Communication Plan for Community Health Assessment

# Purpose

The purpose of this communication plan is to provide action items for how the preliminary findings of the Community Health Assessment (CHA) will be distributed to community members, key leaders, and the local public health system within Yolo County; and to promote and provide opportunities for public comments concerning the CHA. This plan serves as a guide for the dissemination of future CHAs to the community and key leaders within Yolo County.

# Background

Healthy Yolo is a collaborative, participatory approach that intends to engage and mobilize the community so they may have a voice in addressing public health issues and ultimately improve the quality of life for all in Yolo County.

The Healthy Yolo CHA is an important tool for understanding the overall health status of our community, identifying important health issues, and developing goals and strategies to address these issues. The communication of this information to partner organizations and the community is vital to the structure and process of building a healthier community. Two-way communication ensures that the community has a voice in addressing public health issues and provides valuable insight into the strengths and particular culture of their community. Communicating with the members of our community is essential to the effectiveness and overall success of future public health initiatives.

# Strategy to Date

Healthy Yolo intended to engage as many community members as possible and understood that many people would not be willing or able to read a 130-page health assessment. Healthy Yolo created seven regional reports that provided a brief summary of the CHA that was specifically tailored to each region. In addition, we created regional videos, which were just over four minutes in length, to make the information more accessible.

Healthy Yolo planned to present the CHA and related materials to the public during the month of April for review and comment. Healthy Yolo decided to conduct at least one community forum in each of the seven regions and present to the four city councils. Facilities were selected based on their availability and size.

Yolo County consists of several medium-sized cities and large rural areas. In order to address the diverse communication needs, Healthy Yolo selected several methods of communication for disseminating the CHA: hard copy, electronic, and face-to-face.

## Hard Copy

Healthy Yolo distributed hard copies of the CHA and regional reports to seven of the eight county libraries, and to three community-based organizations. The libraries and community-based organizations also received flyers for upcoming community forums in their region, the Healthy Yolo newsletter, and an introduction to the documents that included information on how to comment on the electronic version of our CHA. The libraries included the CHA as part of their reference collection, posted the flyers on their community bulletin board, and disseminated the newsletter and regional report to patrons.

## Electronic

The CHA was made available on the Yolo County Health Department website for review and comment. The CHA was accessible using Google Drive with a link to the document available on the Healthy Yolo web page, [www.HealthyYolo.org](http://www.HealthyYolo.org). Healthy Yolo selected Google Drive because of the ability to share the document publicly, but also the availability of a comments thread that allows users to provide comments and view previous comments. The public could also submit their feedback via email. The seven regional reports and regional videos were available on the website for review as well.

## Face-to-Face

Healthy Yolo presented to all four city councils within Yolo County. All city council members and staff received copies of the regional reports and the Healthy Yolo newsletter. The presentation ranged between five to ten minutes providing an overview of the project and key health indicator information. Healthy Yolo encouraged city council members to read the CHA online and provide their comments; and to promote and attend the upcoming community forums. Healthy Yolo also presented to the County Board of Supervisors.

Healthy Yolo conducted nine community forums throughout the county. At each community forum, posters were displayed consisting of the major determinants of health and info-graphics from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s National Prevention Strategy. Healthy Yolo created fact sheets of the top four health issues that most affect the community specific to each region, which was based on the Community Themes and Strengths Survey results. The fact sheets contained county data and regional data when available along with general health information. Healthy Yolo provided handouts of the fact sheets, newsletter, regional report, and a 2-page summary. The community forums consisted of a half-hour presentation and a half-hour work group where participants did a root cause analysis of particular health issues to help identify strategic issues. Healthy Yolo also conducted a community forum with Yolo County Health Department staff.

List of Community Forums

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Facility** | **City** | **Region** |
| April 14, 2014 | Clarksburg Community Church | Clarksburg | South East |
| April 17, 2014 | Esparto Library | Esparto | North West |
| April 18, 2014 | Country Fair Estates/RV Park | Dunnigan | North East |
| April 21, 2014 | Western Yolo Grange | Guinda | North West |
| April 23, 2014 | Davis Library | Davis | South |
| April 28, 2014 | Winters Library | Winters | South West |
| April 29, 2014 | Yolo County DESS Community Room | Woodland | Central |
| May 1, 2014 | West Sacramento Library | West Sacramento | East |
| May 2, 2014 | Knights Landing Community Center | Knights Landing | North East |

# Promotion

Healthy Yolo promoted the CHA electronic version and community forums through the following channels:

* Email blasts to project stakeholders, school principals, and Yolo County Health Council members;
* Healthy Yolo newsletter;
* Press release; and
* Social Media (e.g., posting on the Department’s Facebook page and Twitter accounts).

