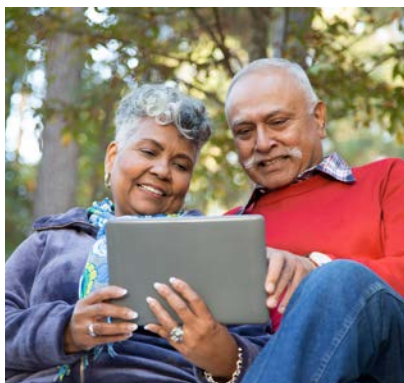


Million Hearts[®] in Municipalities Tool Kit



Module 4: Communication



Acknowledgments

This Million Hearts® in Municipalities Tool Kit was completed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in collaboration with the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) with the goal of helping health departments and municipal organizations implement Million Hearts® strategies at a local level. NACCHO is an association that provides advocacy, leadership, subject matter expertise, and resources to 3,000 local public health departments across the United States.

Contributors

The following individuals contributed subject matter expertise and/or had a major role in the design and format of the document: Erica Hamilton Franks, MPH; Judy Hannan, RN, MPH; Calondra Tibbs, MPH; Sheree Keitt, MPH; Truemenda Green; Andrea Neiman, PhD; Leslie Given, MPA; and Karin Hohman, RN, MBA.

Reviewers

The following individuals reviewed and provided feedback on the document: Janet Wright, MD, FACC; Robin Rinker, MPH; Lauren Elsberry, MPH; Shelby Barnes, MPH; Johanna Segovia, MPH; Stephanie Weiss, MPH; Charles Welge; Mark Gallegos; Amanda Robison-Chadwick, PhD, MPH; and Doris Lassiter.

For more information, e-mail millionhearts@cdc.gov.

Million Hearts® in Municipalities: Communication

Table of Contents

Module Overview	iv
Scope and User Outcomes.....	iv
Section 1: Introduction	1
Million Hearts® Communication Activities	1
Key Communication Principles.....	1
Section 2: Customization	2
Section 3: Readiness Assessment.....	4
Readiness for Million Hearts® Communication Activities	4
Section 4: Action Planning.....	5
Getting Started.....	5
Developing an Action Plan	5
Section 5: Resources	6

Module Overview

Scope and User Outcomes

The Million Hearts® in Municipalities* Tool Kit is intended to assist local and state departments of health to be active partners in the Million Hearts® initiative, which will henceforth be referred to as MH.

What's included?

- Introduction to key concepts and principles to support MH communication activities
- Readiness Assessment and Action Plan to initiate or enhance MH communication activities
- Resources related to communicating about MH efforts

What's not included?

- This module does not provide a step-by-step approach to developing a communication plan for your MH initiative. Instead, it provides key communication information and resources to consider when building and enhancing your MH efforts.

Expected outcomes for module users:

- Be able to identify communication priorities.
- Be able to create an Action Plan for MH communication activities.
- Increase awareness of recommendations and resources on developing, sustaining, and enhancing MH communication activities.

* The term "municipality" is used loosely throughout all modules of this Tool Kit. You may be able to implement these strategies in your city, town, county, state, or other jurisdiction.

Section 1: Introduction

Million Hearts® Communication Activities

MH communication materials are focused on clearly explaining the initiative. This includes selling the concept of preventing one million cardiovascular events by broadly sharing the goals, targets, and evidence-based strategies. Over the years, municipal efforts have developed, and many partners have created materials that speak to these efforts. Use existing MH materials and, if necessary, develop additional materials that communicate tailored messages related to your MH goals, efforts, and successes.

Municipal MH communication activities should include the following:

- Communication objectives tailored to key strategies to be implemented.
- Generous use of existing MH materials; MH web content can be easily embedded into existing websites.
- Development of municipal materials, if needed.
- Use of partner communication channels to disseminate your messages.

Key Communication Principles

- **Be clear and concise.** Communication activities should use clear, concise materials and tools that are readily available for partners.
- **Include call-to-action messaging.** Tell your audience what you want them to do (e.g., implement hypertension protocols, work with community members to improve hypertension control). Strive to communicate the science behind MH with action-oriented print and visual messaging.
- **Combine expertise and science.** Engage science and policy leaders when planning your communication strategy to help maintain focus on the overall goal and evidence-based strategies.
- **Know the audience.** Understanding your audience is key to guiding effective communication efforts.
- **Communicate success stories.** Nothing breeds success like success. Find the partners in your area that are having an impact in cardiovascular health and highlight their work. See the resource list in Section 5 for an example of an MH success story.
- **Identify opportunities.** Conduct environmental scans regularly to identify opportunities to connect MH with other municipal initiatives, events, and trends.

