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## IX BINATIONAL HEALTH WEEK

TULARE COUNTY REPORT  
2009



## GENERAL OVERVIEW

Binational Health Week (BHW) encompasses an annual weeklong series of health promotion and health education activities that include workshops, insurance referrals, and medical screenings.

BHW fosters community solidarity through the extensive mobilization of existing resources and the organization of volunteers working together for a common goal. The events are coordinated by networks forged among agencies and community organizations with the purpose of reaching out the most disadvantaged and vulnerable people, especially those without medical coverage.

BHW main partners include the Secretariats of Health and Foreign Affairs of Mexico, and the Foreign Affairs Ministries of Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, as well as the Institute for Mexicans Abroad, the Mexican Social Security Institute, California's Department of Public Health, The California Endowment, California HealthCare Foundation, US-Mexico Border Health Commission, *Consejo de Federaciones Mexicanas de Norte América* (COFEM), the Health Initiative of the Americas, a program of the School of Public Health at the University of California at Berkeley and many local agencies.

This year, the Ninth BHW took place **October 3-15, 2009** in 40 states in the U.S. and 3 provinces in Canada, with the participation of the consular networks in the United States of Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Additionally, during BHW four national campaigns were implemented to promote awareness among the underserved Latino community: Prevention of Addictions, Nutrition, Prevention of Strokes, and Living Green. The inaugural event and Policy Forum on Migration and Health was held on October 5-6 in Albuquerque and Santa Fe, New Mexico.

## *Binational Policy Forum on Migration and Health*

The IX Annual Binational Policy Forum on Migration and Health took place on October 4-5, 2009 in New Mexico. This two-day event was co-sponsored by the Secretariat of Health and the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, the Institute for Mexicans Abroad, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Guatemala, El Salvador, Peru, Honduras, Colombia, and Ecuador, the U.S. Department of Human and Health Services, the Government of New Mexico, the US-Mexico Border Health Commission, COFEM, the California Endowment, and the Health Initiative of the Americas, among other institutions.

The policy forum was the launching event of Binational Health Week. The goal of this year's forum was to convene key stakeholders from the United States, Mexico, Canada, South and Central American countries to discuss (im)migrant health challenges and to explore unique opportunities to work collaboratively to improve the health and well-being of this population.



## TULARE COUNTY

During 2008, 10 events were organized in Tulare County during which, it is estimated 4,580 people received free health education and services. Approximately, 38 agencies participated at these events and more than 12,000 pieces of educational material were distributed.

Basic health screenings were offered to the public and they included: blood pressure, glucose, cholesterol, vision, dental screenings and flu shots. This year, approximately 1,184 screenings were given to the attendees.

### Events

Binational Health Week was launched in the Central Valley on October 1st. A press conference was held at the Mexican Consulate in Fresno to announce the launch of Binational Health Week events throughout the Central Valley including Tulare County. Representatives from various agencies were present.

In Tulare County, the first event took place October 2<sup>th</sup>. The BHW Task Force in collaboration with Earlimart School District, United Health Centers, CCROPP and other agencies organized a health fair at Earlimart Elementary School. The event included free health information and glucose and blood pressure screenings, nutrition and health advice by nurses, a mobile fitness vehicle that provided physical activities for the children, nutrition education for the parents and the children, a mobile unit that provided training and employment information. A representative from the Mexican Consulate was also present to inform the public about the services offered at the consulate in Fresno and answer questions.



The official opening of BHW in Tulare County was October 4<sup>th</sup> in Visalia. Family Health Care Network organized an annual health fair with various services for the community. Hemoglobin, height and weight and blood pressure screenings were conducted, and health education materials handed out. Entertainment, including Folkloric dancers were also present during this family event. A representative from the office of Senator Dean Florez presented a Senate Resolution to the BHW Task Force. Cónsul of Mexico in Fresno, Reyna Torres Mendivil and Mayor of Visalia, Jesus Gamboa attended the event and officially inaugurated BHW in Tulare County.



A total of 3 events took place on October 9<sup>th</sup>, which were planned for different populations. In partnership with the Central Valley Chronic Disease Partnership, the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Provider Symposium took place in Fresno. This year's theme was *Assessing and Treating Patients with Diabetes* with a dental field focus. The symposium had 64 participants and presented important information on assessing patients with diabetes, and updated information on legislation in regards to dental coverage.

Another event for the community with glucose screenings, blood pressure check, measurements of height and weight and other health related information and services such as dental care, immunizations, employment training, tuberculosis and food stamp enrollment took place in Lindsay with the coordination of Vida Sana Medical Group.

