

# Healthy Homes at North East Community Action Corporation

Bowling Green, Missouri

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North East Community Action Corporation (NECAC) has a number of partnerships to implement weatherization in coordination with health services. Through the coordination of the DOE Audit with the Healthy Homes Audit, (which was approved by DOE), staff are able to assess housing related issues, energy issues, and environmental issues. Utilizing different funding streams, they are then able to address each aspect of the issue, taking care of roof repairs so that mold would cease to grow as a result of leaks, for example.

This work is completed on single family homes through braided funding from SSM Hospital, Wells Fargo Bank, Federal Home Loan Bank, and Rural LISC. Potential funding from the Missouri Foundation for Health and the efforts of a working group of Medicaid and Health Insurance providers, led to the healthy homes program which can include:

- 1) Three **asthma education visits** to the home funded by Medicaid dollars,
- 2) NECAC **environmental assessment** utilizing the BPI and Mercy Hospital Assessment certification (the agency is paid for each assessment completed), and
- 3) Referral into the necessary **WAP or home repair** program.

The Missouri Community Action Association or MoCAN has begun an additional healthy homes project, funded through the Energy Foundation, which focuses on multi-family units. NECAC will be a part of this project and will focus on one of its 1,300 multi-family units owned by the agency.

Just an example of the impact this work can have is a success story about a community member with COPD who required the use of oxygen therapy multiple times a day. The NECAC team found terrible mold in the home's basement during their audit and proceeded to remove every item from the basement and help sell the items through auction with the proceeds of course going back to the individual. NECAC staff installed WAP measures and removed the mold, significantly reducing how often the individual needed Oxygen therapy each day.

## Advice from NECAC on getting started:

This process started with the agency's community needs assessment and led to the hospital.

**"WE KNOW REPEAT VISITS FOR RESPIRATORY ILLNESS ARE COSTING YOU ALL MONEY; YOU ARE NOT HOUSING PEOPLE AND WE ARE NOT HEALTH PEOPLE...LET'S WORK TOGETHER"**

- A system was set up to make referrals without violating HIPAA – hospitals already offered an in home program, so if the referral was made during those visits, and the clients made the call to NECAC from home with the health provider present, that was the best option.
- Pointing to the building science behind the DOE WAP, and the reality of the training and certification of staff, helped secure the needed Medicaid funding.
- Even without the WAP at an agency, the health education side of the program is a great way for CAAs to engage.

Interview with Weatherization Leveraged Partnerships Project (Fall 2017)

The goal of the Weatherization Leveraged Partnerships Project is to offer training and assistance to WAP subgrantees and their Associations in designing private partnerships and programs that leverage their local WAP expertise.

[www.weatherizationplus.org](http://www.weatherizationplus.org)