Section 2: Customization

Use your organization’s existing communication strategies and channels to spread the word about your MH efforts. Additionally, use national MH communication resources to help your partners see that they are a part of this national effort:

- Feel free to place the MH logo on all of your communication materials. See our [logo guidelines](#).
- Sign up for the [MH e-updates](#). Send updates of your municipal MH efforts to millionhearts@cdc.gov that we can include and disseminate. Encourage your partners to do the same.
- Use the sample [Partner Presentation Slide Deck](#) to present on your MH efforts. Encourage your partners to do the same.
- Spread the word about your MH efforts using social media outlets, such as [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#). See [Table 1](#) for some examples of MH social media messages.
- Use the [MH for Clinicians microsite](#) to embed syndicated MH content, including evidence-based protocols, action guides, and other quality improvement tools on your website to help clinicians and other health professionals reduce their patients’ risk for a heart attack or stroke.

Table 1. Sample Social Media Messages

Channel	Message
Twitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread the word! @MillionHeartsUS 2022 aims to prevent 1 million #cardiovascular events over 5 years. Learn more. http://bit.ly/2l2QKNi • We support @MillionHeartsUS evidence-based strategies to prevent 1 million #cardiovascular events over 5 years. http://bit.ly/2l2QKNi • We’re aligning our #cardiovascular disease prevention efforts with @MillionHeartsUS strategies. http://bit.ly/2l2QKNi • #HeartHealth is our priority! We’re partnering w/ @MillionHeartsUS to prevent 1M heart attacks & strokes by 2022. http://bit.ly/2l2QKNi • YOU can help prevent 1M heart attacks and strokes in the U.S. by 2022. Change will happen only if everyone takes small, consistent steps toward better heart health. Get started today! http://bit.ly/2MsToLu #VitalSigns @CDCgov @MillionHeartsUS

Channel	Message
Facebook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We support Million Hearts [tag] evidence-based strategies to prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes by 2022. Visit the Million Hearts® website to learn more about the initiative and available resources. http://bit.ly/2l2QKNi • As a Million Hearts [tag] partner, we're committed to preventing 1 million heart attacks and strokes over the next 5 years. Visit the Million Hearts® website to learn about Million Hearts® 2022 priorities and strategies. http://bit.ly/2l2QKNi • We're aligning our cardiovascular disease prevention efforts with Million Hearts [tag] strategies. Together, we can prevent 1 million heart attacks and strokes over the next 5 years! Learn more about Million Hearts® 2022 resources and strategies for partners. http://bit.ly/2l2QKNi • Heart health is our number 1 priority. That's why we're joining Million Hearts [tag] to prevent 1 million cardiovascular events by 2022. Learn more about the Million Hearts® 2022 initiative and strategies to keep people healthy and optimize care in your community. http://bit.ly/2l2QKNi • Heart disease and strokes are costly and common—and in 2016, 1 in 3 of these life-changing events happened in adults ages 35–64. The good news is that up to 80% of these events are preventable. Explore proven prevention strategies in the latest CDC [tag] Vital Signs. http://bit.ly/2MsToLu Million Hearts [tag]

Million Hearts® Communication Approaches

- **Provide tools and trainings for others.** Give partners the tools and messages they need to promote your MH efforts. Be open to using, rebranding, or promoting their materials to more quickly build up available resources.
- **Disseminate guidelines for using the MH logo.** Remember that it's not about spreading the MH logo or brand; it's about conveying important cardiovascular messages to motivate change. Use the MH logo when helpful, but stay focused on calls to action.
- **Establish targeted media outlets.** This will assist in getting the appropriate messages to your audience.
- **Simplify the messages.** Cardiovascular disease (CVD) prevention and promoting cardiovascular health can be complex. It is helpful to state aims, strategies, and outcomes as simply as possible.
- **Find and share survivor and success stories.**

Section 3: Readiness Assessment

Readiness for Million Hearts® Communication Activities

The statements below are intended to identify current municipal strengths, opportunities, and gaps in your MH communication efforts. If possible, complete the following assessment with key internal staff and a couple external partners who are already working and/or have an interest in cardiovascular disease (CVD) prevention.

As a group, read each statement in the assessment and indicate which number best describes your current situation on a scale of 0 to 5, where 0 indicates “This is not happening at the municipal level” and 5 indicates “This is happening in a robust way at the municipal level.”

After completing, discuss why you rated each statement as you did. Then, go to the next section to identify ways to develop an effective communication plan to help initiate or enhance your MH efforts.

