

**Montana Council on Homelessness  
Information and Data Dissemination:  
*Getting the Word Out***

- I. Listserv: Montana has started a listserv on homelessness. This is a valuable way to build a database of people with an interest in the topic, and to disseminate information.
  - A. One method of getting the word out is adding a signature to every e-mail with instructions for joining the listserv
  - B. There are instructions on the MCH Web site for joining the listserv, and all information disseminated through the listserv is posted there.
  - C. This is not an arduous process. We maintain a simple Excel spreadsheet that includes a name and an e-mail address. This takes only minutes a day to maintain.
  
- II. E-newsletter (MCH e-News): An e-newsletter is disseminated to the listserv in PDF format. It brings information/news together in one place and goes out approximately biweekly, or as needed. That way people are not inundated, and because it's attractive, they *want* to read it. It's usually four pages, but since it's electronic, it can vary in length without incurring additional cost.
  
- III. Articles in other journals: We have recently included articles in Montana's professional prevention journal, the *Prevention Connection*. This is published quarterly by the Prevention Resource Center and can be found online at [www.state.mt.us/prevention](http://www.state.mt.us/prevention). This gets information out to a broad audience of more than 2,000 subscribers, including legislators. At this point, there is a waiting list to get on the subscription list for hard copies, and new subscribers are asked to access the journal online. We also look for opportunities to use newspapers, other listservs, and through other media.
  
- IV. *Homeless in Montana* is a 24-page report used as a mechanism to open the conversation at numerous levels. It brings together a wide scope of information around the issues attendant to homelessness as they relate to Montana. This is a very useful tool for writing grants, educating, and bringing people to the table. The report, the Executive Order establishing the MCH, and the Council members are all linked to the State Web-site.  
[http://www.dphhs.state.mt.us/news/news\\_releases/may/homeless\\_initiative.htm](http://www.dphhs.state.mt.us/news/news_releases/may/homeless_initiative.htm)
  
- V. Web pages also have been established for the Council at [www.SherrieDowning.com](http://www.SherrieDowning.com). They include the information we've gathered, documents created for the council, the e-newsletter, the report, links to resources on homelessness, and other tools. The benefit to an independent Web site is that it can be updated frequently and there's no limit on how much can be posted.

For more information, contact:

<b>MCH Chair</b>	<b>MCH Sponsor/Staff</b>	<b>MCH Staff</b>
Hank Hudson, Administrator Human & Community Services Division, DPHHS 1400 Broadway Helena, MT 59620 <a href="mailto:hhudson@state.mt.us">hhudson@state.mt.us</a> 406.444.5901	Jim Nolan, Chief Intergovernmental Human Services Bureau, DPHHS 1400 Carter Drive Helena, MT 59620 <a href="mailto:jnolan@state.mt.us">jnolan@state.mt.us</a> 406.447.4260	Sherrie Downing 3362 Tizer Drive Helena, MT 59602 <a href="mailto:DowningSL@bresnan.net">DowningSL@bresnan.net</a> <a href="http://www.SherrieDowning.com">www.SherrieDowning.com</a> 406.443.0580