



Health in All Policies Task Force Report to the Strategic Growth Council

December 3, 2010



Executive Summary

Background

California faces critical problems that will shape the futures of our children and grandchildren. Climate change, water shortages, fiscal challenges, an aging population, and increasing health inequities are but a few examples of the compelling issues facing the state. At the same time, California – and the nation – faces unprecedented levels of chronic disease, which now accounts for over 75 percent of all deaths in California¹ and 75 percent of all U.S. health care expenditures.² Obesity and overweight, which increase chronic disease risk and contribute to lost productivity, cost California an estimated \$21.0 billion in 2006.³

Health is a critical component of sustainable communities, and is directly linked to the goals of the Strategic Growth Council (SGC). For example, when Californians consume local produce they enhance their own health through consumption of fruits and vegetables and help preserve California's agricultural lands. Policies that support active transportation help Californians incorporate more health-promoting physical activity into their lives, while also reducing greenhouse gas emissions and other harmful co-pollutants. Infill development can help to reduce urban sprawl, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and support location-efficient housing that promotes active transportation and allows workers to reap both economic and health benefits. Good health is also critical for economic sustainability, increasing workforce participation and productivity, and slowing the ongoing rise in medical care expenditures, which diverts resources from other State priorities such as education or investments in green energy.

The health of California's population is largely determined by the social, physical, economic, and service environments in which people live, work, study, and play. These environments shape the choices that people make every day, as well as their opportunities and resources for health. People in disadvantaged communities often have fewer resources for health, which is reflected in significantly worse health outcomes.

The types of complex problems addressed in this report have been described as "wicked" problems.⁴ They are multi-factorial with many interdependencies, difficult to fully define, lacking a clear solution, and not the responsibility of any single organization or government department. Such problems require a new policy paradigm and innovative solutions that reach across organizational silos and promote co-benefits, which create incentives for coordinated policy approaches. Health in All Policies, or HiAP, is a collaborative approach that has been used internationally to address just these kinds of issues. A HiAP approach recognizes that health and prevention are impacted by policies that are managed by non-health government and non-government entities, and that many strategies that improve health will also help to meet the policy objectives of other agencies. The World Health Organization, European Union, South Australia, Finland, and other Western nations are all exploring ways to implement HiAP. Although it does not use the term HiAP, the Surgeon General's National Prevention,

Health Promotion, and Public Health Council also brings together cross-sectoral agency leaders to address health and prevention.

The Health in All Policies Task Force

California's Health in all Policies Task Force was established by Executive Order S-04-10 of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger on February 23, 2010, under the auspices of the SGC. The Task Force was charged with identifying priority actions and strategies for state agencies to improve community health while also advancing the other goals of the SGC. Between April and November of 2010, representatives from 19 California agencies, departments, and offices came together in multiple individual and Task Force meetings, participated in public workshops, and received written comments from a diverse array of stakeholders. These State leaders have developed a broad-ranging set of recommendations on feasible strategies and actions to promote health while also meeting other objectives of the SGC.

The Task Force defined a healthy community as one that meets the basic needs of all residents, ensures quality and sustainability of the environment, provides for adequate levels of economic and social development, achieves health and social equity, and assures social relationships that are supportive and respectful. The Task Force also identified the following aspirational goals, which provide a structure for the recommendations contained in this report:

- Every California resident has the option to safely walk, bicycle, or take public transit to school, work, and essential destinations.
- All California residents live in safe, healthy, affordable housing.
- Every California resident has access to places to be active, including parks, green space, and healthy tree canopy.
- Every California resident is able to live and be active in their communities without fear of violence or crime.
- Every California resident has access to healthy, affordable foods at school, at work, and in their neighborhoods.
- California's decision makers are informed about the health consequences of various policy options during the policy development process.

Recommendations

The recommendations put forth in this report are geared at improving the efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and collaborative nature of State government, while promoting both health and other goals of the SGC. They address two strategic directions:

1. Building healthy and safe communities with opportunities for active transportation; safe, healthy, affordable housing; places to be active, including parks, green space, and healthy tree canopy; the ability to be active without fear of violence or crime; and access to healthy, affordable foods.
2. Finding opportunities to add a health lens in public policy and program development and increase collaboration across agencies and with communities.

Executive Order S-04-10 calls for the Task Force to “identify priority programs, policies, and strategies to improve the health of Californians while advancing the SGC’s goals of improving air and water quality, protecting natural resources and agricultural lands, increasing the availability of affordable housing, improving infrastructure systems, promoting public health, planning sustainable communities, and meeting the state’s climate change goals.”

All of the recommendations in this report address public health. The table below summarizes the recommendations of this report and identifies the linkages between the recommendation and the other goals of the Strategic Growth Council. The full text of each recommendation can be found beginning on page 25.

