



ATMCH Strategic Planning Meeting

July 21-22, 2010

Hyatt Lodge at McDonald's Campus
Oak Brook, IL

Meeting Summary

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I. Background:

The Association of Teachers of Maternal and Child Health (ATMCH) aims to provide leadership in education, research, and service in the field of maternal and child health. ATMCH began as a liaison committee of the Association of Directors of Maternal and Child Health and CCS Programs, now known as the Association of Maternal and Child Health Professionals (AMCHP). In this forum, MCH faculty met with MCH directors from the states to discuss curricula, important events, and the academic structure of MCH programs. In 1972, the members of this committee decided to form their own association, separate from AMCHP. ATMCH was thereby formed, and continues to maintain its close ties to AMCHP.

In 1988, the organization received 501-c-3 status, and the ATMCH secretariat was officially formed the next year. In 1999, the secretariat was transferred to the Association of Schools of Public Health in order to fulfill the need for continuous administrative support. (A more detailed history can be found in the "Pre-Meeting Materials" in Appendix I.)

Strategic Planning:

The first ATMCH Strategic Plan was developed for 2002-2004 (Appendix II), which focused on two central themes: "Current and Future Faculty Development" and "Partnerships". In 2007, a working plan and timeline was developed for the next Strategic Plan. A membership survey was conducted in Spring 2008 to assess member needs and future directions (Appendix I, p. 5).

In early 2010, the ATMCH Executive Committee decided to revisit the Strategic Plan in order to assess the organization, revitalize membership, and plan its future course. The Executive Committee organized a Strategic Planning Retreat in July 2010.

Participants from ATMCH membership, ATMCH Executive Committee, future membership (students/trainees), and partner organizations (AMCHP, MCHB, PHTCs) were invited to the two-day meeting to review ATMCH's mission, identify goals and priorities, and lay out action steps to create a strategic plan to build activities and initiatives to meet those goals. Below is a summary of the discussion, conclusions and next steps resulting from the meeting. (A summary of the processes used during this meeting can be found in Appendix III.)

II. July 2010 Strategic Planning Retreat: Summary and Outcomes

The two broad questions underlying strategic planning that guided our process were:

1. What does ATMCH do that no one else is uniquely positioned to do?
2. What needs to happen to transform ATMCH?

A. Trends, Identity, Transformation: Baseline for Strategic Planning:

We began by focusing on trends and observations gathered from the pre-meeting materials, with those two broad questions in mind:

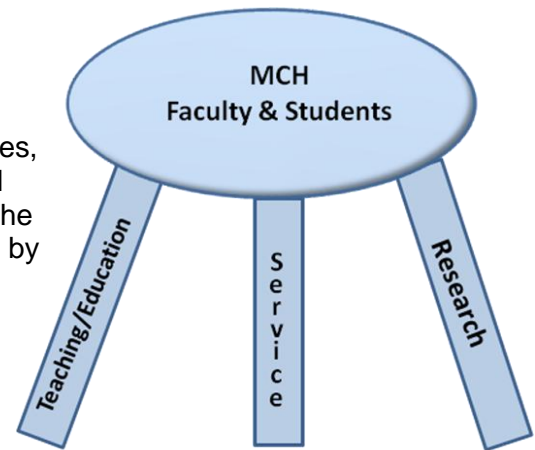
- What are the current trends?
 - ATMCH has experienced a shifting membership over the past five years; with faculty membership declining, and student membership rising.
 - Historically ATMCH membership has indicated low interest in advocacy activities. Is it time to re-evaluate this, especially considering recent health reform legislation (Affordable Care Act)?
 - MCH academia has shifted from what it was when ATMCH was formed. The nature of academics has changed to include a greater focus on funding and less prestige associated with excellence in teaching. Do ATMCH's activities reflect this shift and does ATMCH continue to meet member needs?
- What's the identity of ATMCH?
 - ATMCH fulfills a unique need as a professional home for MCH Academics.
 - Historically it has been a place of collaboration, and strong collegiality. However, it was noted during the discussion that ATMCH has been somewhat insular in its membership and activities (an elite "club"). Do we expand our horizons in terms of membership? Who should be defined as a "teacher" of Maternal and Child Health?
- What should be happening and how should it be done?
 - How can we fulfill our mission, especially if facing cutbacks related to funding and the heightening focus on research? ATMCH needs focus and clarity as related to its mission, goals, and membership. How do we maintain the true essence of MCH in the changing world of academia?
 - We must re-examine roles of members given the shifting trends: Provide opportunities to build relationships between teacher and student members. Consider mentoring and other ways to connect members.
 - What is the potential/future for the organization's direction?

