

9th Annual Public Health Nursing Conference

PHN Advocacy Comments

One experience I have had with PHN advocacy in my career is:

“I helped a 10 year old undocumented, non-English speaking Hispanic boy obtain much needed glasses. Also helped this family mom and dad, grandmother, 3 girls and 1 boy obtain dental care and sealants for all children.”

(PHN, Dunn County Health Department)

“Collaborated with supervisor to inform her of hospital that didn’t help Hispanic (undocumented, non-English speaking) women apply for social security cards for their newborns, but did for non-Hispanic, English speaking mothers. Policy is now changed.”

(PHN, Dunn County Health Department)

“Our agency has collaborated with agencies and disciplines in NW Wisconsin to improve the quality and availability of oral care for people with developmental disabilities.”

(PHN, Community Integration Initiative)

“Getting standing orders for “method in advance” so teens can get birth control immediately, instead of having to wait for a day off of school to get their physical and pap first.”

(PHN, Washburn County Health Department)

“Providing verbal and written testimony on proposed public health legislation.”

(Health Officer, Wood County Health Department)

“Development of the “Just Get Me Through This” monthly career education and support show.”

(PHN, Trempealeau County Health Department)

“Promotion of immunization program – promotion of WIR.”

(Community Health Nurse, Oneida Community Health)

“Advocating for clients to get access to dental care, when area dentists will not accept MA clients and the uninsured. Advocating for the community as a whole to meet the goals and objectives of Healthiest Manitowoc County 2010 through our subcommittee’s health initiatives.”

(PHN, Manitowoc County Health Department)

“Developing a Global Health course.”
(Academia, UW – Eau Claire)

“WWWP, immunizations, nail care for elderly, resource for individuals for referral on other programs.”
(PHN, Taylor County Health Department)

“As the facilitator of our tobacco coalition I take youth around to do WI Wins tobacco compliance checks. This was our 3rd year doing it and we had a 0 non-compliance rate!”
(PHN, Taylor County Health Department)

“Talking with local OB department to promote the continuance of good health care to their patients by referrals to PH upon discharge. Plus working with PH nurses while patients are there so the transition is smooth and best for every one.”
(PHN, Taylor County Health Department)

“We were able to obtain funding for lead abatement from the city.”
(PHN, Wauwatosa Health Department)

“Advocating for a disabled couple who had their baby put in foster care at birth by social services. Their son was returned to them after 1 year.”
(PHN, Dane County Public Health)

“Getting water test kit directions translated into Spanish.”
(PHN, Monroe County Health)

“Getting prenatal care then contraception for an undocumented Spanish woman. Getting vaccines to her children too.”
(PHN, Pierce County Health Department)

“Advocated for family who was having difficulty managing 4 children with special health care needs to connect with appropriate services.”
(PHN, Caledonia/Mount Pleasant Health Department)

“My supervisor went to the county board so that I could express breast milk in my office and cover the window to my door during that time. She felt strongly that if we were to support breastfeeding for the community, it should start in our department.”
(PHN, Marathon County Health Department)

“Working with dentists to accept adults and children on MA.”
(PHN, Fond du Lac County Health Department)

“Developed prenatal classes for Hispanic women in a 3-county region.”
(PHN, Winnebago County Health Department)

“The college maintains a free clinic for the uninsured in collaboration with community partners.”

(Academia, UW-Oshkosh College of Nursing)

“Promoting and coordinating Moving Schools activities in 2 rural school districts.”

(PHN, Winnebago County Health Department)

“Presented at the PHN Conference regarding peer education.”

(PHN, Wood County)

“Referral to medical care and F/U on a non-English speaking pregnant woman exposed to an active case of TB. Also advocated for family members to be medically evaluated at a community health center even though they arrived late for their first appointment and were turned away.”

(PHN, Outagamie County)

“I am the President of Fox Valley District Nurses Association to the WNA. I actively update my colleagues with information to provide better public health to the clients we serve.”

