

## ON THE ROAD WITH THE MLC

### *Leading the Way in Quality Improvement and Accreditation*



Greetings from the **Multi-State Learning Collaborative: Lead States in Public Health Quality Improvement**. In our third publication of “*On the Road with the MLC*,” we share the innovative work that North Carolina, New Hampshire, Oklahoma and Minnesota are doing in preparing for voluntary national accreditation and reinforcing quality improvement as the cornerstone of public health. These four states demonstrated impressive work and gracious hospitality when hosting staff from the National Network of Public Health Institutes, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, visitors from peer MLC states, and representatives from several partnering organizations during their MLC site visits. Partners attending site visits in 2009 include ASTHO, CDC, Muskie School of Public Service, NACCHO, PHF, PHII and PHAB.

To learn more about the Multi-State Learning Collaborative: Lead States in Public Health Quality Improvement and to access the first two publications of “*On the Road with the MLC*,” please contact the [National Network of Public Health Institutes](http://www.nnphi.org).

Warm regards,  
Lee Thielen, MPA  
Chair,  
Multi-State Learning Collaborative: Lead States in Public Health Quality Improvement

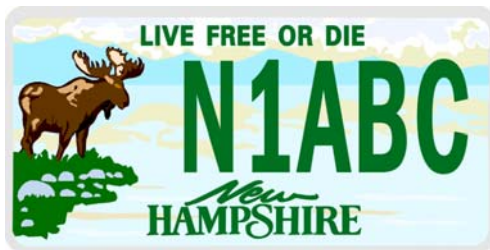
## North Carolina Showcases State Accreditation System

The North Carolina site visit took place on April 1-2, 2009 in Raleigh. The site visit served as a rich opportunity for the MLC states and partners to learn about the N.C. Division of Public Health's pilot accreditation process. Participants from five of the MLC grantee states and several partner organizations met with a representative from the Division of Public Health on the first day of the site visit to walk through the documentation that had been compiled to demonstrate that the Division met the standards outlined in the pilot accreditation process. On the second day, key representatives from North Carolina



provided a detailed overview of the many steps that the Division took to prepare for the pilot accreditation process including: preparing appropriate documentation to meet standards, conducting a self assessment, hosting an on-site review with a national team of experts, and implementing quality improvement efforts that were developed in response to the results of the pilot assessment. One of the key strategies shared during the site visit was the development of the "A" team, a multi-disciplinary team of leaders from each section of the Division that worked together throughout the pilot process to prepare and review documentation that intended to demonstrate accordance with standards and measures. More information about the pilot process and lessons learned via the stakeholder evaluation of the process can be found [here](#).

## New Hampshire Addresses Childhood Obesity and Public Health Regionalization



New Hampshire hosted its site visit on April 20-21, 2009 in Manchester. During the visit, information was provided regarding their Public Health Improvement Action Plan, which was developed as a result of having completed the National Public Health Performance Standards Assessment in 2005; a

public health branding and communications effort that is being developed for the state; and several local public health initiatives. In addition, detailed presentations were provided by each of New Hampshire's three MLC Quality Improvement Learning Teams (QuILTS). Each of the QuILTS, which consist of state health department representatives and community partners, has implemented various

strategies to address childhood obesity. One team, the Lakes Regional Partnership for Public Health, aims for second grade students at an area school to bring fruit and/or vegetables for snacks at least 60% of the time. A second team, the Mascoma Valley Health Initiative, is striving to improve nutritional literacy and decision-making of an area school's 4th grade students and their families. The third team, the Caring Community Network of Twin Rivers, is focusing on improving the method in which weight-related risk and behavioral assessment information is provided to youth in a primary care clinic.

Finally, information was provided on the state's efforts to regionalize public health. The goal of regionalization is to develop a performance based public health delivery system, which provides all 10 Essential Public Health Services throughout New Hampshire. The team is conducting regional assessments exploring financing, public health capacity, and what a connection with governmental public health might look like. A plan will then be developed to pilot the proposed new models in selected areas of the state.

## **Oklahoma Creates Strong State and Local Partnerships**

The MLC team visited Oklahoma on April 24, 2009 in Oklahoma City. During the site visit, Oklahoma demonstrated the strong partnerships between their State Health Department and local health departments, which is exemplified by the sharing of epidemiological expertise. Quality improvement efforts have been fully embraced in Oklahoma and by working with government officials, the state has introduced the "OK Step UP Performance

Management System," which focuses on integrating and sustaining quality improvement in the Oklahoma public health system. Based on their "Strategic Map: 2010-2014," Oklahoma has focused on improving health outcomes through targeted initiatives and improving public health infrastructure. In doing so, Oklahoma has been able to address issues such as social determinants of health, health equity approaches, and the development of effective policy. Oklahoma has also worked to prevent rates of obesity through an after school program that increases physical activity for students from Kindergarten to 5th grade. Additionally, Oklahoma provided early vetting to the Public Health Accreditation Board on its draft standards.



## **Minnesota Embraces Broad Participation in Quality Improvement and Accreditation Efforts**



Minnesota hosted its MLC site visit on April 30, 2009 in Bloomington and demonstrated the wide reach MLC efforts are having in their state. With 40 mini-collaborative teams working on community engagement efforts while also providing each other oversight, review, feedback and encouragement, there are few areas not benefiting from MLC related efforts. The MLC team has developed a strong partnership with the University of Minnesota and fostered collaboration between local health departments and the State Health Department. In an effort to improve the entire public health system, state and local health department officials worked together in vetting the Public Health Accreditation Board's standards. Furthermore, through the implementation of evidence based prevention strategies, public health is playing a critical role in Minnesota's efforts towards health reform. Minnesota has developed the State Community Health Services Advisory Committee (SCHSAC), which is a partnership between local elected officials, public health directors, community health board administrators and directors and staff from the state health department. SCHSAC holds quarterly meetings where the work of the MLC mini-collaboratives is discussed and advanced.

*The Multi-State Learning Collaborative: Lead States in Public Health Quality Improvement* is managed by the [National Network of Public Health Institutes](#) with support from the [Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#).