

Asthma Alliance of Indianapolis 2008 Draft Action Plan

Background:

A strategic planning session was held on October 26, 2007 to discuss the mission and goals of the Asthma Alliance of Indianapolis. The need to create a “work plan” of specific activities for 2008 was also a significant part of the meeting’s agenda. The goal of this session was to discuss – as concretely as possible – the activities that the Alliance needs to focus on at the “front-line level.”

Some key themes that emerged from the session included the need to:

- Re-energize/re-engage current Alliance members
- Attract new members to the Alliance
- Gather better data
- Spend fundraising time/effort in proportion to the return gained
- Better communicate the work of the Alliance to partners and other stakeholders

Organizational Goals Review

The current public goals of the Asthma Alliance of Indianapolis are:

- Decrease the number of emergency room visits and hospitalizations among children with asthma
- Decrease school absenteeism due to asthma complications
- Increase the use of the National Institutes of Health/Asthma Management guidelines among health care providers

Discussion: After reviewing these goals it was determined that they do not necessarily reflect the current broad mission and direct-service activities of the Alliance. The goals were considered too prescriptive and do not truly convey the work being done.

The high-level goals might be most accurately reflected in the three broad categories that encompass the work the Alliance performs. Its goals are to:

- Educate
- Advocate
- Serve

These three key words could be the basis of a new mission statement/goals.

Many functions are performed under each of these three main areas and different stakeholders address each one. To be as action-oriented as possible, the strategic planning session attendees focused on items that could and should be addressed in the upcoming year.

While no final decisions were made, the activities suggested fell into several distinct categories:

Board Issues

Membership – the Alliance needs to better engage/re-engage its members. It is possible different representatives from current member organizations need to be contacted and it was also agreed that each representative on the Alliance should better inform the members of their own organizations about the work of the Alliance.

New Members/New Partners – Many natural stakeholders and potential members of the Alliance were identified during a brainstorming session. Potential members to be approached include Parish Nurses, Schools of Nursing, Indiana University School of Public and Environmental Affairs, Indiana University School of Social Work, Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, Insurance Companies, Physician Associations, Day Care Providers, School Corporations, other Health Care Providers.

While everyone agreed new members and partners are needed, there is no formal system to identify and approach potential new members and partners. As part of their annual Commitment to the Alliance, members should – each year – send the names of potential new members/partners and a master list of prospects could be created.

Prospects could be invited to an annual “meet-and-greet”/open house held to familiarize people with the work the Alliance, perhaps with a high-profile guest speaker. Another option would be to have a small group of Alliance members meet with prospects to determine how they could learn about and be a help to the organization.

Volunteers - they are needed to conduct awareness/training sessions and assist the Alliance in other ways, such as outreach and fundraising. Several groups to be approached were identified, including middle and high-school students, nursing school students, parents of affected children, school-based parent groups, MSW students and business school students.

Like new members, there is no organized system to identify and recruit volunteers. Alliance members, as part of their annual Commitment Form, should be asked suggest new sources of volunteers. Once a master list is created, the Alliance can rank the suggestions based on the work that needs to be done. In order to get the most helpful suggestions from members, the Alliance should send a list of tasks (and the training needed for each) that have to be done when asking members for suggestions.

Fundraising

The Alliance has held an annual golf outing, which yields approximately \$4,000 after expenses. Discussion centered on the time it takes to plan the event and there was a strong feeling expressed that the same amount of funds, if not more, could be raised with less effort.

If the decision is made not to hold the golf outing, other fundraising activities to be divided among a “fundraising committee” of Alliance members could include:

Applications to local and national foundations that fund health initiatives

Solicitations of all Alliance members – regardless of giving level, should every Alliance member be required to make a donation?

Solicitation to Businesses, Community Groups and Service Organizations – including, but not limited to: Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary, etc.; Physicians Associations and individual practices, Insurance Companies, Hospitals, Pharmaceutical Companies.

Outreach

Letting people know about what the Alliance has to offer is one of the most important tasks at hand, but it sometimes takes a back seat to doing actual hands-on work.

To have a successful outreach program, which can also assist in fundraising, the Alliance must identify the groups it wants to focus on and create needed tools to get the message out.