Additionally, Healthy Yolo also used flyers that were posted at the forum sites and at the sites of three community-based organizations located in Winters, Esparto, and Knights Landing. One hundred flyers were distributed to River City High School students in West Sacramento.

# Lessons Learned

Unfortunately, the attendance at the community forums was extremely low. Four of the community forums had no attendees. Moreover, of the remaining five community forums, there was an average of three attendees per event: ranging from one in Winters to four in Davis.

There are several possibilities for the low turnout: community members did not receive the promotional communications; lack of interest; and/or convenience of the forums as far as time and venue.

Relying primarily on the Internet, social media, press releases, and the posting of a flyer turned out to be insufficient in reaching community members to promote the community forums particularly in rural areas. Several attendees mentioned that they do not get the newspaper and are unfamiliar with the Department’s website and social media efforts. These attendees learned of the community forum through publication in a community church newsletter.

The Sonoma County Department of Health Services has created a report, “Best Practices in Action: Strategies for Engaging Latinos, Seniors, and Low-income Residents of Sonoma County[[1]](#footnote-1)” that describes a three step process for effective community engagement. The Yolo County Health Department and Healthy Yolo would benefit by following the process discussed in Sonoma County’s report.

The first step is to build foundations. The foundations consist of four pillars: knowledge of the community; an understanding of community resources; strong partnerships; and a culture of community engagement.

Knowledge of the community involves an understanding of where people live, work, and play as well as whom they trust in their community. An understanding of community resources includes knowing the groups, agencies, and organizations and the work and coalitions they have established. Strong partnerships are formed on a reciprocal, collaborative basis. A culture of community engagement must be a Department-wide effort.

In order to connect and relate to the various communities in Yolo County, the Department must go out into the communities and establish trusted relationships with prominent community members, groups, and organizations. Community engagement must be an ongoing process in order for future engagement activities to be able to draw on.

Community members may have a lack of interest in becoming involved in health planning processes. Establishing trusted relationships can improve community involvement. The promotion of the CHA should include how community input will be utilized to shape public health efforts. In addition, refreshments and giveaways could attract community members to attend the community forums.

Understanding the community plays a role in the determination of the time and venue for a community forum and the possibility to coincide with another community event. For example, the Winters Youth Day could have been a community event that Healthy Yolo participated in conducting a community forum. In addition, the agricultural communities have varying work hours that scheduling community forums should accommodate.

Healthy Yolo presented information about the project and the CHA to the County Board of Supervisors and the city councils. Informing the county and city representatives prior to the community forums would have been beneficial to gather input and buy-in on the community forums. The representatives could aide in getting the word out to their constituents.

# Implementation Going Forward

The implementation of this work plan and its success is contingent on the Yolo County Health Department establishing the four pillars of community engagement and conducting multiple engagement activities.

The following information explains how Healthy Yolo will implement the communication plan for the CHA public review and input (see Appendix A for a timeline of activities). The Healthy Yolo team will convene to identify the steps, budget, staffing needs, and timeline to develop a work breakdown structure for the documents preparation, promotion, and conducting community forums in order to implement this work plan (see Appendix B for an example of a work breakdown structure).

## Identify Potential Community Partners

Healthy Yolo will reach out to community-based organizations, churches, clinics, schools, and health boards and councils to assist in promoting the CHA. Healthy Yolo will identify key leaders in the community and places often frequented by community members (e.g., post office, church, market, etc.) to assist in selecting venues, dates, and times for the community forums and to assist in promoting the community forums.

## Prepare Information

Once the final draft version of the CHA is complete, Healthy Yolo will begin preparing the materials and documents. Healthy Yolo will collaborate with community partners to develop talking points, determine key data that should be in the regional reports and PowerPoint presentations.

List of Documents

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Document** | **Spanish Translation** | **Print & Bind** | **Communication Channel** |
| CHA | No | Yes | website, e-mail, libraries, selected organization offices, kick-off meeting |
| Regional Reports | Yes | Yes | website, e-mail, libraries, selected organization offices, kick-off meeting |
| Newsletter | No | Print | website, e-mail, kick-off meeting |
| Talking Points | No | Print | e-mail to staff and selected organization offices |
| Press Release | No | No | media outlets, Facebook, twitter |
| PowerPoint Presentations for each region | No | No | community forums, kick-off meeting |
| 2-page Regional Brief | Yes | Print | e-mail to selected organization offices, community forums, kick-off meeting |
| Regional Videos | No | No | website, kick-off meeting |
| CHA Response Form | Yes | Print | selected organization offices, community forums |
| Community Forum Flyers | Yes | Print | website, community forum sites, selected organization offices, libraries, kick-off meeting |
| Paid Media Advertisement | Yes | No | newspapers |
| Fact Sheets for each prioritized Health issue | Yes | Print | community forums, kick-off meeting |
| Social Determinants of Health | No | Print | community forums, kick-off meeting |
| Root Cause Analysis Worksheet | Yes | Print | community forums |

## Inform the Public

Healthy Yolo will update its website to include the CHA, regional reports, and regional videos. The webpage will have a comments thread associated with the CHA and have an e-mail address prominently displayed for community members to provide feedback. In addition, Healthy Yolo will send out its newsletter announcing the kick-off meeting, community forums, and update to its website. Media advertisements will be placed at this time.

