

## **DEVELOPING A COMPREHENSIVE HEART DISEASE & STROKE PLAN**

*Legislative briefings and public forums in California are the first steps*

### **Public Health Problem**

- Heart disease and stroke are the first and third leading causes of death in California, costing the state's economy an estimated \$40.3 billion each year.
- More people die each year from heart disease and stroke than from the next four leading causes of death combined.
- California needed a master plan for heart disease and stroke to guide implementation of prevention and treatment strategies and position the state to receive federal funding for a comprehensive program.

### **Program**

- The California Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program, funded by the Public Health & Health Services Block Grant, provided technical assistance for a legislative briefing to educate California's policymakers about the impact of heart disease and stroke on the state's population and economy, and the need for statewide prevention and treatment strategies.
- The Program also organized regional public forums in six areas of the state, both urban and rural, to gather recommendations for the master plan from local stakeholders. Public health officials, physicians and other healthcare providers, city planners, and community representatives contributed expertise.

### **Impact**

- Educating California's Legislators increased understanding of the burden of heart disease and stroke to the state.
- The California Legislature passed Assembly Bill 1220, creating a task force charged with developing a comprehensive master plan for heart disease and stroke prevention and treatment.
- Because of the high visibility of this governor-appointed task force, \$150,000 was leveraged from private sources to begin plan development. A funding source other than state funds is required by Assembly Bill 1220.
- Public forums brought together individuals, institutions and community-based organizations, often for the first time, to pursue collaborative strategies for the prevention and control of heart disease and stroke.
- The public forums identified potential partners for implementation of the master plan.

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