ATMCH's identity:

There was significant discussion about ATMCH's identity as an organization and its niche in the MCH field. The question was posed: Is ATMCH a viable organization? The consensus was that yes, ATMCH is a viable organization that provides a needed service. ATMCH can provide a "voice" for MCH in academic settings.

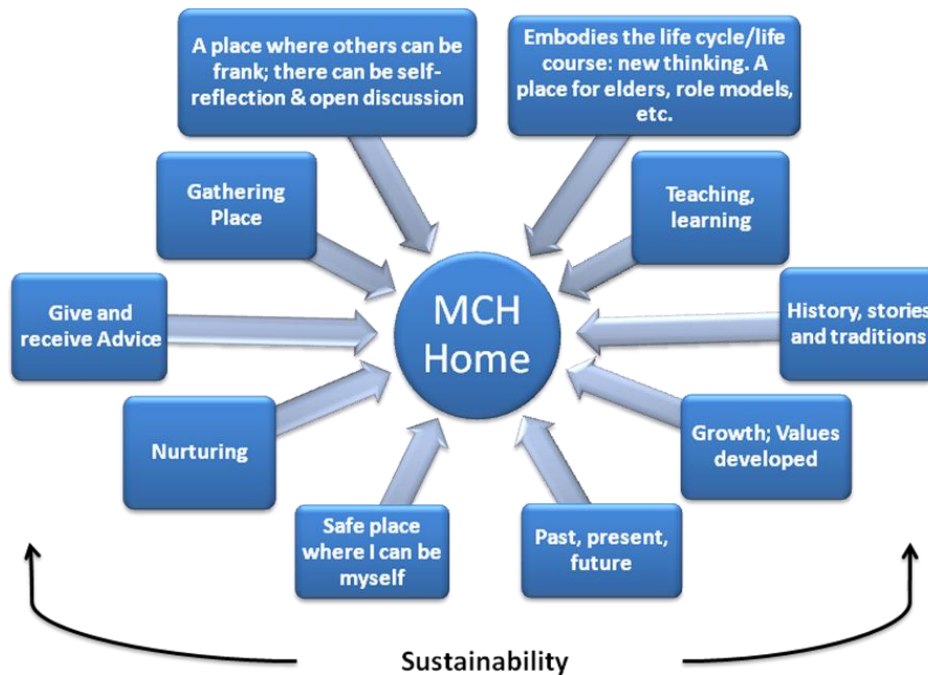
Figure 1: Three-legged stool of MCH Academia

This led to discussion of what it means to be an MCH academic and what does that entail? Are MCH academics only in Schools of Public Health, or does it include those working in MCH training centers, practitioners in communities, etc.? The group agreed upon the conceptualization of MCH academia using the three-legged stool model in Figure 1. The field of MCH academics (faculty and students) is supported by efforts in “Teaching/Education,” “Research,” and “Service.” These are also the three tenets spelled out in ATMCH’s mission statement.



There was also an overwhelming consensus that there should be a “home” for MCH academics, which ATMCH is uniquely positioned (and established) to provide. (A pictorial depiction of this type of “MCH home” based on the discussions is shown in Figure 2).

