SPArC Tobacco-Free Multnomah

Oregon Health Authority

BACKGROUND

For the first time in Oregon, during the 2013 legislative session, Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (TMSA) funds were designated for tobacco prevention and control. Input from the Conference of Local Health Officials (CLHO), the CLHO Healthy Communities Committee, the Tobacco Reduction Advisory Committee (TRAC), and an expanded group of advisors including representatives from Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) and the Governor's Office resulted in a competitive funding opportunity using a portion of the TMSA funds for Local Public Health Authorities (LPHAs) to advance policy, systems and environmental changes that:

- Promote tobacco-free environments and communities,
- Reduce the influence of tobacco product marketing and promotion, and
- Encourage tobacco users to quit.

LPHAs were encouraged to work with their local CCO, Regional Health Equity Coalitions, Tribes, and other community organizations representing local populations disproportionately impacted by tobacco products to implement recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Best-Practices for Tobacco Control.

Multnomah County was one of six grantees awarded funds to advance tobacco control and prevention in local communities, working closely with their Regional Health Equity Coalition and community groups to develop tobacco-related policy solutions in the region.

"My primary concern is protecting kids from exposure to these products. And I want to ensure that people who choose not to vape are protected at work."

County Chair Deborah Kafoury

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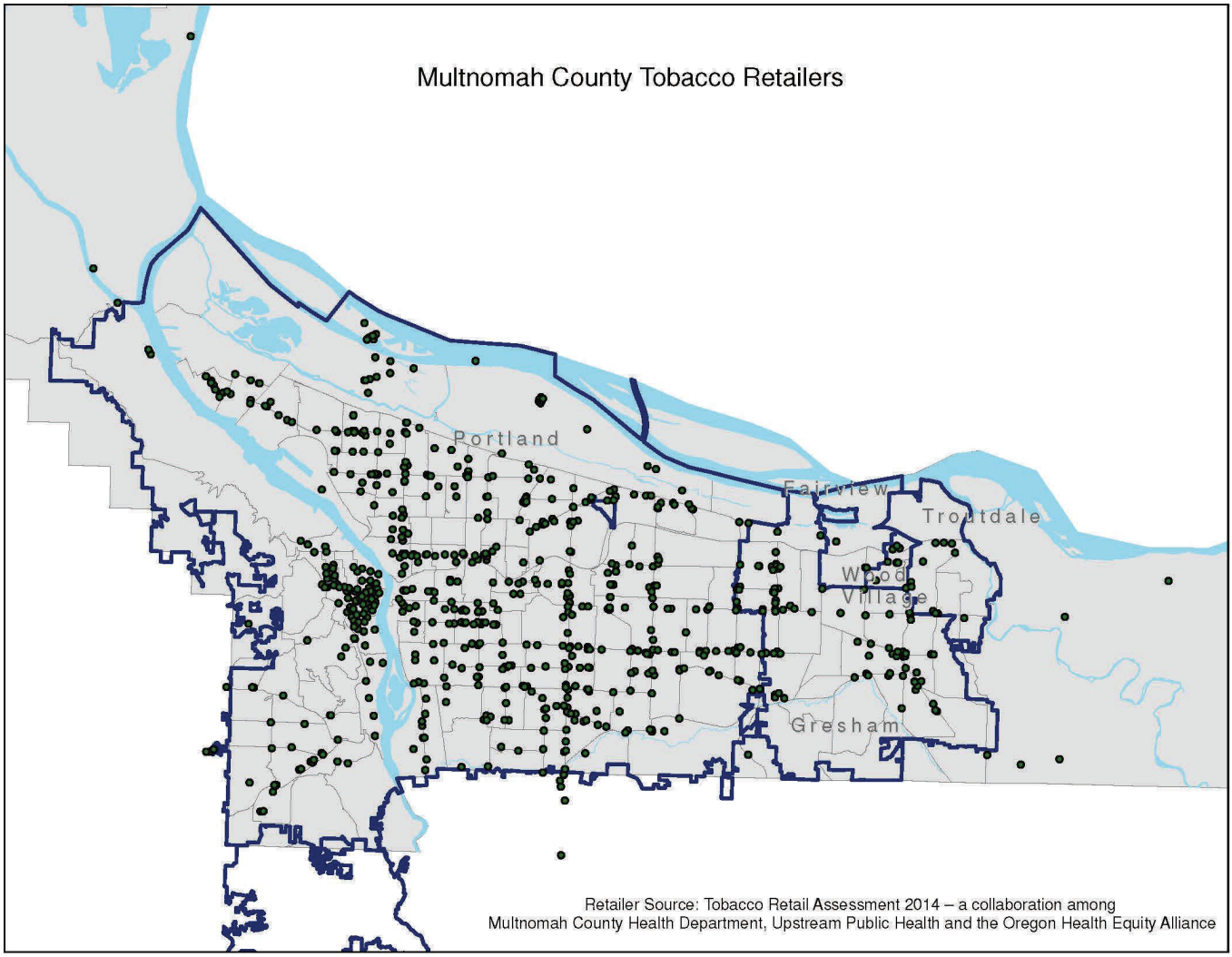
Grantee Summary

