

# Connecting MassHealth Information and Resources to Health Care Organizations and Community Agencies

The MassHealth Training Forum (MTF)

Office of Community Programs

***Communicating accurate, timely information relating to MassHealth operations and policies to health care organizations and community agencies***

In many communities in Massachusetts, local health care organizations and community agencies are the first stop for people seeking health care access, often asking questions about the MassHealth program, or looking for an application. Since MassHealth is a large and sometimes complex entity, it can be a challenge for providers and community based organizations to provide current and accurate information on MassHealth to applicants and MassHealth members. The composition of these health care providers and community based organizations is diverse in the work and services they provide. Some activities include: application/enrollment assistance, member outreach and education, billing/claims submission, and health care advocacy.



In order to assist provider groups and community based organizations to continue playing a critical role in helping MassHealth applicants and members understand the program, MassHealth created the MassHealth Training Forum (MTF). MTF is a program that resides in the Office of Community Programs (OCP), within the Commonwealth Medicine division of the University of Massachusetts Medical School. MTF's mission is to provide accurate and timely information and resources to those in the community who assist MassHealth members, the underinsured, and uninsured.

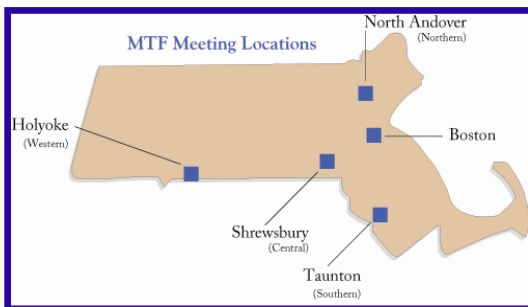
***Providing a critical information resource***

MTF has a very important role in providing timely information and clarification of policies and procedures to patient health advocates and enrollment workers. Services offered include:

- Working with MassHealth to develop meeting agendas, recruit expert presenters and determine content for MassHealth updates
- Understanding and responding to participant needs and interests

- Assuming full responsibility for meeting logistics and coordination
- Creating a meeting format that allows direct communication with MassHealth experts
- Maintaining a database of MTF participants which allows for ease of communication
- Assisting with information dissemination, including email updates and meeting notices
- Overseeing the development and maintenance of the MTF website

As part of the partnership between MassHealth and OCP, MTF developed three primary vehicles for bringing MassHealth information to health care organizations and community agencies:



### ***Quarterly Meetings***

Regional meetings are held in Boston, Shrewsbury, North Andover, Holyoke and Taunton during January, April, June and October. Key staff members from MassHealth departments present updates on policy, programs, eligibility and enrollment at every meeting. Each quarterly agenda includes presentations on current MassHealth related topics and trends, such as New MassHealth Citizenship Requirements, Health Care Reform and MassHealth Expansions, The Virtual Gateway, Major Impacts of the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit, the Recipient Eligibility Verification System (REVS) and the Uncompensated Care Pool Streamlined Review Process. Meetings also include roundtable discussions with MassHealth personnel and meeting presenters, providing an opportunity for individual questions and consultation.

### ***MassHealth Updates***

MTF participants receive MassHealth email updates on items such as MassHealth policy changes, training opportunities, and other relevant information and resources. Periodic updates include new and relevant information from other health and human services sister agencies.

### ***MassHealth Training Forum Website***

Located at [www.masshealthmtf.org](http://www.masshealthmtf.org), the MTF website offers online meeting registration, electronic versions of meeting materials, recent MassHealth updates and other

informational handouts, including answers to frequently asked questions and links to relevant resources.

MTF has experienced increased participation and community recognition with each passing year, and has seen growing involvement from MassHealth staff as both program planners and presenters. As a result, MTF participants have enhanced opportunities to learn about MassHealth directly from the individuals who know the program best.

### ***Results***

MTF has made great strides since its inception in 2003. Meeting attendance reflects continued interest in the program; attendance numbers were 596 for FY04; 808 for FY05; and 829 for FY06. Attendance for the first three MTF meetings in FY07 was 1150 people representing over 350 organizations. Sample meeting topics included: Virtual Gateway, Medicare Part D, MassHealth Buy-In Programs and The Insurance Partnership.

Survey ratings of the MTF meeting presentations by attendees have been very positive; 75% reported the presentations were very useful and 90% of the respondents indicated they share MTF meeting materials with other staff members (potentially reaching over 2,400 people). A few attendee quotes are: “great information and helpful Q&A opportunities” (Health Care For All) and “appreciate the information you provide” (SHINE).

### ***Looking Towards the Future***

MTF has a variety of goals for the future. MTF plans to increase the number of participants by communicating the value of the Forum to new community organizations and agencies. MTF will also respond to the needs of current participants and program sponsors through continuous improvement of communication practices and overall program content and format.

Another future role for MTF comes with the expansion of MassHealth, the creation of the Health Connector and new insurance products. The need for timely, clear information is essential for those staff enrolling recipients into the programs, and MTF is an ideal conduit communication channel.

The Office of Community Programs will continue to partner with MassHealth to communicate current information to agencies and organizations that provide health care access in Massachusetts.

### ***About the Office of Community Programs (OCP)***

As part of the University of Massachusetts Medical School's Commonwealth Medicine division, the Office of Community Programs (OCP) serves as a vital bridge between the knowledge and resources of the Medical School and health care programs in local communities. Our dedicated staff works closely with state Medicaid programs, government agencies and community-based organizations to identify areas where there may be barriers to care. Based on Best Practices and the latest health policy information, we then develop strategic, practical solutions for the development and implementation of community-based health care programs and services. As a result, OCP implements innovative health care services and educational programs to more communities. These services and programs include:

- Community Health Center Initiatives
- Dental Services, Training and Capacity Building
- MassHealth Training Forum
- Medical Interpreter Training Program
- Community Service and Service Learning

### ***Message from Mick Huppert, M.P.H., Director and Associate Dean, Office of Community Programs***

The MTF program is another example of why community-based efforts and programs are so critical to the public health of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This partnership with the Office of Medicaid ensures that the most current and accurate MassHealth information is available to local health care organizations and community agencies – those who interact with the most vulnerable populations in the state. I'm proud of the Office of Community Programs' role in supporting MTF, and look forward to continuing to be a partner in statewide public health initiatives.

***Message from Theresa Glenn, M.P.H, MTF Program Manager, Office of Community Programs***

I would like to acknowledge a number of organizations which have worked tirelessly to develop and maintain this forum. OCP is grateful to these champions for their help with providing information and resources to those in the community who serve MassHealth members.

- University of Massachusetts Medical School and Commonwealth Medicine
- Office of Medicaid
- Division of Health Care Finance and Policy
- Executive Office of Elder Affairs
- Member Education
- MassHealth Customer Service
- MassHealth Operations
- Virtual Gateway
- Commonwealth Connector
- Health Care For All
- Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers
- Massachusetts Hospital Association
- MassMedLine
- SHINE

**Contact us for more information**

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