Identifier	Abbreviated Recommendation	Strategic Growth Council Goals					
		Air and water quality	Affordable housing	Infrastructure systems	Natural resources and agricultural land	Sustainable communities planning	Climate change
I. PROMOTE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES							
I.A. Active Transportation							
I.A1	Utilize data to improve community planning and increase active transportation.	X	X	X		X	X
I.A2	Support active transportation through implementation of “complete streets.”	X		X		X	X
I.A3	Incorporate safety considerations of all roadway users into programs, policies, and community designs.	X		X		X	X
I.A4	Highlight the opportunities presented by SB 375 to promote active transportation.	X		X		X	X
I.A5	Incorporate trails and greenways as part of an active transportation system.	X		X	X	X	X
I.A6	Promote and encourage active transportation and physical activity for State employees.	X		X			X
I.B. Housing and Indoor Spaces							
I.B1	Encourage sustainable development through healthy housing by offering incentives and providing State guidance.	X	X			X	X
I.B2	Explore secure and permanent funding for affordable housing.		X				

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I.B3	Promote sustainable development through smart housing siting.	X	X	X	X	X	X
I.B4	Ensure that all workers and school-children enjoy smoke-free environments.	X					
I.C. Parks, Urban Greening, and Places to be Active							
I.C1	Support urban greening and access to green spaces.	X			X	X	X
I.C2	Improve wildfire-related air quality and safety.	X			X	X	X
I.C3	Take stronger actions to prevent and control invasive species which pose a threat to all ecosystems, including agriculture and forests.	X			X		X
I.C4	Encourage joint use of facilities throughout communities in California.				X	X	
I.C5	Reduce the environmental impact of tobacco waste.	X			X		
I.D. Violence Prevention							
I.D1	Build violence prevention capacity statewide by supporting community-level efforts to engage and convene stakeholders to develop data-informed prevention actions, including through training to promote effective community engagement and joint action.					X	
I.D2	Disseminate existing guidance on Crime Prevention through Environmental Design.					X	
I.D3	Analyze State violence prevention spending in the ten California communities that have the highest rates of violence and develop recommendations for State agency action in those ten communities, drawing from evidence-based approaches.					X	

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I.D4	Expand the Governor's Office of Gang and Youth Violence Policy to become a comprehensive clearinghouse on violence prevention that will develop and distribute crime prevention education and training materials as well as provide training and technical assistance to communities.					X	
I.D5	Work with foundation, private sector, and State agency partners to increase resources for a Probation Resource Center to support probation departments' efforts to implement evidence-based practices.					X	
I.E. Healthy Food							
I.E1	Encourage and expand the availability of affordable and locally grown produce through "farm-to-fork" policies and programs.	X			X	X	X
I.E2	Better utilize State-administered food assistance programs to increase consumption of healthy foods, decrease consumption of low-nutrient, high-calorie foods, reduce hunger, and add dollars to the local economy.				X	X	
I.E3	Establish a California Food Policy Council comprised of State agencies and other relevant stakeholders involved with food production, distribution, purchase, promotion, provision, and health, in order to build a more robust, sustainable food system, alleviate hunger, and promote consumption of healthy foods.	X			X	X	X
I.E4	Leverage government spending to support healthy eating and sustainable local food systems.	X			X		X

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II. PROMOTE HEALTHY PUBLIC POLICY							
II.A. State Guidance							
II.A1	Incorporate a health and health equity perspective into State guidance, surveys, and technical assistance documents where feasible and appropriate.	X	X	X	X	X	X
II.A2	Identify and publicize a comprehensive set of state resources for communities to use in healthy community planning.	X	X	X	X	X	X
II.B. Embedding Health in Decision Making							
II.B1	Incorporate health and health equity criteria into State grant Requests for Applications, review criteria and scoring, technical assistance, and monitoring/performance measures, where feasible and appropriate.	X	X	X	X	X	X
II.B2	Continue to provide integrated comments on federal legislative and policy proposals from multiple California agencies, including incorporation of a health and health equity lens (e.g., Transportation Reauthorization, Child Nutrition Reauthorization, Environmental Protection Agency Greenhouse Gas Regulation).	X	X	X	X	X	X
II.B3	Explore appropriate ways to integrate health analysis into existing State projects and plans.	X	X	X	X	X	X
II.C. Data and Research							
II.C1	State agencies and their contractors, where feasible and appropriate, should incorporate health and health equity indicators into data collection tools and accountability measures, and endeavor to standardize data elements and indicators to facilitate data collection, sharing, and accessibility.	X	X	X	X	X	X

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II.C2	Increase use of evidence-based practices.	X	X	X	X	X	X
II.D. Cross-Agency Collaboration and Expertise							
II.D1	Foster deeper understanding and collaboration across State agencies.	X	X	X	X	X	X
II.E. Community Engagement							
II.E1	Improve opportunities for substantive community engagement in State agency decision-making.	X	X	X	X	X	X
II.F. Continue the Health in All Policies Task Force							
II.F1	Continue the Health in All Policies Task Force in order to foster continued dialogue on the impact of decisions on health and health equity, and to pursue implementation of recommendations. Expand participation to additional relevant agencies.	X	X	X	X	X	X

Challenges, Successes, and Next Steps

The Task Force has faced the same challenges that often make collaborative work difficult, such as restricted financial and staff resources, limited initial knowledge of each other's policy areas, and competing critical priorities. The Task Force made great strides in building trust, developing working relationships, establishing a baseline of knowledge about each other's policy areas, and identifying the multiple links between each policy area, strategic growth, equity, and health. The Task Force also collected and sifted through an enormous body of information and identified specific areas for further work to advance these co-benefits.

This report is a starting point; much work remains to guide implementation of these recommendations. The Task Force intends to work with the SGC in the coming year to identify priorities among this set of recommendations and to develop action plans and implementation strategies. The discussions and work of the Task Force have been exciting and challenging, and have demonstrated the power of deeper cross-sectoral engagement to address the interconnected wicked problems that we confront.