

Creating a Healthier Sutter - Community Awareness Campaign



Abstract of the program:

In response to increases in the local chronic disease rate, beginning in 2010, Sutter County Health Division developed the *Creating a Healthier Sutter- Community Awareness Campaign* to increase public awareness of underlying causes of chronic disease and to promote policy, systems and environmental changes which could have an effect on chronic disease rates. The low-cost, comprehensive campaign included developing innovative communication tools including fact sheets and DVDs, engagement of youth advocates, hosting community forums for local leaders and residents, and providing self-management classes for community members currently living with chronic disease. Residents have a better understanding about the environmental contributors to poor health, and a variety of changes have been proposed. Many residents have benefited from participation in the Stanford University Chronic Disease Self-Management Program, and additional program leaders have been trained to serve neighboring communities. As a result of the *Creating a Healthier Sutter- Community Awareness Campaign*, policy changes have been made which ultimately will help reduce the prevalence of chronic disease in Sutter County.

The problem or need for the program: Sutter County is a primarily rural county in northern California less than an hour's drive north of the state Capitol in Sacramento. Data show the 95,000 residents of the county suffer a heavier burden of chronic disease than do residents of the state of California on average. An estimated \$120,000,000 is lost annually in the county due to extraordinary medical costs, lost productivity, and early death related to chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer. A Chronic Disease Summit conducted in 2010 by Sutter County Health Division shared chronic disease statistics for the county, which are some of the worst in California, with representatives from business, political leadership, healthcare, and education. Attendees agreed that while local data were disturbing, the majority of the community was unaware of the magnitude of the problem. Health Division staff concluded that before any change could occur, the community needed to be informed about local chronic disease rates and contributing factors.

Description of the program: In response to the poor health status of the community, Sutter County Health Division developed a *Creating a Healthier Sutter- Community Awareness Campaign* aimed at addressing the chronic disease problem.

The four objectives of the *Creating a Healthier Sutter- Community Awareness Campaign* :

- 1. Create a variety of educational tools to describe the current chronic disease burden in Sutter County, which can be easily understood and shared with a wide range of community members.**

In order to more clearly communicate the complex data on chronic disease and the role of the environment to the general community, Health Division staff funded by the California Tobacco Control Program developed an educational DVD, "*Looking at Chronic Disease in Sutter County*" in 2012. Although this DVD included information about environmental contributors to poor health, such as the large number of fast food restaurants and a map showing the concentration of tobacco-only stores within a small geographic area, the main focus of the DVD was to increase awareness that local chronic disease rates were above state averages and in many cases were increasing. The DVD was widely viewed and copies distributed to over 600 community members and leaders and posted on the Health Division webpage.

In 2014, Health Division staff created another DVD called "*The Burden of Chronic Disease in Sutter County*". In order to capture the attention of viewers, the new DVD was shorter and focused on one

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main theme: the poor health of our neighbors costs each of us money. The annual extraordinary (beyond average health care) costs for persons suffering from common chronic diseases, such as diabetes and heart disease, were included. Economic data highlighting costs due to reduced worker productivity were also included.

“The Burden of Chronic Disease in Sutter County” was widely distributed throughout the community. Just two weeks after its release, the Sutter County Administrative Officer played the DVD for a meeting of the Yuba-Sutter Chamber of Commerce as a portion of his “State of Sutter County” presentation. An elected official requested that Health Division staff present the DVD to a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and the Youth Commission.

Both DVDs were translated into Spanish and Punjabi, the two primary non-English languages in Sutter County, to make it accessible to the majority of the population. The English versions of both presentations have been posted on the county FaceBook page and YouTube.

