targeted health disparities interventions throughout the state's health care system.

Partners

MDPH, Executive of Health and Human Services, Division of Health Care Finance and Policy

Activity Outcomes

Improvements in identifying, developing interventions and reducing health disparities across Massachusetts

Evaluation Methods

Secretariat level dashboard

Health Disparities Grant Program

As part of its efforts to eliminate health disparities in Massachusetts, the MDPH developed a grant program that supports health disparities interventions and activities at organizations serving racial/ethnic minority communities across Massachusetts. The first round of grant awards were distributed to organizations to implement activities to work on a range of issues including: community mobilization, advocacy, health care workforce pipeline programs, and prevention programs related to wellness and chronic disease management.

Partners and Funding

MDPH distributed \$1 million in grants in fiscal year 2008 to specifically support community-based efforts to eliminate health disparities. An additional \$2 million was distributed for wellness and chronic disease management activities, some of which target communities of color.

Activity Outcomes

Reductions in chronic disease disparities and improved health outcomes for racial/ethnic minorities

Evaluation Methods

Quarterly and annual progress reports from grantees with program specific outcome and process measures

Massachusetts' primary contacts for racial/ethnic minority health and health disparities are:

Lauren Smith, MD, MPH

Medical Director, Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Monica Valdes Lupi, JD, MPH

Chief of Staff, Massachusetts Department of Public Health

<http://www.mass.gov/dph/omh/omh.htm>

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