Figure 2: “There should be a home for MCH academics”



What is ATMCH uniquely positioned to do?

ATMCH can offer a “home” or gathering place for MCH academics, as well as support for their unique needs and challenges. ATMCH is specifically focused on its members’ needs as individuals to succeed and further the field of MCH. This organization can foster a “cornucopia” of knowledge and expertise in order for members to learn and grow from each other. Activities (such as the competencies, case studies, sharing of syllabi, etc.) are successful ways the organization has supported its members.

- *Has there been too much focus on only a small group of members (i.e., MCHB School of Public Health training programs)?*

- *Because of the increasing discussion and focus related to Life Course Perspective, can/should ATMCH serve as the leader in helping other MCH training programs integrate this theory into their curriculum? Should this be a role?*

ATMCH should consider its strengths when planning how to transform its current organization to better meet the needs of its members (existing and future) and the MCH field. Additionally, given the extent to which the organization should transform, ATMCH should consider revisiting its mission/vision statement to better fit the needs of MCH academics and its membership in the current times.

B. Strategic Focus Areas:

In order to help members attain their goals in MCH, ATMCH should identify more clearly what those goals are (particularly for teaching/education, research, and service), and identify areas of focus within the organization in order to achieve those goals.

A brainstorming session resulted in the following areas of focus:



Brief Summaries of the Terms:

- **Resources:** This includes the financial and human resources to carry out organizational goals and activities. ATMCH should consider strategies to increase resources, better utilize current resources, and identify mechanisms to increase resources. Ex., consider offer services for payment to increase revenue (and not rely solely on HRSA funding and membership dues).

- Advocacy: Promoting MCH programs and policies, and more specifically advocating for MCH programs in schools and universities.
- Products & Services: These are what ATMCH offers to members and to the field. Examples include the curricula posted, competencies, case studies, events, etc.
- Organizational structure: ATMCH may want to consider reevaluating the current organizational structure so it better suits the changing needs of members and the organization. For example, should ATMCH create new leadership positions (committee chairs, student liaison, etc.)?
- Membership: Traditionally, ATMCH membership has focused on MCH faculty in schools of public health (and some programs of public health). There was discussion that the teaching and practice of MCH is much broader than just the schools; therefore ATMCH should consider ways to broaden its membership and serve those MCH academics outside the “traditional” scope.
- Excellence: Recognizing and promoting excellence in MCH academia; through awards, collaborations, providing support for members to excel, etc.
- Marketing/Outreach: Strategies for marketing ATMCH’s services and benefits as an organization to members and potential members. Outreach to increase membership, and also to increase awareness of ATMCH and its value as a leader in the MCH field.
- Strategic Partnerships: Identify partnership and possible projects for collaboration with other organizations working to further MCH. Developing these partnerships should entail detailed steps and expectations for the collaboration (goals, commitment for each, etc.).
- Student Role: This refers to student-specific services offered by ATMCH. With the view that students are full-members of ATMCH, it is important to incorporate students fully into the organization.
- Mentoring: Mentorship was a strong emphasis for the organization. This includes faculty-student mentoring, and senior faculty-junior faculty mentoring. This mechanism is a way that ATMCH can help provide guidance to members throughout their MCH academic career.

After further discussion and prioritizing, these categories were folded into the following four areas of strategic areas of focus:

- **Resources**
- **Membership**
- **Products/Services**
- **Advocacy**

Break-out sessions (with a subsequent large group discussion) were held to yield the following preliminary goals and activities under each of the focus areas. Once these goals and activities are developed, ATMCH will use tracking worksheets to lay out a detailed plan. (An example can be found in Appendix IV.)

1. *Resources*

Goal #1: By the end of year 1, develop a financial strategy to procure additional financial resources (fundraising, contracts, partnerships, grants, etc.) to achieve organization mission.

Goal #2: By the end of year 1, develop recommendations for staff and leadership changes based on new strategic plan.

