



STD Prevention in SPA 6—Update

A highly successful meeting of the SPA 6 Prevention Planning group was held at South Health Center on December 7, 2007. The topic of discussion was bringing *Plain Talk* to South Los Angeles and asking for a lead agency to come forward to implement this important program. Guests included representatives from Councilwomen Berks office; Public Private Ventures; local community based service organizations; Public Health officials and the SPA 6 Area Health Officer and staff.

Plain Talk is a community involvement program that has been shown to improve communications between youth and their parents or guardians and to reduce the rates of unplanned teen

pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and HIV/AIDS. The 3 core elements of *Plain Talk* include community mapping, walkers & talkers and home health parties. The first two elements involve hearing the communities' needs and recruiting community volunteers to host home health parties where communication and reproductive health topics are discussed with parents.

Prior to this meeting on December 7th, the Prevention Planning group had researched several STD and teen pregnancy prevention programs and spent more than a year working in collaboration with area service providers to determine the best prevention

program for SPA 6.

The Prevention Planning Group is now in the process of following up with those agencies that indicated they would be interested in implementing *Plain Talk* and preparing to raise the funds needed.

For more information about *Plain Talk* go to www.PlainTalk.org or contact Susan Walker at the Sexually Transmitted Disease Program (213) 744-3085.



Inside this issue:

A Smoke Free Ride for Kids!	2
Go Red for Women!	2
Emergency Prep for Seniors	3
LA County Health Status Profile	3

Area Health Officer Retires After 36 Years of Service



Martina Travis-Blount, Area Health Officer for the Department of Public Health

(Service Planning Area 5 and 6), is retiring in March after 36 years of service to the County.

Ms. Travis-Blount began her County career with the Department of Health Services at Los Angeles County - USC Hospital in 1969 as a part-time staff nurse at LAC+USC Hospital.

Her tenure in SPA 6 began in 1972 at the brand new King/Drew Medical Center in

Watts. She worked there as an OB-GYN clinic nurse and was eventually promoted to Supervising Nurse.

In 1981, Ms. Travis-Blount became District Nurse Manager of the Compton Health District.

In 1995, when Public Health and Personal health were separated (under the Department of Health Services), she became Nurse Manager and worked in that capacity for twelve years.

She became Area Health Officer for SPAs 5 and 6 in August 2007, after acting in that capacity for two years.

She and her family were long time residents of

Compton before moving to their current residence in Cypress, California in 2007.

Ms. Travis-Blount has served the County with distinction and dedication, providing resources and support to various community projects, most recently those involving the Florence Firestone community, and the reduction of STD rates in South Los Angeles.

The SPA 5 and 6 staff wish to extend our appreciation to Martina for her dedicated service to the residents of SPA 5 and 6 and wish her a healthy, prosperous, and rewarding retirement.

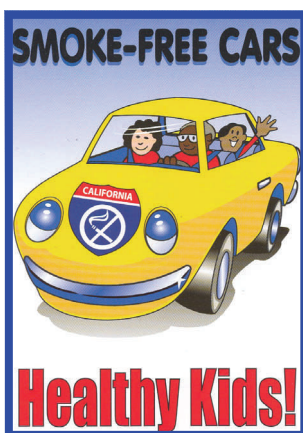
Making it a little Easier for Your Kids to Breathe: A Smoke-Free Ride

A new law hopes to make it a little easier for your children to breathe. Effective January 1, 2008 H&S code 118947 bans the smoking of any cigarette, pipe, or cigar in a moving or parked vehicle while any child 18 years or younger is present. California's "Smoke-free Cars with Minors" law, authored by Senator Jenny Oropeza, D-Long Beach aims to ensure that children and youth traveling in cars are not exposed to secondhand smoke.

Studies have shown that children and infants are especially susceptible to the harmful effects of secondhand smoke, which can lead to asthma, ear infections, bronchitis and pneumonia. Officials state that smoking a cigarette in a car makes the air inside the vehicle 10 to 30 times more toxic than the level the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says is hazardous for breathing.

On Thursday, January 3, 2008, the California Department of Public Health held a news conference at Hollywood United Methodist Church Parking Lot in Los Angeles to demonstrate the harmful environment smoking creates while in a car. In the demonstration, sensors were attached to the dashboard of a Toyota Corolla car, while a volunteer smoker sat in the driver's seat ready to light up

a cigarette. Additional sensors were attached to a child safety seat in the back. The sensors measure the amount of fine particulate matter in the air of the car. This matter cannot be seen by the naked eye, but can be found in all air but is especially concentrated in cigarette smoke. This matter can lodge deep into the lungs and cause long-term health problems.



The demonstration showed how rapidly the particles build up in the confinement of the car. Within seconds of lighting up the cigarette, computer monitors show the air quality in the front and back seat beyond hazardous, dangerous for anyone to breathe. In a repeat demonstra-

tion where the driver's window was open, the air in the car was still beyond hazardous within seconds. Even when the demonstration was over and the cigarette was extinguished, the smoke still lingered and took minutes to completely clear out and bring the air quality back down to normal.