To view *“Looking at Chronic Disease in Sutter County”*: www.youtube.com/watch?v=XDBZukSpJRE

To view *“The Burden of Chronic Disease in Sutter County”*: www.youtube.com/watch?v=INjDEfLegfk

Easy to read fact sheets using local data were also developed, and distributed to people viewing the DVDs. Fact sheet topics included: “Sutter County – Chronic Diseases”, “Sutter County – Obesity”, “Sutter County – Tobacco”, and “Youth Access to Tobacco”. Fact sheets have been updated as new data has become available. Data from both the Tobacco Control Program and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-Education (SNAP-Ed) were combined to create “Sutter County-Life Expectancy” fact sheet which highlights health disparities.

2. Promote and support advocacy efforts by local youth to improve the health status of their community.

Health Division staff have worked with local youth coalition members to develop and support advocacy skills. Several youth focused training have been conducted teaching data collecting skills, presentation techniques and media engagement. Youth have participated in multiple data collection efforts as part of the community assessment, participated in community forums, and worked with local corner stores to reduce marketing of unhealthy messaging and increase access to healthier foods. Using data they collected, youth created an effective presentation showing how simple changes and proven policies can make a community healthier. The presentation was given by the youth to local elected officials. Educational tools such as fact sheets and DVD’s were used by the youth in this project.

3. Increase residents’ and policy-makers’ awareness of chronic disease rates, and how policy, systems, and environmental changes could slow or even reverse the progression of chronic disease rates.

In order to specifically reach local leaders and policy makers, Health Division staff organized multiple forums addressing the linkages between chronic disease and the local environment. Health Division staff partnered with Sutter County Substance Use Disorders Services staff and youth coalition members to host the first public forum, “Taking Action for a Healthier Community”, in April 2013. As a result of personal invitations, more than 100 local leaders from healthcare, business, education and local government participated in the forum. Forum attendees worked together with youth coalition members using the “World Café” method to brainstorm and prioritize ideas to support healthy changes in the community, such as modifying existing policies to permit a mobile farmers’ market to sell fresh,

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locally grown produce in low-income geographically isolated areas. Other suggestions included adopting ordinances making it more difficult for underage youth to have access to alcohol and tobacco. Possible solutions were compiled by Health Division Staff into a handout, “*How Can I Make Changes to Create a Healthier Sutter?*”, which has been widely distributed to community partners at presentations of the DVD.

Health Division staff collaborated with the Agricultural Commissioner in the planning and hosting Food Day celebrations in 2013 and 2014. Both events emphasized the connection between public access to locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables, and better health. Health Division staff had worked with a local farmer to decrease chronic disease rates among his employees by implementing a low-cost employee wellness program. He was the keynote speaker at the 2014 Food Day event whose primary invitees were policy makers and local leaders.

Health Division staff funded by the USDA SNAP-Ed project began work in 2012, teaching nutrition classes and offering cooking demonstrations to SNAP-eligible residents. One significant project involved the creation of a County Nutrition Action Plan (CNAP) team, comprised of partners from schools, healthcare, Head Start, Food Bank, and farmer’s markets. CNAP team members have been instrumental in increasing the promotion of both chronic disease DVDs and the “*How Can I Make Changes to Create a Healthier Sutter?*” handout. Partners have helped to market chronic disease campaign messages to the public through posting colorful banners with messages like “Make half your plate fruits and veggies” at their worksites. The Health Division has also wrapped their van with this message and used colorful images, effectively creating a mobile billboard. The Health Division models healthy behaviors when facilitating this group and as a result, many of these partners adopted the CDC Healthy Meeting Guidelines, incorporated physical activity into their workday, and have made simple changes like offering only fruit-infused water at their agency’s meetings and trainings.

4. Offer evidence-based self-management classes to individuals currently living with chronic disease, to reduce suffering and delay onset of complications.

In order to assist community members already living with chronic disease, in 2011, two staff from Sutter County Health Division attended the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (CDSMP) Master Trainer program developed by Stanford University. This is an evidence-based, scripted program which has been proven to help participants increase healthy behaviors and better manage the symptoms of chronic disease. The Health Division has offered CDSMP classes to the public at no charge, on average three times per year, at a variety of venues, including senior centers, public housing facilities, and healthcare facilities in the county. Health Division staff also trained several new CDSMP leaders who are now providing CDSMP classes in neighboring communities.