Healthy Yolo will distribute packets that include the CHA, regional report, community forum flyer, talking points, newsletter, CHA response forms, and an introduction letter to selected organization offices (e.g., community-based organizations, churches, libraries) and community forum venues. The documents will be available in the organizations’ front office so people may review them and submit a response using the CHA response form.

Healthy Yolo will conduct a kick-off meeting to celebrate the completion of the CHA and to promote the CHA and community forums. Healthy Yolo committee members, the media, elected officials, local public health system representatives, and community members will be invited to the kick-off meeting where the documents will be available to the attendees.

Healthy Yolo will encourage Yolo County Health Department staff and community partners to promote the CHA and community forums through word of mouth.

## Conduct Community Forums

Healthy Yolo will conduct at least one community forum in each of the seven regions. Healthy Yolo will provide promotional giveaways and raffle off a gift card for attendees at the forum to help increase attendance. In addition, Healthy Yolo will present the findings from the CHA to all four city councils and any community or board council.

# Appendix A

Timeline of Events

|   | Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 | Week 5 | Week 6 | Week 7 | Week 8 | Week 9 | Week 10 | Week 11 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| CHA Supporting Documents |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Regional Reports |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Executive Summary |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| PP Presentations |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| 2-page Regional Briefs |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Fact Sheets |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Regional Videos |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Printing & Translations |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Community Forum Handouts |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Develop Web Page |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Promotion of CHA & Community Forums |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Identify Potential Partners |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Select Venues and Dates for Community Forums |   |   |   |   |  |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| CHA Packets for Community Partners |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Press Release & Media Advertisements |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Newsletter |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Conduct Community Forums |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Kick-Off Meeting |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |
| Community Forums |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |  |

# Appendix B

Work Breakdown Structure Example

| Task # | Task Description | Task Predecessor | Est. Level of Effort | Start Date | End Date | Owner |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1.1 | Finalize CHA |   |   |   |   |   |
| 1.2 | Draft CHA Executive Summary | 1.1 | 4 days |   |   |   |
| 1.3 | Review and Approve CHA Executive Summary | 1.2 | 2 days |   |   |   |
| 1.4 | Draft Regional Reports | 1.1 | 10 days |   |   |   |
| 1.5 | Review and approve Regional Reports | 1.4 | 5 days |   |   |   |
| 1.6 | Draft Fact Sheets for each Prioritized Health Issue | 1.1 | 5 days |   |   |   |
| 1.7 | Review and Approve Fact Sheets | 1.6 | 2 days |   |   |   |
| 1.8 | Translate Regional Reports | 1.5 | 10 days |   |   |   |
| 1.9 | Print CHA and Regional Reports | 1.8 | 3 days |   |   |   |
| 2 | Draft 2-page Regional Briefs | 1.5 | 4 days |   |   |   |
| 2.1 | Review and approve 2-page Regional Briefs | 2 | 2 days |   |   |   |
| 2.2 | Translate Fact Sheets and Regional Briefs | 1.7, 2.1 | 10 days |   |   |   |
| 2.3 | Create Regional Videos | 2.1 | 10 days |   |   |   |
| 2.4 | Review and Approve Regional Videos | 2.3 | 2 days |   |   |   |
| 2.5 | Draft Community Forum PP Presentations | 1.5 | 3 days |   |   |   |
| 2.6 | Review and approve PP Presentations | 2.5 | 2 days |   |   |   |
| 2.7 | Draft Talking Points | 2.1 | 1 day |   |   |   |
| 2.8 | Review and Approve Talking Points | 2.7 | 1 days |   |   |   |
| 2.9 | Draft Newsletter |   | 1 day |   |   |   |
| 3 | Review and Approve Newsletter | 2.9 | 1 day |   |   |   |
| 3.1 | Review and Approve Social Determinants of Health Handout |   | 1 day |   |   |   |
| 3.2 | Review and Approve Root Cause Analysis Worksheet |   | 1 day |   |   |   |
| 3.3 | Draft Press Release | 1.8, 2.4, 2.6, 2.8, 3 | 1 day |   |   |   |
| 3.4 | Review and Approve Press Release | 3.3 | 1 day |   |   |   |
| 3.5 | Draft CHA Web Page | 2.4 | 1 day |   |   |   |

1. The report is available on the County of Sonoma website, <http://www.sonoma-county.org/health/community/index.asp> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)