



## RELEASE

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### **Delaware Public Health Institute (DPHI) Releases the First State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) Annual Report addressing mental health and encouraging healthy lifestyles.**

*DPHI continues implementation by conducting community needs assessments in the state of DE.*

**WILMINGTON, DE**— [Delaware Public Health Institute](#) the state's first public health institute developed through a partnership between Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) and the University of Delaware, released its first [Delaware State Health Improvement Plan](#) (SHIP) Annual Report. With input from the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH) in the Department of Health and Social Services and several community partners, Delaware SHIP is a comprehensive statewide health improvement plan that works to continually address core health issues in the state of Delaware through a collaborative network of stakeholders.

“The release of the Delaware SHIP Annual Report marks an essential first step toward a healthier community through an ongoing, systematic, coordinated, quality improvement process in the state,” said Francine Axler, PHMC’s Executive Director, DPHI. “We look forward to sustaining and enhancing improvements recommended by SHIP. We will also continue to work on gathering data and information from the Household Health Survey and the needs assessments for the next planning phase.”

Over the past year, a three-stage process was conducted with 33 key stakeholders from across the state. Based on this process, the SHIP action plan developed two priority goals: healthy lifestyles and access to mental health in Delaware.

#### **Healthy Lifestyles:**

SHIP addressed assuring an infrastructure necessary to increase the adoption of healthy eating and active living in three ways:

1. Maximizing and developing resources through the development of a funding and sustainability plan for the [Motivate the First State](#), a pilot health promotion campaign that puts the power of healthier behaviors to work for the greater good of Delaware residents. To date, more than 5,500 participants have enrolled in Motivate the First State (MTFS) with more than 50,000 activities, nearly 100,000 miles, more than 25,000 hours of activity logged, nearly 90 million steps taken, and nearly 15 million calories burned.
2. Building support and creating more access to promote behavioral changes for healthier lifestyle choices. A statewide promotional platform for MTFS was created with DPH and many public-private partners. Additional announcements are coming in February 2016 from MTFS and DPH as the healthy lifestyles project further expands its goals and partnerships.
3. Optimizing and aligning efforts. Three interventions were selected to help provide healthy eating and active living: the expansion of Farmers’ Markets into low income and food desert areas, development and implementation of sustainable community gardens,

and improvement of city, county and state parks to include safe walking trails and other equipment to promote physical activity

### **Access to Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services:**

SHIP addressed improving access to mental health and substance abuse services and supports, including prevention, early intervention and treatment for all in four ways:

1. Integrating care throughout life by filling gaps in mental and behavioral care by assisting with provider incentive identification and supporting information network expansion and promoting care coordination throughout one's life. The Delaware Center for Health Innovation ([DCHI](#)) is creating a website with videos and animated tools to engage patients and help them with informed decision making regarding health care and behavioral health services.
2. Enhancing the behavioral health workforce through continuing education by providing services for preparatory education at middle and high school career and technical education programs, associate's degree programs, four-year college programs, and graduate and post-graduate disciplines. In 2015 workgroups began increasing access to training resources by working with the Medical Society of Delaware in partnership with Christiana Care, Delaware Professional Counselors and the University of Wilmington offering training on substance abuse, and Central East Addiction Technology Transfer Center offering a two-day conference.
3. Improving early detection, screening, intervention and prevention through implementation of a well-researched screening instrument and integrated system processes across multiple sectors and developing a payment model that reimburses for behavioral health screenings and care. Both were accomplished through the first Community Outreach, Referral and Identification (CORE) screeners' training and the implementation of the Behavioral Health Works screening program in primary care physician offices.
4. Increasing awareness of mental health and substance use issues and the available prevention and treatment resources through education and marketing efforts around the CORE program and the [HelpIsHereDE.com](#), a website created by the Department of Health and Social Services as part of a larger effort to increase information and access to substance abuse prevention and treatment.

As part of the continuation of the SHIP process for 2016, DPHI will conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) across the state. The CHNA will integrate qualitative and quantitative data, which includes socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the population, health issues across the state, discussion of contributing causes of health challenges, and a listing of state assets and resources that can be utilized to address health issues, and the distribution of the preliminary assessment. In addition to the community needs assessment, DPHI has completed the fielding of the first Household Health Survey (DE HHS) in 2,500 households across the state. These data will provide a comprehensive picture of unmet needs at the state, county and sub-county level.

In January, DPHI will meet with the key stakeholders in the state to kick-off the 2016 process in order to continue to develop, document, and implement a process to issue a revised SHIP every three years that will continue to address the public health issues that are most pressing in an effective, organized and collaborative ways.

For more information or to see the SHIP Annual Report, please visit [www.delawarephi.org](http://www.delawarephi.org).

**About Delaware Public Health Institute**

The Delaware Public Health Institute (DPHI) is a nonprofit in collaboration between founding partners Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC), Pennsylvania's public health institute and the University of Delaware, College of Health Sciences (CHS). DPHI is the first and only public health institute in Delaware.

**About the State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP)**

The Delaware State Health Improvement Plan (SHIP) is a project of the State of Delaware, Division of Public Health, which is designed to address core health issues identified for action by Delaware communities. DPHI, in partnership with the Delaware Division of Public Health houses SHIP.