

Identifying Opportunities for Local Action – February 29, 2008

Health Action was convened in October 2007 to mobilize community partnerships and resources to improve the health status of Sonoma County residents. Over the past five months Health Action has assessed data on health issues that are impacting Sonoma County and has developed criteria for focusing their efforts. In February 2008, Health Action members narrowed their focus on the following three issue areas for further study, research, and analysis:

1. Healthy Eating and Physical Activity
2. Healthy Aging
3. Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs

Issue Briefs for each of these three areas were developed to help depict how these issues are impacting Sonoma County, their contributing factors, and potential opportunities. The March 7, 2008 Health Action meeting will focus on discussing these issues and potential opportunities for local action. The April 4, 2008 Health Action meeting will identify which of these issues can best leverage local resources and energy to achieve the greatest improvements in health status.

Once Health Action identifies a focus issue in April 2008, it will convene two advisory Task Forces to study the issue in more depth, engage the community in identifying potential strategies, and develop recommendations for Health Action consideration:

- The Community Health Task Force will look at community conditions that contribute to the selected health issue and will develop recommendations for improvement.
- The Health Care Delivery System Task Force will look at potential improvements to the health care delivery system for the selected health issue.

The Task Forces will extend the reach of Health Action by engaging expertise beyond Health Action membership and linking to key health care work groups and consumer advocacy organizations. Health Action members will chair the Task Forces. In addition to Health Action members, Task Force co-chairs may appoint community members who can offer a critical perspective on selected priority issues and who can provide expertise and/or resources (e.g. data, information on best practices) needed to develop recommendations. Individuals with background or expertise in the selected issue area, who wish to serve on a Task Force, may contact Ellen Bauer at ebauer@sonoma-county.org or (707)565-6684.

All Health Action meetings are open to the public. For more information on meeting dates and locations, visit the Health Action website at: www.sonomahealthaction.org