

Prevention Agenda Toward the Healthiest State 2008-2013

The New York State Department of Health, has launched a *Prevention Agenda for the Healthiest State* to support the goals of health care reform. This agenda sets ten statewide public health priorities and asks local health departments, hospitals and other community partners to work together to address them. The emphasis of this public health initiative is on prevention strategies to improve the health of all New Yorkers and foster healthy communities. Priority areas include:

- Access to Quality Health Care
- Chronic Disease
- Community Preparedness
- Healthy Environment
- Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies, Healthy Children
- Infectious Disease
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse
- Physical Activity and Nutrition
- Tobacco Use
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Rationale – Why Public Health?

Our health status is largely influenced by social circumstances, environmental conditions, behavioral patterns and access to health care. Public health efforts directed at each of these factors can lower the risk of adverse health outcomes. Primary prevention efforts promote healthy environments and behaviors that lower the risk of disease among susceptible people. Secondary prevention focuses on the early detection of diseases and conditions to enable a cure or better treatment outcome.

There is ample evidence that state and local spending on community-based primary and secondary prevention can improve health outcomes and yield a return on investment through savings in health care costs and Medicaid budgets.

Approach

The Prevention Agenda establishes goals for each priority area and defines indicators to measure progress toward achieving these goals, including the elimination of racial, ethnic and socioeconomic health disparities. The Prevention Agenda calls on local health departments and hospitals to identify two or three of these priorities, and then work with community providers, insurers, community based organizations and others to take action in addressing them. Each health department will undertake a comprehensive Community Health Assessment and then develop a Municipal Public Health Services Plan for the period 2010-2013. Hospitals will describe their operational commitment to meet community needs in a Community Service Plan for a similar time period.

The Department is providing technical assistance on accessing county-specific data, using evidence-based prevention approaches, and monitoring their impact. Community-based efforts will be complemented by local and statewide policy initiatives to help achieve the prevention goals.

More Information:

http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda/index.htm

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