(PHN, Outagamie County)

“Assisting a pregnant mom to get dental services that would continue with family for future years.”

(PHN, Marathon County Health Department)

“I am presently advocating for fragile elderly who do not qualify for low income assistance but who have great need and no one to provide it. The numbers are increasing dramatically. I brought a coalition of interested people together to brainstorm and try to find a solution in our local area.”

(PHN, Wood County Health Department)

“Member of 10 agency interpreter collaboration – assuring the competence of interpreters for limited English proficiency clients.”

(PHN, Dane County Public Health)

“Christmas for Katrina – A group of students selected Hurricane Katrina victims and raised money/collected supplies for a school in the hurricane area for Christmas 2005.”

(Academia, UW-Oshkosh)

“I can't count the times when I have experienced advocacy during my career.”

(Community Health Nurse, Ho-Chunk Health Care Center)

“Helping a nursing student make a career decision to become a PHN.”

(Academia, UW-Oshkosh)

“Providing quality care to the elderly.”
(*Viterbo University – Student*)

“As a student I have little experience, but I look forward to learning more about community health nursing.”
(*Student, Viterbo University*)

“Encouraging parents to clean up debris in home, for safety of children.”
(*PHN, Oak Creek Health Department*)

“Disabled man – facilitated getting glucose meter that workers – teaching on how to use. Had to call company – long phone wait, etc.
(*PHN, Vernon County Public Health*)

“Helping to combine a public health week activity along with surrounding tribal and county health departments – all of us together.”
(*PHN, Brown County Health Department*)

“Advised an uninsured immigrant mother to tell the clinic nurse “I think the thermometer is reading 105” for her infant in order to be able to get her baby seen that day at the only clinic in town.”
(*PHN, Shawano County Health Department*)

“Being an advocate for a family with the school system.”
(*PHN, Calumet County Health Department*)

“Found dental care for 2 year old with baby bottle tooth decay.”
(*PHN, Calumet County*)

“Bringing community partners together to make a mass clinic plan for our county. PH Preparedness.”
(*PHN, Marquette County*)

“Bringing forward client concerns regarding poor service on Economic Support staff to our DHHS supervisors and director. Encouraging clients to call director themselves with c/o.”
(*PHN, Burnett County DHHS*)

“Advocated for a client to have energy/heat/etc. not to be turned off.”
(*PHN, Marquette County Health Department*)

“I advocated for a homeless man who was so depressed, he was unable to keep a medical appointment, let alone look for a job (a requirement of the homeless shelter where he was staying). After repeated attempts (and someone actually accompanying him to the MD appointment) he was able to begin medications, get hooked up with

some counseling, find a job, and start earning money to save for a down payment on an apartment.”

(Academia, Viterbo University)

“Prenatal care coordination activities that find resources of medical care, transportation, food, housing, and child care for the low income pregnant woman on medical assistance and being an advocate for her unborn child to promote a healthy baby outcome.”

(PHN, Wood County Public Health Department)

“System – all of Wisconsin has dental access issues. Recently 2 staff members spoke to legislators in regard to dental access issues in Wisconsin.”

(Health Officer, Waushara County)

“A young mother was returning to NTC dental program and didn’t know how she could continue breastfeeding. I spoke with the dean, attended a meeting of all the deans for NTC and they eventually established a “mother’s room” at NTC-Wausau as well as several other campuses.”

(PHN, Marathon County)

“Working with WIC families monthly encompasses many services and teaching opportunities.”

(PHN, Green Lake County)

“Pregnancy testing and linking with Healthy Start, WIC and all available resources.”

(PHN, Green Lake County)

“Advocated against B-3 rules for more services at a point when a child/family needed it most.”

(Health Officer, Buffalo County)

“Helping a Hmong young mother to safety in a domestic abusive relationship.”