2. Membership

Goal #1: By [date], [ATMCH] will have [X%] of its [200] members who are [involved in] MCH academics in [settings] other than Schools of Public Health.

- Action steps:
 - Identify core elements that comprise “MCH academics” (settings that are engaged in: research education, and service)
 - Conduct a needs assessment (there was some discussion that this was repetitive)
 - Develop an outreach strategy (can we reach out to some sister organizations? Expand the focus to include all MCHB-funded programs? All MCH programs in Schools of Public Health?)
 - Reconsider name of organization

There was much discussion about expanding membership—who do we include? How broad should our reach be? What is the value-added for members? Is ATMCH able to transform to meet the needs of the current academic environment related to research, teaching, and service? Should ATMCH become the organization supporting teaching for all MCHB-related training programs (e.g. LEND, LEAH, PPC)?

How should the role of student members be defined – as full participating members? Should ATMCH seek greater or lesser numbers of student members? Should MCHB trainees be encouraged to join ATMCH?

Another question raised is whether ATMCH should have an emeritus or ‘retired’ membership category.

Also discussed was whether ATMCH should have an organizational, program or department membership category.

3. Products & Services

Goal #1: *By the end of the strategic planning period, we will have an identified set of products & services that meet members’ needs in the areas of: education, research, and service.*

- Action steps:
 - Conduct survey to identify needs in education, research, and service (with ranking/prioritizing of needs)
 - We already have a member survey so the survey may need to focus more on those people who currently are not members of ATMCH but should be (i.e., those in MCHB-funded training programs)
 - A future survey should be conducted using sound methods for identifying respondents sought (i.e., various categories of non-members”; students, former trainees etc.) and received (i.e., sound response rate), some customized questions for various groups, etc.
 - Analyze results. Make recommendations to the Executive Committee.
 - Develop products & services based on results/recommendations. (Continuing existing services if still needed).

- Monitor environment for emerging issues relevant to members.
- Engage in ongoing evaluation of products/services to ensure they continue to meet needs.

4. Advocacy

“Promoting programs & policies, e.g. advocating for field of MCH in schools of PH, professional associations, government relations, providing evidence base” – [Note: will need to flesh out exactly what is meant by this concept. Are we talking about teaching advocacy, developing advocacy skills for MCH educators, practicing advocacy on behalf of the MCH field?]

Goal #1: Advocate for the inclusion of life course into MCH syllabi, curricula, and MCH training programs in 2 yrs.

Goal #2: Offer expert services to other organizations (AMCHP, etc.) involved in direct government advocacy efforts (via consultation, etc.).

Goal #3: Increase MCH content in public health programs via inclusion in CEPH competencies and CPH exam questions.

- *There is a need to promote MCH content in schools beyond public health, such as public policy, social work, child development, medical schools, pediatric residencies, etc. If order to do this we need to think about the need for expansion in focus, changing the name, etc.*
- *Making people realize that even though they don't identify themselves as "MCH" ATMCH has resources for them?*

Goal #4: Advocate for additional \$ for funding MCH programs at the state/national levels

Goal #5: Each year, identify 1 priority area of health care reform/Affordable Care Act implementation of interest to ATMCH members and inform membership.

C. Next Steps:

The following “next steps” were identified to ensure the strategic planning process moves along and the proposed ideas from this meeting can be used to inform an official action plan:

- Rough draft of goals/Meeting summary:
 - Kate: send Draft 1 to Russ by **8/2**
 - Russ: complete edits by **8/9**
 - Send to group for feedback: Return by **8/23**
- Have 1:1 conversations with Executive Committee members by **9/12**
- Have draft of meeting summary/recommendations to board by **9/19** (in conjunction w/ Sept. EC meeting/conference call) Executive committee to determine next steps for introducing plan to membership.
- Mission statement review: by APHA (**Nov. 2010**)
 - Identify subcommittee to do this.