The last event for that day was a presentation on HIV Prevention conducted by Dr. Genoveva Perez and coordinated by

Proteus, Inc. Dr. Perez visited Tulare County to participate during BHW activities from the Secretaría de Salud in Mexico CENSIDA program. The presentation was at the Proteus' office in Dinuba and had participation of the Plaza Comunitarias students as well as general public.



Tulare Community Health Clinic held its annual Binational Health Week Health Fair on Saturday October 10<sup>th</sup>. During this event, attendees had the opportunity to receive free health screenings, flu shots, hear a presentation on nutrition education conducted by Dr. Genoveva Perez and have dental screenings. Some of the free screenings included: glucose checks, iron level, blood pressure, vision and hearing screenings, and height and weight. An estimated 673 people attended this event at the Tulare Fair Grounds.



The Second Annual Tulare County Health & Wellness Expo coordinated by Radio Campesina took place during Binational Health Week on Sunday October 11<sup>th</sup>. Free health screenings and information were also provided. During the event, attendees had the opportunity to get blood pressure checks, glucose screenings, participate in physical activities provided by the Mobile Fitness Vehicle, nutrition education and listen to Mariachi music by a local children's mariachi group.

With the assistance of Proteus in Porterville, BHW guest Dr. Genoveva Perez was able to present on HIV Prevention to the community of Porterville. The participants were students of the Plaza Comunitaria and the general public. Attendees' age ranged from high school students to retirees and they all showed a special interest on the topic. Some of the older participants commented on the fact that it was their first time hearing a presentation on the topic and realized the importance of it. A young attendee said she "felt important that the parents talk to their children about prevention of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases and not just let the schools do it". Open communication between parents and children was highly encouraged during these presentations.

Another important topic that was highlighted during this year's Binational Health Week was Suicide Prevention. As the number of suicides in Tulare County has been continuously rising, especially among youth, the BHW Taskforce decided it was important to address it. On Thursday October 15<sup>th</sup> with a unique collaboration between Lindsay Unified School District Migrant Education Program Region 24, Health Initiative of the Americas, and Synchrony of Visalia a presentation for 160 parents was conducted at Washington Elementary School in Lindsay. The presentation conducted by Synchrony discussed possible signs that suicidal people may display, general awareness, and local resources for the attendees. It also included a panel of mental health and counseling experts as well as two parents of teenagers who recently committed suicide that gave testimony of their loss and raise awareness.



The closing event for BHW in Tulare County, happened on October 23<sup>rd</sup> with the collaboration of Lali Moheno & Associates which held its 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Farmworker Women Health and Safety Conference in Visalia. The conference had an attendance of approximately 500 attendees which were mostly women who work primarily in the agricultural industry. Early in the morning a health fair with information on health insurance, pesticides, domestic violence awareness, job training, other health related information booths, and free flu shots and blood pressure and glucose screenings took place. Then, the conference started with a welcome by various personalities including Visalia Mayor, Mexican Consul of Community Affairs among others. Workshops followed with information on occupational health rights and regulations, citizenship, job training and health related presentations.

### Media

To assist in disseminating information about Binational Health Week in Tulare County, media alerts were circulated to the local media. Interviews with several radio stations and newspapers also took place.

Radio Bilingüe provided support during BHW and provided free air time for interviews to announce BHW, and interviews with expert Dr. Perez to inform the listeners about HIV Prevention. They also provided music and participated at various events throughout the county.

Radio Campesina also participated in several of the BHW events providing music, promotional items and live remote controls

inviting people to attend and announcements of events.

### Resources

The Task Force counted with an initial budget that allowed them to assist some of the organizing agencies with some funds to defray some of the costs incurred. Anthem Blue Cross donated \$1,000.

The agencies that organized events raised their own funds and received monetary donations and/or a large amount of in-kind contributions. It is estimated that throughout BHW in Tulare County, in-kind contributions totaled \$85,000.

## Tulare County Binational Health Week 2009 Task Force, Partners and Sponsors

Anthem Blue Cross  
Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program (CCROPP)  
Central Valley Chronic Disease Partnership  
Consulado de México en Fresno  
Earlimart Unified School District  
Family Health Care Network  
Health Initiative of the Americas  
Health Net of California  
Kaweah Delta Health Care District  
Lali Moheno & Associates  
Lindsay Unified School District, Migrant Education Region 24  
Proteus, Inc.  
Radio Bilingüe  
Radio Campesina  
Secretaría de Salud México, CENSIDA  
Synchrony of Visalia  
Tulare Community Health Clinic  
Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency  
Tulare County Nutrition Collaborative  
Tulare County Office of Education, Migrant Education  
United Health Centers of the San Joaquin Valley  
United Way, Poder Popular Program  
Vida Sana Medical Clinic

Thank You!