(PHN, Green Lake County)

“Refugee family from the Congo moved into our county and the local clinic initially refused to see them and the family was forced to seek care at a clinic 45 minutes away. The family currently receives medical care at the local clinic.”

(PHN, Clark County Health Department)

“Jail Health”

(PHN, Marathon County Health Department)

“Providing educational resources for the Hispanic community regarding newborn care (SIDS, shaken baby, growth and development).”

(PHN, Green Lake County)

“Assisting client obtaining and installing car seat with technician and interpreter (client unable to drive).”

(PHN, Outagamie County Public Health)

“The most memorable experience I have regarding advocacy was in working with a single mother with a handicapped child and a new baby. She is Hispanic and was non-English speaking and undocumented. The handicapped child was 3 years old and had cerebral palsy. While working with this mother her 3 year old child had surgery in Milwaukee. The mother was sent home with minimal instructions written in Spanish and very little education with an interpreter. I worked with Children’s, her local pediatrician and the mother to help her learn to care for her daughter. The 3 year old had a subsequent surgery. After the surgery the child developed a fever. During a home visit I assisted the mother in contacting her doctor who contacted Children’s. The child was taken by ambulance to Children’s as the mother could not afford to drive and was afraid to take the child alone. The child later died, but the mother was able to advocate for herself as well. She later became an interpreter once she learned English and planned to go on for further education. She has been very appreciative of our relationship and still hugs me every time she sees me.”

(PHN, Outagamie County)

“I’ve spent the last 8 years working with other service providers to build a supportive community for 400 disabled (mentally ill and physically disabled) adults living in a low-income housing development that promotes positive social skill development and preventive health programs.”

(PHN, Madison Department of Public Health)

“Getting meds for pregnant client with an STI who was not treated at clinic because medical coverage through HMO difficult. Client untreated until I advocated for prescription to a pharmacy. I picked meds up and gave to client at home (no transportation available to client.”

(PHN, Madison Department of Public Health)

“Advocating wellness and healthy choices for the students in grade schools through the new mypyramid.gov with bulletin boards, worksheets, discussions and including each to do their own program and worksheets.”

(PHN, Lincoln County Health Department)

“Smoking cessation – supporting cigarette tax increase.”

(PHN, Waushara County Health)

“Working with children in the school setting helping them receive dental sealants.”

(PHN, Waushara County Public Health)

“Continue to advocate for interpreters for non-English speaking persons in our community – some progress has been made, but there is a long way to go.”

(PHN, Fond du Lac County Health Department)

“Coached a woman through making an appointment she was “unable to make for myself” – issue was her yelling at the receptionist – not best method of inducing someone with the desire to be helpful.”

(PHN, Madison)

“Coordination with local policy department, housing, authority personnel and manager of local low income apartment complex to improve housing, e.g., playground for children, construction issues, etc.”

(PHN, Fond du Lac County Health Department)

Dental health – starting a Fluoride Varnish Program. Attending the Oral Health Coalition. Advertising programs encouraging clients to seek services.”

(PHN, Waushara County Health)

“A family had an infant die. I contacted the PHN in that county to help serve this family. The family had very limited finances and were having difficulty getting a grave stone. This PHN connected the family with a monument company that came to the home and worked with the family to choose a monument and discounted the price and worked out a payment option that worked for them.”

(RN, Infant Death Center of Wisconsin)

“Teaching families of lead exposed children so that the blood lead does not reach 10 mcg/dl.”

(PHN, Langlade County Health Department)

“Advocating for women in WWWP.”

(PHN, Langlade County Health Department)

“Getting a diabetic client who had severe eating disorder in for inpatient mental health treatment.”

(PHN, St. Croix County)

“Helping start the Family Resource Center and Teen Parent Group.”

(PHN, St. Croix County)

“Sauk County has 2 clinics that provide free health care for urgent needs of non-insured, low income Sauk County residents. Sauk County Health Department screens clients and provides the access to this service. This system is a result of PH assessment and advocacy on behalf of uninsured clients in urgent need of health care.”

