

CSAC Challenge Award – 2016 Plumas County Executive Summary

Overview – 20,000 Lives is an initiative to improve the quality of life in Plumas County by bringing the entire community together for powerful, lasting change.

Challenge – In 2013, Plumas County Public Health Agency faced the challenge of implementing an ambitious three-year, Community Health Improvement Plan, at a time when both the county and the department lacked the funding, infrastructure and capacity to successfully tackle our most pressing health and community problems. The Plan was developed during a twelve-month planning process in collaboration with local hospitals, tribal health, community partners and over 400 county residents. In the past, the agency would have looked for outside funding, such as grants, to finance solutions to health priorities. However, community stakeholders were discouraged when programs were not sustainable after grant funding ended. Additionally, such funding was often not flexible, came with burdensome administrative requirements, and did not always address issues unique to our small communities.

Innovative Solution –As we mapped the numerous assets across every layer of the community, the community health improvement collaborative believed that it would not be new or outside funding that would help achieve our priorities, but the gamering of existing community resources, strategically aligned towards mutual goals, that would be the key to sustaining lasting community change. The feedback from the community led to one of three overarching health priorities in the Community Health Improvement Plan - Optimizing Current Resources. Recognizing a new era in which Public Health and local government, alone, do not have the ability to solve our communities' towering issues, the Public Health Agency proposed a new approach to improving community health, with a campaign name based on the number of residents in the county. The 20,000 Lives initiative, which implements the Community Health Improvement Plan, has a singular goal - to improve the quality of life for all Plumas County residents.

Plumas County Public Health Agency's role in 20,000 Lives is to serve as the backbone organization, acting as a catalyst for achieving community-level progress. The framework of the last decade, in which the public health department assumed the primary responsibility for population health, with reliance on health system partners and unpredictable grant and Realignment funding through sales tax and vehicle license fees, was no longer working optimally to serve Plumas County residents. Under the 20,000 Lives initiative, Public Health lends its centralized infrastructure, dedicated staff, and structured processes, to facilitate, link and leverage resources to improve population health. The agency invests time, expertise and energy in partners, recognizing that partnership is essential given the current financial landscape. More than twenty community institutions and organizations and nearly 250 community members, through their participation, also do their part. These partners help to focus the entire community on shared goals, align

multiple efforts and existing resources to increase effectiveness and impact, contributing to large scale, lasting change from cross sector coordination.

Originality – The development and sustainability of a formal organizational framework mobilizing the entire community, from public institutions to individual residents, to share the responsibility for the county's overall quality of life is unique in small counties, but it is also replicable. Many counties embrace and support the concepts of collective action, but often lack a model, such as 20,000 Lives, to put the concepts into action.

Cost Effectiveness – 20,000 Lives was launched with no new funding. The Public Health agency committed to align relevant existing grants, projects, and staff to make measurable contributions and progress towards the 20,000 Lives goals. Additionally, the County General Fund Maintenance of Effort match for Public Health Realignment was redirected to fund Targeted Grants of \$20,000 and numerous \$500 mini-grants, for projects addressing one of the three priority areas of the Community Health Improvement Plan. The support provided to the community was multiplied many times with personal and organizational investments of staff time and other resources.

Results –In its third year of implementation, the 20,000 Lives initiative, through the re-design of the existing county public health system, has achieved a new level of effectiveness and performance across the county. Individuals and small grass roots organizations are now able to join larger partners and contribute towards strategic actions in accomplishing shared community goals. Institutions such as hospitals, higher education, schools, and county departments benefit from on-the-ground knowledge, expertise and experiences of partners outside of government. In the last three years, 20,000 Lives has awarded eighty-one mini-grants totaling \$24,406 and five Targeted Grants totaling \$100,000 to community based projects that address a health priority in the Community Health Improvement Plan. Additionally, during that time period, the Public Health Agency along with two district hospitals, two local nonprofits, and the Plumas County First 5 Commission have worked together to leverage more than \$1.5 Million in federal reimbursements of local public expenditures and efforts on increasing access to Medi-Cal and Medi-Cal covered services. Not only did the group improve access to health, it was able to participate in federal reimbursement, which provided additional funds to reinvest in the ongoing work of 20,000 Lives

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