2008 Activities

I. Alliance Membership Commitment Forms

Ask each Alliance member to fill out a 2008 Commitment Form

SAMPLE COMMITMENT FORM

Name:

I/my organization is willing to conduct the following activities in 2008.
(Check all that apply)

- Inform members of my organization about the work of the Alliance by making a presentation, providing materials for a newsletter or _____ (list other activity)
- Identify potential new members
- Identify and help solicit new donors
- Identify and help train volunteers
- Make presentations about the Alliance to professional and service groups
- Include information about the Alliance in my organization newsletters/website
- Assist in fundraising events
- Help create outreach/communication materials
- Assist in grant research and writing
- Deliver Asthma Education in Schools for Students and/or Staff (# of sessions?)
- Deliver Asthma Education in Schools for Staff and/or Parents (# of sessions?)
- Help Staff Community Events
- Other activities _____

Additionally, my organization will donate \$_____ to the Alliance this year.

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II. Alliance Toolkit

In order for Alliance members to help engage members, find new ones and attract funders, they must have materials to “make their case.”

Materials that would be useful include:

Presentation kits – including PowerPoint, talking points, handouts. Slightly different versions would be needed for different audiences. Service groups could get a handout “Facts About Asthma in Indianapolis” and a sheet that lists “How You Can Help” with specifics about volunteer opportunities and what funding pays for – i.e. \$XXX pays for a home visit that includes XXX.

Professional, medical groups would get a more clinical presentation on treatment guidelines, prevalence in Indianapolis, and how they could support the Alliance (volunteer/financial).

Research data – being able to pinpoint prevalence and costs associated with prevention and treatment services would give Alliance members persuasive evidence to help educate stakeholder groups and potential funders and supporters.

III. Action Time Line

JANUARY – MARCH

Alliance sends members Commitment Forms and a list of the specific things it needs members or volunteers to do. (i.e. conduct education sessions)

Alliance Members sign commitment forms

Organize and conduct one training session to educate volunteers

Set fundraising targets

Notes: most organizations have an annual “stretch” – i.e. raise 5% more than the year before. Your members should be told “we raised \$XXX in 2007 and need to raise \$XXX in 2008. If you determine the golf outing is not worth the time, I would suggest creating a plan that shoots to raise just a little bit more and then determine how to get it done.

Options:

- Add a platinum sponsor at \$1,000
- Raise Bronze; Silver, Gold to \$250, \$500, \$1,000
- Raise membership to \$50
- Ask each member to bring in just one new lower-level sponsor
- Apply for \$2,500 in funding from four new sources

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- Create an annual fundraising mailing (need a 501c3 partner) – could be linked to World Asthma Day/Poster Contest.
- Hold an annual a.m. or late-afternoon open-house for members and prospective new members with a speaker and ask organizations to be sponsors (Charge \$500-\$1,000 for two-three sponsors who would be recognized at the event. Another could donate light refreshments). Law firms, hospitals, medical practices, pharmaceutical companies, etc. may be particularly interested in sponsorship opportunities. This kind of event will take work, but I think it would be less work than a golf-outing.

All available data gathered for grant applications

Commitment from members willing to be 501c3 partner for grants requiring non-profit status of recipients

Create standard presentation kit for members to address community and professional audiences. Ask Alliance members to suggest audiences, and then prioritize them. Possible audiences include:

- Hospital Rounds
- Nursing Organizations
- Social Worker Organizations
- Teacher/School Administrator Organizations
- Parent organizations
- Annual Physician Association Meetings (general, pediatricians, etc.)
- Annual Head Start conference
- FSSA officials (because of the Medicaid link)
- Service Clubs – Lions, Kiwanis, Rotary, service sororities and fraternities
- Business Groups: Chamber of Commerce, Large Employers
- Student groups (high school and University)
- Law Firms (many have lunch-time education sessions about community issues)

APRIL-JUNE

Outreach presentations made to three new audiences. These audiences should be chosen because they need your information, and because they may be potential financial supporters or sources of volunteers.

One fundraising activity conducted (i.e., mailing, grant application, presentation to potential funder)

One new volunteer recruitment activity

Alliance sub group determines what data is needed; requests for data made to those who collect needed information

Create short article to put in Alliance member newsletters/websites

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JULY-SEPTEMBER

Outreach presentations made to three new audiences

One fundraising activity conducted (i.e., mailing, grant application, presentation to potential funder)

One new volunteer recruitment activity

Assess effectiveness of presentations; make changes as needed

Distribute press release in time for “back-to-school” when parents are thinking about physicals

OCTOBER-DECEMBER

Outreach presentations made to three new audiences

One fundraising activity conducted (i.e., mailing, grant application, presentation to potential funder)

One new volunteer recruitment activity

Organize and conduct one training session to educate volunteers

Create short article to put in Alliance member newsletters/websites

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IV. Contacts – potential sources of information, funding, volunteers

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