



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Healthy Counties Initiative





The Healthy Counties Initiative

What is It?

The National Association of Counties (NACo) launched the Healthy Counties Initiative in 2011 to enhance public-private partnerships in local health delivery, improve individual and community health, and assist counties to effectively implement federal health reform. More information is available at www.naco.org/healthycountiesinitiative.

What are Its Strategies?

The **NACo Healthy Counties Initiative** will engage county officials and private sector partners across the country to:

- ▶ Take a leadership role in implementing health reform at the county level;
- ▶ Enhance coverage, access to and coordination of health care for vulnerable populations in the community, including health services in hospitals, community health centers and county jails, while focusing on cost-containment strategies;
- ▶ Promote community public health, prevention and wellness programs, including increased physical activity and healthy eating;
- ▶ Participate in the national transition to health information technology and telemedicine; and
- ▶ Offer information, ideas and solutions for county government employee and retiree health benefits and programs.

Who Leads the Initiative?

NACo's Healthy Counties Initiative is guided by the public-private Healthy Counties Advisory Board, which is comprised of county officials who are health leaders at NACo and corporate partners. The Healthy Counties Advisory Board assists NACo in identifying the priorities and activities of the Healthy Counties Initiative and provides input and expertise on program implementation.

Capacity Building Milestones to Date

Educational Forums

Two day forums are held to educate members and partners.

- ▶ In Creating Healthy Counties: Investing in County Health in Tough Economic Times, sessions explored various health topics, including policies and initiatives that encourage residents and county employees to adopt healthier lifestyles and how to maintain disease prevention and health promotion efforts within the context of constrained local budgets. In addition, county leaders heard from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on the federal-level investments in prevention and wellness that affect county public health infrastructure and activities.
- ▶ County Challenges and Opportunities in a Changing Health System provided counties with the opportunity to discuss issues ranging from health care policy and system changes and the implications for county health care delivery systems to preparing your county for the health needs of an aging population to customizing data to create local community health indicators.



Workshops

- ▶ Participants had the opportunity to learn how they could use the tools to better allocate public health resources and improve health outcomes to their residents through a hands-on demonstration of health information technology.
- ▶ County leaders learned why they need to be involved in their community health needs assessments and implementation strategy process to ensure that other local health assessment efforts were not duplicated, that tax-exempt hospitals are measurably taking on uncompensated care, and local safety net care burdens are equitably shared.

Engage • Collaborate Share Solutions

Webinars

- ▶ County leaders discussed successful strategies for diverting mentally ill individuals into comprehensive crisis care services and supporting the behavioral health needs of ex-offenders reentering the community after incarceration.
- ▶ Challenges such as obesity, asthma, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and access to care can be aggravated by physical design, infrastructure and environmental factors. County leaders and staff learned about the value of incorporating health outcomes into planning policies.
- ▶ Creative and cost-free ways to engage community members in their county's health promotion activities is becoming increasingly important. Counties learned about unique public-private partnerships for supporting and financing local-health focused projects.



Resources

Database

NACo collects strategies implemented by counties across the country for county leaders to use as models. Counties may also submit their own initiatives. More information is available at www.naco.org/healthycountiesinitiative and click on "Counties in Action."

Resource Center

Information about the policies and initiatives implemented by counties to promote community health, links to federal health information, toolkits, and publications from leading health promotion organizations can be found in NACo's Healthy Counties Resource Center. For additional information, please visit www.naco.org/healthycountiesinitiative and click on "Resources and Publications."

Corporate Sponsors





“ A critical component of creating and sustaining resilient communities is having healthy counties. This Initiative is a vehicle by which counties can learn and share best practices for cultivating thriving communities through public-private partnerships.”

— **Hon. Jim McDonough**

Commissioner, Ramsey County, Minnesota
NACo Healthy Counties Advisory Board Chair

NACo HEALTHY COUNTIES

An initiative of the
National Association
of Counties



For more information on NACo's Healthy Counties Initiative, please visit
www.naco.org/healthycountiesinitiative

or contact

Emmanuelle St. Jean, MPH, Program Manager
202.942.4267 • estjean@naco.org



25 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE, NW | SUITE 500 | WASHINGTON, DC 20001
P: 202.393.6226 F: 202.393.2630 | WWW.NACO.ORG



FB.COM/NACODC | TWITTER.COM/NACOTWEETS | YOUTUBE.COM/NACOVVIDEO | LINKEDIN.COM/NACODC