

“In a Heartbeat” AMI Community Engagement (ACE) Toolkit Training

What: The “*In a Heartbeat*” toolkit is a resource for community members to use, that stresses the importance of calling 911 quickly, and accessing medical treatment as soon as possible after witnessing or experiencing heart attack symptoms. Our goal is to train volunteers about this important issue, so that all communities can educate at-risk community members and their loved ones about heart attacks and timely treatment. Standardized materials and messages provide a consistent message across Maine. The toolkit consists of: a trainer’s guide, PowerPoint presentations, a storyboard, a handout, and magnet that emphasize the signs and symptoms of heart attacks, and the need to call 9-1-1 immediately after symptoms begin. It also includes a survey template that trainers can use if they wish to evaluate the effect of the training and toolkit in their community.

Why: One of the priority recommendations of “*In a Heartbeat’s*” AMI Community Engagement (ACE) workgroup is to develop and distribute a set of consistent state-wide messages and resources relative to heart attack, in order to overcome barriers to calling 911 such as confusion, embarrassment, or lack of knowledge. A toolkit with evidence-based messages and resources that can be used by state and community partners will assist us in reaching this goal.

Partners and Target Audience: “*In a Heartbeat*” wants to partner with local organizations that wish to raise awareness of symptoms and promote the use of 911 for heart attack in their communities:

- Regional and local Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel - including but not limited to current Maine HeartSafe Communities
- Hospitals - including all staff with interest in cardiovascular health
- Local Healthy Maine Partnerships (HMPs) and Healthy Community Coalitions (HCCs)
- Other interested community organizations

The target audience will be residents in your community, who are at increased risk of heart attack, due to modifiable risk factors, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, physical inactivity, poor nutrition, tobacco use, etc., and/or risk factors that can’t be changed, such as existing disease, past heart attack, and/or other cardiovascular events, age, gender, etc.

How/Where: In an effort to reach a broad number of participants throughout the state, toolkit trainings will be conducted in four regions:

1. Northern Maine: Presque Isle – Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP)
2. Central/Eastern Maine: Bangor – NorthEast EMS at Eastern Maine Community College
3. Western Maine: Farmington – Franklin Memorial Hospital
4. Southern Maine: Scarborough – MaineHealth Learning Resource Center

Goals for “In a Heartbeat” trainees:

- Conduct at least 1 training per year, to increase the number of community partners and/or organizations able to deliver consistent heart attack awareness messaging in your region. For instance, you could train the Emergency Response Team at a local business to deliver heart attack education to their fellow employees, or train staff at the local YMCA to deliver the message to their member populations.

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- Conduct at least 1 educational activity per year, to increase the number of residents who know the symptoms of heart attack and the importance of calling 9-1-1 immediately. For example, you could present at a local housing development for the elderly, or at a monthly civic group meeting.