

## **BLOCK GRANT FUNDING HELPS FLORIDA COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAMS TARGET HEART DISEASE & STROKE PREVENTION**

*Model chronic disease program coordinates resources and addresses the most common risk factors for chronic disease to maximize prevention results*

### **Public Health Problem**

- Chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes cause nearly 75 percent of all deaths in Florida each year.
- Heart disease and stroke are the first and third leading causes of death.
- A high percentage of Florida's adults have one or more risk factors for these conditions. Nearly 60 percent are either overweight or obese, one-third have high blood pressure, and more than a quarter have no leisure-time physical activity.

### **Program**

- The Chronic Disease Health Promotion and Education Program, using Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant funds, has evolved over eight years from a few pilot projects to comprehensive statewide coverage of Florida's 67 counties.
- The program focuses on heart disease and stroke prevention by addressing risk factors such as physical activity, nutrition, diabetes, obesity and tobacco use.
- Program coordinators develop health councils, assess local health needs, write grants, and help communities implement and evaluate proven chronic disease programs.
- Participating communities must provide 25 percent of program funding from local sources.

### **Impact**

- Many of Florida's counties have implemented successful chronic disease prevention programs. Examples include:
  - Baker County has promoted structured physical activity in elementary schools during recess and after-school programs.
  - Collier County Health Department partnered with the Boys and Girls Clubs to develop public service announcements on obesity prevention.
  - Hendry County passed a "tobacco free" ordinance for all county-owned parks.
  - Hernando County instituted a "Smoke-Free Home Pledge Program" that was recognized by the Environmental Protection Agency.
- The state has promoted physical activity through improved lighting, sidewalks and walking trails. Counties also participate in "Step Up Florida -- On Our Way to Healthy Living," a border-to-border county relay that covers the entire state of Florida. More than 1,300 partners participate each year, covering over 305,000 miles.

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