Healthy Homes Grantees in Region 1, New England

Name of Grantee: The Medical Foundation/New England Asthma Regional Council
Name of Project: New England Healthy Homes
Amount Awarded: $1,000,000
Year of Grant: 2003
Contact:
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Project Partners: Boston Public Health Commission, Boston Urban Asthma Coalition, Vermont Housing and Conservation Board, Boston Housing Authority

Summary of Project Activities:

The Asthma Regional Council created a unique New England Healthy Homes (NEHH) project that demonstrated, promoted, and supported healthy homes activities. The project built on the effective multi-year collaboration among ARC members and leverages over $360,000 of other funds. The project has two core components: Training, Tools and Outreach activities and Urban and Rural Housing Interventions.

Training, Tools and Outreach:
Two key elements of ARC's strategic 12 point Action Plan relate to housing: a) "Create and disseminate guidance for the design, renovation, and maintenance of asthma safe homes. b) Work to have publicly-funded housing agencies programs use asthma safe guidelines during construction, renovation, and maintenance. " In this task, ARC will disseminate and seek adoption of the existing ARC Healthy Homes Building Guidance (HHBG). The team will target affordable housing financiers, developers, community groups, contractors, and maintenance companies. The ARC's HHBG is recognized regionally and nationally as being relevant, effective, and affordable. ARC will also conduct training on healthy homes building practices for code inspectors throughout the region. This training can reach individuals on the front lines who inspect existing housing as well as housing under construction. ARC's Housing Committee members have helped to define these critical undertakings ensuring state support for the actions. By working at a regional level, the ARC can leverage resources taking work done in one state or city and sharing it with others. This strategy has also been fruitful in terms of building momentum for healthy homes.

Urban and Rural Housing Interventions
The team will demonstrate two types of interventions: low cost comprehensive healthy homes interventions in homes of children with asthma and stand-alone Integrated Pest Management treatments. The broad healthy homes interventions will occur in an urban setting (Boston - 70 units) and in a rural setting (Vermont - 30 units). These 100 intervention units will include federally assisted housing 8 well as private low-income landlords and residents. Interventions will cost on average- $2500 and be evaluated to document changes in housing condition, health hazards and self-reported health outcomes. The NEHH project will also demonstrate and document how to pursue Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in a multi-family building. The NEHH project will institute IPM evaluation and control measures in conjunction with resident education to reduce pests, a key asthma trigger. The team will document the cost effectiveness of this approach and disseminate tools (videos, model forms and contracts) and results for potential adoption of IPM by other large property owners including housing authorities.
Partner Organizations:

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Product Outcomes/Outputs:  
- 3,000 affordable housing units will be constructed or rehabilitated following healthy building practices.  
- 30,000 affordable housing units will be maintained as healthy homes.  
- Healthy homes practices will be incorporated into the construction standards of four state housing finance agencies.  
- Core technical resources will be developed and disseminated: Property Maintenance Guidance for Healthy Housing and Flooring Choices for Affordable and Healthy Housing.  
- Training will be provided to 200 code inspectors, 70 residents, and 100 affordable housing professionals.  
- More than 40 outreach and awareness meetings, trainings, and forums will be held.  
- Housing interventions will occur in 100 low-income homes with asthmatic children.  
- IPM treatments will be performed at an 86 unit building creating an IPM model for use with large housing authorities or landlords.