Multnomah County Health Department (MCHD), in partnership with the Upstream Public Health and Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA) partners, focused on a policy strategy to curb youth access to and use of tobacco and e-products. Nearly 600,000 youth live in Multnomah County and data show that tobacco advertising targets youth, particularly in neighborhoods with higher numbers of racial/ethnic minorities and low income individuals, which fosters ongoing health disparities. Local data indicate that youth are experimenting with and using emerging tobacco and nicotine products, such as flavored tobacco, e-products, and hookah at unacceptable rates.

SPArC funds allowed Multnomah County and OHEA to complete a comprehensive tobacco retail assessment by partnering with community members and advocacy groups. These assessment data were used to develop policy options. MCHD and OHEA conducted a series of presentations for the County Board of Commissioners, and supported Chair Kafoury to circulate policy options to jurisdictions in the County.



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KEY STRATEGIES

In response to this funding opportunity, LPHAs designed SPArC projects to respond to local needs in tobacco prevention and control; each grantee implemented strategies tailored to their unique context.

Multnomah County proposed one main policy strategy in their SPArC application:

1. To implement policy changes in retail environments, in order to reduce youth access to and use of tobacco.

MCHD, in partnership with OHEA, tackled this strategy by:

- Allocating resources to build community capacity with Upstream Public Health and OHEA partners.
- Enlisting diverse community members and advocacy groups to conduct a retail assessment and increase public awareness.
- Disseminating results through strategic communications (media, policy meetings).
- Informing policy makers to take action.

"The assessment was an eye-opening opportunity for me to learn how tobacco products are being advertised and sold in Oregon."

Community member who participated on the retail assessment team

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Project Milestones

- Completed assessment of 411 tobacco retail venues—70% of known retailers—using a health equity lens framework.
  - In addition to project staff, the assessment team included 15 volunteer community members from 8 organizations.
- OHEA presented assessment results and policy options to the Multnomah Board of County Commissioners in December 2014.
- County health department leaders conducted a series of presentations to the Board of Health and County Commissioners.
- Supported proposed policy agenda through strategic communications, extensive earned media and a "road show" to city councils in Troutdale, Fairview, Wood Village and Portland.
- In March 2015, the Multnomah County Commissioners unanimously voted for two policy options:
  1) Prohibit e-cigarette sales to, and use by, minors
  2) Include use of e-cigarettes in the Multnomah County Smoke-free Workplace law
- Five OHEA partners from four organizations were featured as Smokefree Oregon Heroes. Videos focused on the impact and burden of tobacco on culturally-specific communities in Multnomah County.
- OHEA awarded additional grant funding to conduct health equity impact assessment focused on equitable tobacco retail licensing policies.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. SPArC funding helped raise the profile of tobacco prevention work for policy makers and community members who have not been engaged previously in tobacco issues.
2. Navigating the political climate of tobacco policy development requires extensive planning and preparation across partners and teams.
3. Intentional approach to equity work and community partnerships were woven throughout the project, from conceptualization and grant-writing to data collection and policy development.

"This project and the partnerships activated our Board of Health. Our policymakers were briefed by health department staff, Upstream and OHEA partners, academics and state staff on the need to take action to reduce youth access and prevent the rise of tobacco and nicotine products in our young communities."

FUNDED PROJECTS

The Strategies for Policy And enviRonmental Change (SPArC) Tobacco-Free competitive Request for Grant Applications (RFGA) directed applicants to:

- Complement, build upon, or accelerate, but not duplicate, the current Local Program Plan of the LPHA(s) Tobacco Prevention and Education Program (TPEP);
- Be achievable and produce a sustainable change within the 15 month grant period of April 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015; and
- Be evaluable to demonstrate advancement of policy, systems and environmental changes in tobacco prevention and control.

Six grantees were funded across the State of Oregon in the following counties:

1. Coos & Douglas
2. Klamath
3. Lane
4. Linn, Benton & Lincoln
5. Multnomah
6. Yamhill

Next Steps

- Disseminate the tobacco retail assessment results to policy makers and community members
- County Health Department will work with Upstream and OHEA partners to disseminate findings from the health equity impact assessment around retail assessment policy options
- Assess the feasibility of a Tobacco Retail Licensing (TRL) ordinance in Multnomah County
- Conduct tobacco prevention strategies for the African American community as part of the REACH funding

"We believe if we can focus on prevention in communities that are vociferously targeted by tobacco companies, we'll have a better outcome for everyone."

Midge Purcell, Urban League of Portland and Oregon Health Equity Alliance

MORE INFO

Smokefree Oregon Heroes in Multnomah:

http://smokefreeoregon.com/oregonians/

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