(PHN, Sauk County Health Department)

“Advocated for Hispanic family – got some help in home to help parents learn English as well as neighbors learn Spanish.”

(PHN, Vernon County Health Department)

“Working with a Somali family who had a child with special health care needs. It was a wonderful experience learning their culture and understanding their needs. I was able to link this family with available resources including medical care, Birth to 3, housing, physical therapy and WIC. It has been my pleasure to watch this child grow, gain great strides in his development and watch his parents grow in their abilities to advocate for themselves and grow as parents.”

(PHN, Barron County Public Health)

“Present job – advocating for individuals with developmental disabilities to assist with developing infrastructure to support this population in the community to promote and assure health and quality of life.”

(RN, Division of Disabled & Elder Services)

“Working closely with our pediatric clinic to ensure proper immunization of children.”

(Community Health Nurse, Oneida Community Health Center)

“Promotion of a “safe kids” chapter. Ensuring safety of our children.”

(PHN, Wood County Health Department)

“I support public policy through WNA to promote health care access.”

(Academia, UW-Eau Claire)

“Assist Hispanic family in coordinating pending surgery in another city – involved housing, child care, meals, etc. No income post surgery while husband cared for wife. Husband spoke English, wife does not.”

(PHN, Neenah Health Department)

“Presented testimony at state legislature in support of funding for public health programs.”

(Academia, UW-Madison)

“Finding resources for a client that had anal cancer and no insurance.”

(PHN, Washington County Health Department)

“A family needed storage for oxygen tanks in a mobile home park. They had limited income and no carpentry skills and could not bring home their child until safe oxygen storage was obtained. I contacted the local Lions Club who had the storage built within days and since then build ramps, etc. for families in need.”

(PHN, Polk County Health Department)

“Working with/for new Hispanic immigrants in a 5 county region and applying for federal and faith based grants to address their needs.”

(PHN, Wood County Health Department)

“Working with jail system to get better health care for the inmates in process and community health clinics.”

(PHN, Marathon County Health Department)

“Networking with other organizations to pool resources to provide services to Latino clients.”

(Academia, UW-Madison School of Nursing)

“Teaching Hispanic prenatal class has allowed me to be an advocate to ensure these women deliver health babies.”

(PHN, Winnebago County Health Department)

“We persisted with emergency room directors – after we would get STD reports – that were discovered upon follow-up that the clients were unaware of DX and were untreated. It took weeks – but the ER director did have the ER doctors contact the clients for Tx and changed their policy to have MD follow-up the ER visit.”

(PHN, Oak Creek Health Department)

“Finding the pregnant women in our county and informing them of all they are eligible for. I advocate for them for WIC, PNCC, economic support (MA, food share, child care assistant), crisis pregnancy center, food pantries, etc. I advocate for the pregnant women to get the help they need to have a healthy pregnancy and healthy baby.”

(PHN, Columbia County)

“Two young girls were being over medicated due to mom’s verbal report of behavior. After visiting and observing in the home and school setting, talking with their teachers and talking with the girls, I was able to provide documentation to the physician to have the medication reduced.”

(PHN, Neenah Health)

“Promoting PHN careers for BSN nursing students at UW-Madison (encouraging them to advocate, i.e., a student organized a flu clinic to a mental health population of 300 – now the program is in place).”

(PHN, UW-Madison)

“Vaccines = WIR, flu shots for community, people with disabilities, elders care, case management, elder abuse.”

(Community Health Nurse, Oneida Community Health Center)

“Promoting lead testing and health checks.”

(Nutrition and Health Association/Rock County)

“Opportunity to provide support and health counseling to an unwed pregnant teen, contemplating an abortion. Against wishes of the father and family and friends, this young lady chose to carry the child to term and place him up for adoption. She loved

her child so much; wanted him to have the best opportunities that she realized she could not currently provide.”

