

YOUR TURN

**PUBLIC HEALTH
BUSINESS PLANNING**

A practical guide

Chapter Eight: Marketing

Recent changes in OSHA regulations require that personnel in health care or other industries who could be exposed to air-borne bacterial or viral agents must be fit-tested for respirators annually. You have decided to create a program that will sell fit-testing services to local entities to help them meet these requirements. Read the following Definition of Plan from an actual MAPH business plan, and then answer the following questions about developing a marketing plan for this project:

- Who will be the end user of your service, and who will pay?
- Who would be the targets of marketing?: list as many as you can.
- What might be some primary messages you'd want to get to these markets to sell your services?
- What type of marketing products might be most effective for your audience(s)?

Definition of Plan

Our team will develop and market a user-friendly and cost-effective program that enhances respirator usage among health care personnel and ensures compliance with current OSHA regulations. This plan is being developed in an open market, meaning that there are no current local independent competitors. The Crater Health District and the Chesterfield Health District will enter into a cooperative agreement to share personnel as needed for this project, and revenue will be collected and divided accordingly through the fiscal management department. First, we will work with local hospitals to identify the need for respirator fit testing, planning, and training and then to create a contract based on the number of employees that will be fit-tested and trained. We will purchase respirator fit testing equipment that can be easily maintained as well as utilized quickly and efficiently. This service consists of three parts: Medical Questionnaire, Fit-Testing, and Documentation.

Medical Questionnaire: A standardized medical questionnaire will be utilized and distributed to clients one month before on-site fit-testing begins (Appendix A). A client will self-report any chronic medical conditions, including diseases of the lung or respiratory system. This form, which is kept confidential, is then reviewed by a health department physician or nurse practitioner. Review and signing-off should take no more than 5 minutes per questionnaire. All forms will be cleared unless the client reports signs or symptoms that are contraindications to respirator use. When review is completed, questionnaires are returned to the coordinator to set-up appointments. A client who cannot be cleared, must have a medical exam by their private medical physician (not a service of the health department) to determine if fit-testing or respirator usage is safe for that client. If it is not safe, the client will need to report such to his or her supervisor for follow-up, which may include a recommendation for alternate work assignments. Also, should an employee experience respiratory distress during fit-testing, fit-testing will be suspended until a private medical provider can assess and clear the employee for respirator usage. Although rare, this may occur for a few employees and it would be the responsibility of the employer to follow through with proper fit-testing, perhaps at our next session.

Fit-testing: Only those clients who have a signed, clear medical questionnaire will be fit-tested on the scheduled day. Hospital employees will be fit-tested for N95 respirators only since biological hazards are the primary hazard within medical settings. N95 respirators can be purchased through the hospital's contracted medical supply company. The facility will supply us with a selection of standard sized N95 respirators to distribute to clients upon fit-testing. Should a client need an alternate size, this will be ordered by the hospital on the recommendation of the fit-testing staff. We will be responsible for supplying the Portacount® fit-testing machine, laptops, 2 staff members for each of three shifts, and training pamphlets for each client. During fit-testing, each of the 2 staff members will see a client. It is estimated that each employee will take at most 15 minutes to fit-test, this is a liberal estimate given that trials with the machine showed that we could perform a fit-test in 10 minutes, thus allowing extra time to answer questions, trouble shoot, or take a break. At the conclusion of each session, the client is educated on the importance of preserving their N95, keeping it easily accessible for emergencies, and is given a pamphlet with documentation of their fit-testing date and size N95 mask with training information included in the pamphlet as a refresher for future reference.

Documentation: An advantage of using the Portacount® fit-testing machine is that it comes with a records management system which can be up-linked to a laptop computer. This record management system automatically records the N95 respirator requirement for each client and allows the user to

print a small label for each client. The system also allows for information to be downloaded into a Microsoft Excel format with all of the client's information which can be copied to a disk and provided to the hospital administrator or records keeper for personnel files. This application format will benefit the hospital or facility in keeping with OSHA's regulations for documentation of training and annual fit-testing.

Identifying the need for respirator fit-testing among hospital administrations is a process that has already begun. Current plans are to approach hospital administrations with three-year service contracts for respirator training and fit-testing beginning in the first quarter of 2008. We hope to begin actual implementation of the project by the third quarter of 2008. Critical to the success of this plan will be the "by-in" among hospital administrators. To date, many hospitals are not abiding by the current OSHA regulations. For this plan to be successful, hospital administrators must be supportive of the project from beginning to end.

Training will occur on-site prior to fit-testing by an employee who is also conducting the fit-testing services. Generally, the training will be a standard format in accordance with OSHA standards but will include client specific information such as location of the clients Respiratory Protection Plan, who the plan administrator is, and how additional masks can be obtained.

An ongoing evaluation component will be built into the project so that we can monitor our successes and failures and build upon the knowledge that we develop. Using this, we can continue to build contracts with future targets as well as renew contracts with existing clients.