

**Service Name:** KeepMEWell

<http://www.keepmewell.org>

**Category:** Digital Government – Government to Citizen

**State:** Maine

### **Executive Summary:**

In 2009, Maine's Governor created a Universal Wellness Initiative aimed at helping Maine reach its goal of being the healthiest state in the nation by promoting access to resources and evidence-based interventions in order to better know, understand, and address health risks and to improve health and prevent disease for Maine citizens.

KeepMEWell (Keep Maine Well - <http://www.keepmewell.org>) is a web-based application designed to help Maine citizens – especially those uninsured or underinsured – assess their risk for chronic disease, improve their health through education, and link them to local resources and supports that can help them decrease their risk of chronic disease and improve their health.

The informative website and interactive online health assessment were developed by Maine Center for Disease Control, in partnership with InforME, the state's e-government portal, in an effort to assist all Mainers to improve self-care for chronic disease through the increase in knowledge about their individual health, lifestyle risks and protective factors.

## **Description:**

In 2009, the Maine state legislature and the Governor enacted a law (22 M.R.S.A., Part 2 §411) to establish a Universal Wellness Initiative at the state level to help Maine reach its goal of becoming the healthiest state in the nation, to maintain the state public health system for federal accreditation, and assure the effective, efficient and evidence based delivery of essential public health services.

Included within this initiative were requirements for the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC), an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), to develop a resource toolkit and online health assessment.

The informative website and online health assessment at KeepMEWell.org, were developed by Maine CDC, in partnership with the state's e-government portal, InforME, to assist all Mainers to improve self-care for chronic disease through the increase in knowledge about their individual health, lifestyle risk and protective factors. The KeepMEWell service is provided at no cost to citizens.

The online service was intended to provide individual assessments of Mainers that positively reinforce areas of low risk and encourage the individual to deal proactively with areas of high risk identified in the assessment. The website and online service utilized existing resources to populate the recommendations from the health risk assessment with local services available.

By law, the first phase of the website, focusing on the health assessment tool, was required to be completed by July 1, 2009. The Maine CDC and InforME were able to achieve the deadline and to create a successful online service benefiting Maine citizens.

To satisfy the legislative requirements, the following online resources were developed:

1. An informational website to provide all Mainers with the necessary information required for improved self-care for chronic diseases.
2. A dynamic, web-based health assessment that provides users with customized results and feedback to highlight areas of success as well as areas where improvement could be made. The health assessment positively reinforces areas of low risk and encourages the individual to deal proactively with areas of high risk identified in the assessment
3. A searchable health care services toolkit allows Mainers to learn more about where and how to find local, low-cost health care services that

address any health-related concerns.

The dynamic, database-driven online health assessment assigns appropriate feedback and target goals to a series of questions and responses. Upon completion of the survey, the user's responses are analyzed into easy to understand reports that are generated for the user to review. The report includes a scorecard, a health report, and a listing of community resources available to the user. The scorecard and health risk assessment are generated based on a series of target goals and measures that are assigned to each response option. The report also includes community resources generated based on keywords, using the Maine 2-1-1 repository of local health care resources.

The project was divided into two phases. The first phase was approximately 2 months, spanning May 2009 to July 2009. The second phase was approximately 5 months, spanning from September 2009 through January 2010.

### **Significance:**

The online service and website, [www.keepmewell.org](http://www.keepmewell.org), assist the Maine CDC with their goal of providing feedback to users that positively reinforces areas of low risk and encourages individuals to deal proactively with areas of high risk identified in the assessment. The website and online report utilize existing resources to populate the report recommendations from the health risk assessment with local services.

Evaluation of the web-based application has focused on: (i) the usage of the website; (ii) the type of promotional activity reported as most effective by users; and (iii) whether the web-based application is reaching its target audience, i.e. uninsured and underinsured residents in Maine.

The mixed methods evaluation design includes keeping manual logs as well as database and website analysis. To date, KeepMEWell data suggests that this program is highly successful in reaching its target audience and providing useful information to help Mainers maintain a healthy lifestyle.

### **Benefit of the Project:**

As stated above, the dynamic scorecard and health report produced by the online service greatly benefits Mainers as it provides them with the necessary information to increase their knowledge about their individual health and lifestyle risk in an effort to improve self-care for chronic diseases.

From January 2010 through May 2011, the website has received over 7,750 visits, more than 3,450 people have completed the online health assessment, and nearly 3,000 online searches have been conducted for health care resources.