Use of technology:

GIS mapping was used for community assessments. The fact sheets and both DVD presentations were created using data collected from publicly available data sources like CDC and California Department of Public Health via the Internet and community assessment results. The presentations were developed primarily using PowerPoint and Corel Draw. Health Division staff used a handheld voice recorder to record narrative which was uploaded and embedded throughout the DVDs using the Sony Vegas Movie program. The completed presentation was mass-produced, including a professional label, using an Epson Disk Producer. Fact sheets were created using PowerPoint and Publisher. All materials developed for the *Creating a Healthier Sutter- Community Awareness Campaign* are posted on Sutter County websites and various social media channels such as FaceBook and YouTube.

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Cost of the program: Each DVD cost less than \$1.50 per copy. Fact sheets cost \$0.15 per page double sided to print. Staff time for community assessment, chronic disease research, creation of the DVD presentations and fact sheets, and organizing community forums was paid for by grants from the California Tobacco Control Program and the Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Branch. Sutter County general funds paid for the CDSMP Master Leader 5-day training at Stanford University which cost \$1800 per person and \$500 for the license to provide CDSMP classes for three years and staff time to conduct the CDSMP classes.

Results/success of the program: The DVD *“Looking at Chronic Disease in Sutter County”* was shown to over 400 community members and over 200 copies were provided to individuals including the local, state, and national elected officials, school boards, service clubs, and the local Chamber of Commerce. It was nominated by the California Department of Public Health for a National Public Health Information and Communication 2013 Award for Excellence and was awarded a Silver Medal. As of March 2015, the DVD *“The Burden of Chronic Disease in Sutter County”* has been shown to over 200 community members and over 100 copies were provided to individuals including local, state, and national elected officials, school boards, service clubs, and the local Chamber of Commerce. In an online evaluation of the DVD, 100% of respondents said they had shared information from the DVD with coworkers or friends, and 100% also said they were inspired by the video to make changes in the community.

Recently, an elected official has begun planning a health forum for the public which will showcase local opportunities to improve health outcomes. The elected official has requested Health Division leadership speak about local chronic disease rates, emerging tobacco products and show the *“The Burden of Chronic Disease in Sutter County”* DVD.

In response to the *Creating a Healthier Sutter- Community Awareness Campaign*, several local businesses, including the majority of health providers, have established tobacco-free site policies. Multiple organizers of large public events have adopted tobacco-free event policies. The 2014 Bi-National Health Fair organizers added to their vendor application “this is a candy, sugar-sweetened beverage, and tobacco free event”. A local community college is currently in the process of adopting a tobacco-free campus policy.

Over 75 residents have participated in the CDSMP 6-session classes, which Stanford University has evaluated to show helps participants increase healthy behaviors and better manage the symptoms of chronic disease. Health Division Master Trainers have trained 9 CDSMP Leaders in surrounding communities and 8 CDSMP Leaders in Central California, who continue to provide CDSMP classes in their home communities.

Several other smaller California counties with limited budgets and staff capacities have contacted Health Division staff requesting technical support in creating their own chronic disease DVDs and replicating other aspects of the *Creating a Healthier Sutter- Community Awareness Campaign*. Health Division staff have been asked to provide best practices trainings at state-wide conferences related to the *Creating a Healthier Sutter- Community Awareness Campaign*.

Worthiness of award: Sutter County Health Division’s *Creating a Healthier Sutter- Community Awareness Campaign* is an innovative, low cost and effective project that has raised the awareness of residents about chronic disease and the policy, systems and environmental changes that can support a healthier community. The educational tools can be easily adapted and customized for other

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communities. The *Creating a Healthier Sutter- Community Awareness Campaign* has been effective in providing information that facilitates effective public policies and promotes public and private sector cooperation and coordination in addressing shared problems.