



January 24, 2012

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Dear Local Government Elected Officials and Chief Administrative Officers:

As you may be aware, Premier Christy Clark announced the Healthy Families BC strategy in May 2011. As part of the strategy, the Honourable Michael de Jong, Minister of Health, announced the Healthy Families BC Communities initiative in September 2011, with the intent to foster partnerships between local governments and health authorities to help families and individuals live healthier lifestyles.

Local governments are already leaders and promoters of healthy living in their communities. To build on this momentum, the Province is developing an approach to provide greater support to communities in prioritizing health actions that will reduce the incidence of chronic disease and promote healthy weights.

The development of this initiative involves a comprehensive province-wide consultation process with the Union of BC Municipalities and local government to ensure it meets local community needs in all regions of the Province. These consultations will take place between February and May 2012.

I would like to cordially invite you as members of your municipal councils, regional district boards or as senior staff to participate in a Healthy Families BC Communities consultation session scheduled in your region. Please refer to the enclosed *Healthy Families BC Communities Initiative Consultation Overview and Registration* document for more information about the consultations.

I look forward to your participation in the sessions and to the forthcoming discussions, feedback and partnerships that will emerge to support the health of British Columbians.

Yours sincerely,

Arlene Paton
Assistant Deputy Minister
Population and Public Health

Enclosure

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pc: Dr. Paul Van Buynder, Chief Medical Health Officer, Fraser Health Authority
Dr. Andrew Larder, Chief Medical Health Officer, Interior Health Authority
Dr. Ronald Chapman, Chief Medical Health Officer, Northern Health Authority
Dr. Patricia Daly, Chief Medical Health Officer, Vancouver Health Authority
Dr. Richard Stanwick, Chief Medical Health Officer, Vancouver Island Health Authority
Dr. Perry Kendall, Provincial Health Officer, Provincial Health Officer's Office
Lydia Drasic, Acting Executive Director, Population & Public Health,
Provincial Health Services Authority
Grant Hollett, Director, Planning and Community Engagement,
Vancouver Island Health Authority
Doug Quibell, Northwest Area Manager, Public Health Protection,
Northern Health Authority
Jami Brown, Manager, Healthy Living/Healthier Communities, Fraser Health Authority
Lex Baas, Practice Lead, Promotion and Prevention Community,
Interior Health Authority
Claire Gram, Population Health Policy Consultant, Vancouver Health Authority



Healthy Families BC Communities Initiative Consultation Overview and Registration Information

Local governments are already leaders and promoters of healthy living in their communities. Many local governments have the health and well being of their community embedded into the services they offer, establishing bylaws that protect the health of their community and also placing the improvement of quality of life at the core of their strategic plans.

The Healthy Families BC Communities Initiative focuses on increasing support at the local government and health authority level to create environments that support people to make healthy choices the easy choice. Many local governments have made strides in building healthy communities, and through enhanced collaboration with their health authority, they will be able to jointly identify and align health promotion initiatives that will further improve the health of their citizens.

Healthy Families BC Communities Initiative is intended to support communities and local governments in prioritizing health actions in areas such as physical activity, healthy eating, tobacco reduction, healthy built environments, and priority populations/key settings to reduce chronic disease and promote healthy weights.

There will be an online portal to include a 'one-stop' directory for accessing health authority contact information and sharing of best practices/successes throughout different communities. Additionally, tools will be available via an online portal, to assist local governments in the development of community health profiles and community baseline assessments to identify the priority actions.

Local Government Consultations

There is no "one size fits all" approach to creating a healthy community. Each region has different characteristics and each community has a unique history of supporting collective health and well-being. To that end, the Ministry of Health is consulting with local governments and health authorities on the development of the Healthy Families BC Communities Initiative to ensure that it meets local community needs.

The Objectives of the consultations are to:

- Provide participants with an overview of the proposed Healthy Families BC Communities Initiative;
- Receive feedback from local governments on the proposed Healthy Families BC Communities Initiative; and
- Facilitate discussions between local governments and health authorities to identify how they can build on their existing partnership to reduce chronic disease and obesity risk factors.

The issues to be addressed during the consultations are:

- the impacts of chronic disease in BC communities;
- the benefits of collaborative action;
- the roles and responsibilities of local governments and health authorities in improving the health of their community;
- the role of the Provincial government; and
- options for partnerships, resources and recognition.

Based on the feedback received from the Union of BC Municipalities and Area Associations, we have organized a series of regional consultations with local governments to gather input and feedback on the development and implementation of the Healthy Families BC Communities Initiative. Given that the primary focus of the Initiative is to foster partnerships between local governments and their regional health authority, we encourage you to attend the session that is specific to your Health Authority Region.

The consultation dates and locations are as follows:

Health Authority Region	Consultation Session
Vancouver Island Health	Monday, Feb. 13, 2012 – Courtenay or Thursday, Feb. 22, 2012 – Victoria
Interior Health	Monday, Feb. 20, 2012 – Kamloops or Monday, Feb. 27, 2012 - Kelowna or (in conjunction with the Building Sustainable Communities Conference) or Wednesday, Apr. 18, 2012 – Rossland (pre-conference session at the AKBLG Area Association conference)
Northern Health	Wednesday, May 2, 2012 - 100 Mile House (pre-conference session at the NCLGA Area Association conference)
Fraser Health	Wednesday, May 9, 2012 – Whistler (pre-conference session at the LMLGA Area Association conference)
Vancouver Coastal Health	Wednesday, May 9, 2012 – Whistler (pre-conference session at the LMLGA Area Association conference)

Please confirm your attendance by registering at www.civicinfo.bc.ca/302e.asp?eventId=3005
Further details regarding exact times and locations of the consultation sessions are available at this site. If you have any questions regarding registration, please contact Gail Lucier at glucier@fraserbasin.bc.ca.