(PHN, Waupaca County Public Health)

“Through PNCC I do advocating for clients for a variety of services.”

(PHN Fond du Lac County Health Department)

“I’m in 2 rural school districts one day a week in each school. One 3rd grade came from a dysfunctional family. This little girl had terrible head lice, almost truant. Made a home visit, found an unkept house. No hot water, had pet rats. Grandparents – primary caregivers of little girl also ill. Dad – disabled. Taught some caring staff to do head checks, shampoos, etc. Found hairdresser (25 miles away) to give the little girl a free haircut and she left with a bag of supplies such as hair care products, etc. Long story short – never became truant. Lice finally left, rats removed, house was clean. New hot water heater was given to family. Unfortunately family moved to Texas at end of school year. (P.S. This is only part of the whole story with this family).”

(PHN, Taylor County Health Department)

“Testifying to the State Assembly Health Committee on issues RIT the elderly.”

(Academia, Viterbo University)

“I work to create partnerships by working with private sector health colleagues to promote and assure high levels of childhood immunization in our communities through use of WIR and VFC resources provided by the Wisconsin Immunization Program. I help to assure access to vaccines for at-risk children and work to create systems that interface to assure protected communities.”

(RN, WI Immunization Program, SERO)

“PHN’s advocate for safe sleep every day. They work with families to use what they have to provide safe sleep. They took the need to empower others to provide pack and play to new parents.”

(PHN, Milwaukee Health Department)

“A young refugee boy needed dental surgery. Surgery day was scheduled, however, because family did not understand the procedure, had misconceptions and failed to show for appointment. As a PHN, I advocated for this boy and family, explained the procedure and follow up after consulting with the dentist. Family then agreed and this young boy had his oral surgery and did very well.”

(PHN, Marathon County Health Department)

“Finding a doula to volunteer her time for a client who had no labor support and wanted a natural experience.”

(PHN, Marathon County)

“Hispanic family had 1 year old child in the hospital because of reaction to live vaccine. Found out child had immune compromised disorder. Parent upset because nurses and MD let people go in and out of hospital room. Child eventually transferred to Children’s and died. Mom was upset but didn’t want to cause problems because not documented. PHN called on behalf of client to hospital and talked with QA about situation.”

(PHN, Outagamie County)

“For mental health services for clients with mental illness.”

(PHN, Marathon County Health Department)

“A business owner asked about a food safety class for his employees also requested information about tobacco education for his employees. We have also accepted a student to come in October to shadow our public health nurse.”

(PHN, Clark County Public Health)

“Helped family with chronic respiratory problems get home evaluated for environmental hazards and eliminated problems regarding to mold to improve health of all family members.”

(Health Officer, Green Lake County)

“Collaborating with WIC and members of WCHD to implement a breastfeeding support service in our clinic.”

(PHN, Wood County Health Department)

“I had a foreign speaking family that was TB skin tested and one member had active disease. The challenge was that I could not find anyone outside the family as an interpreter. There were financial issues since they were uninsured. There were issues with the school system. Addressing these issues and the many related ones was just one of my experiences.”

(PHN, Adams County Public Health)

“Staff flex time (outside union contract) to serve WIC clinic clients.”

(Health Officer, Shawano County Health Department)

“Working with local school district to develop and support school wellness policy.”

(PHN, South Milwaukee Health Department)

“Explaining to people on the streets the importance of vaccines and where to receive them.”

(Academia, Viterbo University)

“Notifying human services when child found wandering by self. Child severely delayed.”

(PHN, Calumet)

“Set up the language line for MCHD to assure interpreter available for all clients.”

(PHN, Marathon County Health Department)

“Helping people to help themselves: recently a Hispanic client in PNCC learned to use our bus system because of “token bus” incentives!”
(PHN, City of Racine Health Department)

“Working with the Amish families and WIC services/resources with CSHCN.”
(PHN, Jackson County Health and Human Services)