

Massachusetts

Awareness Campaign to Help Increase Early Identification of Strokes

Public Health Problem

To avoid duplication of services and fragmentation of resources when there are multiple public health programs targeting the same focus areas.

Program Example

In Massachusetts, the state Coverdell Registry program is successfully integrated into state Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention and Control (HSPC) program's activities, supporting the development of a statewide stroke system of care.

The State HSPC Program developed the Stroke Heroes Act FAST educational campaign that provides community education on the signs and symptoms of stroke. Massachusetts has an innovative state program that certifies and designates acute care hospitals as Primary Stroke Services (PSS) facilities. By providing the signs and symptoms campaign materials to PSS hospitals at no cost through the HSPC program, the MA Coverdell Registry program has helped all 57 Coverdell enrolled hospitals reach their communities with an effective awareness campaign to help increase early identification of strokes. Early community identification of stroke, coupled with an appropriate clinical response from hospitals is crucial to reducing deaths and disability from strokes.

Implications and Impact

More communities were reached with a local Act FAST campaign. Coordination of these efforts will lead to an increased ability to monitor the impact of campaigns, most notably on the mode of transportation patients used to get to the Emergency Room and the time from symptom onset to treatment. Through this integrative effort, both programs work synergistically to maximize their resources, support hospital efforts to improve quality of care, and evaluate the impact of the statewide stroke system of care.