January E-Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1, January 2007

In this Issue

CA Nutrition Network Partnership
"Smart Growth" Conference
Pre-Diabetes and Obesity Health Care Provider Symposium
State Food Stamp Participation Report
Fit Business Tips

Partnership with California Nutrition Network Continues in 2007

The Obesity Prevention Project is proud to announce its renewed partnership with the California Nutrition Network to continue the Physicians for Healthy Communities Initiative and Medi-Cal nutrition education efforts in 2007.

With the Network's support, the Physicians for Healthy Communities Initiative will continue to encourage healthy eating and physical activity education in California's underserved communities and advocacy trainings for physicians and health professionals will be held throughout the state. The project will continue building partnerships with Medi-Cal Managed Healthcare plans to compile resources that help providers offer the most comprehensive care to overweight and obese patients.

Smart Growth Conference to be held in Los Angeles

The 6th Annual New Partners for Smart Growth conference for Building Safe, Healthy and Livable Communities will be held on February 8-10 in Los Angeles.

The conference is presented by the Local Government Commission and will bring together a wide range of professionals including local elected officials, planners, transportation professionals and traffic engineers, health professionals and public health advocates, parks and recreation professionals, urban designers, social equity advocates and community leaders.

"There is strong and growing evidence that healthy community design leads to healthy, more active and more socially connected people," says Loel Solomon, Ph.D., National Director of Community Health Initiatives and Evaluation for Kaiser Permanente. "This conference is a place where we can learn together about what works to create healthy, thriving communities—and then put it into action."

More than 90 program sessions will be offered. For more information, visit www.newpartners.org or contact Elisa Wong, MPH at Elisa.Wong@kp.org.

Pre-Diabetes and Obesity Prevention Health Care Provider Symposium

The Central Valley Chronic Disease Partnership will hold a Pre-Diabetes and Obesity Prevention Health Care Provider Symposium in Fresno to offer the health care community an opportunity to learn about practical approaches and resources to assist in working with those who are at risk for obesity and diabetes. Speakers and workshops will highlight prevention efforts focusing on healthy eating and active living for both children and young adults.

Physicians, Nurses, Certified Diabetes Educators, Dietitians, Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, Health Educators, Community Health Workers, Medical Assistants, and other members of the care team are encouraged to attend.

For more information please see the attached Save the Date PDF document.

Synopsis of Reaching Those in Need:
State Food Stamp Participation Rates in 2004

In 1977, the United States Federal government enacted the Food Stamp Program (FSP), which has grown to become the largest of the domestic food and nutrition assistance programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service. The overall aim of the program was, and still is, to alleviate hunger and malnutrition by supplying eligible individuals with Food Stamps, through *Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT)* cards to purchase more nutritious food. In 1977, a national average of 17 million people participated per month in the Food Stamp program. Almost 30 years later, in Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2006, an average of 26 million people per month were served by the program.

One of the FSP performance measures is the participation rate or the percentage of eligible people participating in the program. Each year USDA releases a state participation rate report. The most recent report released in mid-November for FFY 2004 also includes participation rates for the "working poor" —FSP eligible individuals living in households in which someone earns income from a job.

In FFY 2004, close to 60 percent of eligible people living in the United States received food stamps with wide variation in participation rates by state. California ranked last with only 46 percent of eligible Californians participating which was 14 percent below the national average (60 percent). Applying this rate approximately 2.1 million eligible people in California were not receiving FSP benefits. Of the number of eligible "working poor", California again was at the bottom of the list with only 34 percent participating, in comparison to the national average of 51 percent. This translates into approximately 1.4 million eligible working poor not participating in California. For the past three years (2002-2004), California has had significantly lower participation rates than half the States.

However, it is important to mention the participation rates are based on small samples of households from each state. Each state's participation rate estimate is presented with a 90 percent confidence interval. For example, there is a 90 percent chance that California's true participation rate falls within its confidence interval of 44-49 percent. The data reported in the USDA report was drawn from the Current Population Survey (CPS) [decennial census] and is

compared to Food Stamp administrative data. Food Stamp eligibility criteria was matched to the CPS to determine the number of individuals by state then compared to the administrative data of the number enrolled by state.
For additional information or a copy of the full report, visit
http://www.fns.usda.gov/oane/menu/Published/FSP/FILES/Participation/reaching2004.pdf
Article courtesy of the California Nutrition Network's Fresh Facts newsletter.

Fit Business Tips

From *California 5 a Day -- Be Active! Worksite Program*

- **Snacking happens:** Snacking throughout the day is not a bad thing, so long as you make healthy choices. Choosing fruits and vegetables instead of a bag of chips is not only healthier, but also easier on your budget. Apple slices, baby carrots, celery sticks, and bananas are all great choices for snacks that are inexpensive and require very little preparation.
- **Get up to get out your message:** In today's technological world, it's become easier to send an email or pick up the phone to talk to someone in the office than to talk to them in person. Instead of calling or emailing others in the office, get up and walk to their desk to deliver the message. Also try printing documents at a printer farthest from where you are working. These extra steps will add up and before you know it, you'll be increasing your physical activity!

Coming Next Month…

- 2007 Physicians for Healthy Communities Training Information

Physicians for Healthy Communities Toolkit survey