Table 2. Readiness Assessment for Initiating or Enhancing Million Hearts® Communications Efforts

Municipal Communication Activities	0	1	2	3	4	5
We have identified our priorities in cardiovascular health and determined which ones need to be a focus in our communication efforts.						
We have reviewed MH and other websites to see what communications materials are already available.						
We have developed an MH communication plan and/or priorities.						
We have identified staff who are responsible for implementing the MH communication plan.						
We have identified audiences and methods to reach those audiences.						
We have identified multiple methods for communication (e.g., print, social media, municipal speakers, websites).						
We have identified ways to measure our MH communication efforts so that we know whether we are reaching our audiences.						

Section 4: Action Planning

After assessing current strengths, opportunities, and gaps, you/your planning team should begin to develop next steps or actions to move MH efforts forward. Action plans should focus on a few priority areas that would most benefit municipal CVD prevention efforts.

- Use the Action Plan template below (Table 3) to identify the next steps, who is responsible for each step, and your due dates.

Getting Started

- Review the results of the Readiness Assessment to identify a few immediate priorities on which you can begin to work. To choose these priorities:
 - Look at the statements you ranked 4 and 5 and ask, “What is the best way to leverage or expand on this strength as our MH efforts are developed or enhanced?”
 - Look at the statements you ranked 1, 2, and 3 and ask, “Will this gap delay or prevent progress on our MH efforts? If so, how can this gap or asset be strengthened?”

Developing an Action Plan

Use the template below or one you develop to outline the next steps for you/your planning team. Actions should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. Identify who, on the team, will be responsible and the expected date of completion. Any resources that will be needed to complete the action should also be identified at this time. Plan to meet regularly to revisit the action items and provide updates on progress and/or barriers.

Table 3. Action Plan Template

Actions to Take	Who is Responsible	Due Date	Resources Needed	Notes

Section 5: Resources

The following resources can support your MH communications.

Table 4. Communications Resources

Resource	Description
<p>Million Hearts® Success Story http://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@adv/documents/downloadable/ucm_479859.pdf</p>	<p>This webpage provides an example of a successful implementation of MH strategies at the municipal level.</p>
<p>Million Hearts® News and Media Resources http://millionhearts.hhs.gov/news-media/index.html</p>	<p>This webpage provides news releases and announcements about MH. It also allows partners to share information and important messages related to CVD.</p>
<p>Forbes Article on Million Hearts® 2022 Communication Strategies https://www.forbes.com/sites/carminegallo/2018/10/31/a-national-health-campaign-skillfully-uses-communication-to-save-one-million-lives/#6d0f22c8f9be</p>	<p>This article explains key communication strategies used in national MH efforts.</p>
<p>Million Hearts® Sample Partner Presentation https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/files/MillionHearts2022-Sample-Partner-Presentation.pptx</p>	<p>This resource was developed to help MH partners communicate about their actions to support the initiative with other heart health stakeholders and potential partners nationwide.</p>
<p>Million Hearts® Logo Guidelines https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/news-media/media/logos.html</p>	<p>These guidelines on how to use the MH logo and trademark allow easy access to MH logos and badges for use in print and online materials.</p>
<p>Million Hearts® e-Update https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/news-media/news.html</p>	<p>The e-Update helps you stay connected with MH. Encourage partners to sign up as well.</p>
<p>Million Hearts® for Clinicians Microsite https://tools.cdc.gov/medialibrary/index.aspx#/microsite/id/279017</p>	<p>This microsite is a collection of MH content, including evidence-based protocols, action guides, and other quality improvement tools you can embed on your website to help clinicians and other health professionals reduce their patients' risk for a heart attack or stroke.</p>

Resource	Description
<p>Million Hearts® Cardiac Rehabilitation https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/tools-protocols/tools/cardiac-rehabilitation.html</p>	<p>This webpage includes tools and resources on cardiac rehabilitation for physicians, partners, and patients that can be included in MH communications.</p>
<p>Million Hearts® Particle Pollution https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/tools-protocols/tools/particle-pollution.html</p>	<p>This webpage provides tools and resources on particulate matter and CVD that can be included in MH communications.</p>
<p>Million Hearts® Prevention https://millionhearts.hhs.gov/learn-prevent/prevention.html</p>	<p>This webpage explains the ABCS of heart health.</p>
<p>CDC Office on Smoking and Health <i>Tips from Former Smokers Campaign Resources</i> https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/resources/index.html</p>	<p>This webpage provides information on the health consequences of smoking and tools and resources to help spread the word, including buttons, badges, videos, social media content, print ads, and information for specific audiences.</p>
<p>CDC Active People, Healthy Nation Framework https://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/downloads/Active_People_Healthy_Nation_role-of-public-health_082018_508.pdf</p>	<p>This five-step framework provides actions for communities to take to increase physical activity.</p>
<p>CDC Sodium Reduction in Communities Program (SRCP) https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/programs/srcp/resources.htm</p>	<p>This webpage describes the SRCP and how to implement sodium reduction strategies in your community.</p>