The new law is no different than other measures taken to protect our children, like requiring children to be properly secured in car seats or with seat belts. Although police cannot pull over motorists for the smoking violation alone, if pulled over for another violation (such as running a red light) drivers can be fined up to \$100. Officials say they hope to continue to change social norms about smoking.



GO RED FOR WOMEN!

Cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 killer of all American women. BUT, African American women are at greater risk for cardiovascular disease than any other ethnic group, yet they are less likely than white women to know that they may have major risk factors. Diabetes, smoking, high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, physical inactivity, overweight/obesity and family history of heart disease are all greatly prevalent among African Americans and are major risk factors for cardiovascular disease, including stroke. Fewer than half of African American women (41%) consider themselves well informed about cardiovascular disease.

Taking care of your heart is more

important than you might know. Too few people realize that heart disease is the No. 1 killer of American women — and of men. But the good news is that heart disease can largely be prevented. Go Red For Women empowers women with knowledge and tools so they can take positive action to reduce their risks of heart disease and stroke and protect their health.



Go Red For Women is the American Heart Association's nationwide movement that celebrates the energy, passion and power we have as women to band together and wipe out heart disease. Thanks to the participation of millions of people across the country, the color red

and the red dress have become linked with the ability all women have to improve their heart health and live stronger, longer lives. The movement gives women tips and information on healthy eating, exercise and risk factor reduction, such as smoking cessation, weight maintenance, blood pressure control, and blood cholesterol management. **Take Action NOW!** Visit www.goredforwomen.org to join the movement, access heart-health information, get your free red dress pin, and take the **Go Red Heart CheckUp**. It's easy and life-saving!

For more information or to plan a Go Red event in your area, please contact: Dana Colbert, Director of Cultural Health Initiatives
American Heart Association | 213-291-7060 | dana.colbert@heart.org

Fire Drill Prepares Seniors for Emergencies

On Tuesday, December 11th, 2007 Willowbrook Senior Center (located in SPA 6) participants and staff took part in an evacuation drill orchestrated by MSN/MPH candidates from California State University, Long Beach. There are six candidates in this cohort, 3 of which currently work at South Health Center: Deanna Jackson-Keeble, Evelyn Price, and Yesenia Eras, Public Health Nurses.

After an extensive and thorough health and needs assessment, the MSN/MPH students determined that one intervention to improve Willowbrook Senior

Center emergency preparedness would be to conduct a drill in collaboration with the local fire department. The students believed that physically involving the seniors would spark their attention and open lines of communication for further emergency preparedness interventions. A survey was administered to seniors of WSC to determine emergency preparedness priorities. Some respondents believed it was unnecessary to prepare while other believed that it was very important.

Although much work needs to be done to have Willowbrook Senior Center fully

prepared for man-made and natural disasters, the drills and other interventions implemented have pushed the center into a higher level of emergency preparedness awareness and shed light to the importance of preparedness.

[see *Seniors*, on page 4]



Los Angeles County Health Status Profile

Los Angeles County met the *Healthy People 2010* objectives for reducing the death rates due to all cancers, lung cancer, prostate cancer, and cerebrovascular disease. Los Angeles County also met the national health objectives related to breastfeeding initiation, late or no prenatal care, and infant mortality (Asian/PI and White).

Los Angeles County has not achieved the *Healthy People 2010* objectives for reducing death rates due to colorectal (colon) cancer, female breast cancer, coronary heart disease, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, unintentional injuries, motor vehicle crashes, suicide, homicide, firearm-related, and drug-induced deaths. Nor has the county met the objectives related to AIDS incidence (in the population aged 13 and older), gonorrhea incidence, tuberculosis incidence, low birthweight infants, adequate/adequate plus prenatal care, and infant mortality (All Races, Black, and Hispanic). The data presented were extracted from the *County Health Status Profiles 2007* report. All rates are per 1000,000 population unless indicated.

Healthy People 2010 Objective	2000-2002	2003-2005	Change (%)	Healthy People 2010 Objective	2000-2002	2003-2005	Change (%)
Adequacy of Prenatal Care	80.3	83.1	+ 3.5	Female Breast Cancer age-adjusted death rate	23.2.	22.6	-2.6
Births to Adolescent Mothers 15-19 yrs. (per 1,000 female population) age-specific birth rate	47.5	40.7	-14.3	Prostate Cancer age-adjusted death rate	24.8.	22.1	-10.9
Breastfeeding (per 100 births) percent of breastfed infants	80.3.	82.8	+ 3.1	Diabetes age-adjusted death rate	24.8.	25.4	+2.4
Infant Mortality all Races (per 1,000 births) three year average infant death rate	5.4 (1999-2001)	5.4 (2002-2004)	0	Alzheimer's Disease age-adjusted death rate	11.9.	16.3	37.0
Low Birthweight Infants (per 100 live births) percent of low birthweight infants	6.6	7.2	+ 9.1	Coronary Heart Disease age-adjusted death rate	214.9.	179.5	-16.5
Reported Incidence of AIDS (age 13 years and older) case rate	22.7.	16.7	-26.4	Cerebrovascular Disease age-adjusted death rate	55.1.	46.8	-15.1
Reported Incidence of Chlamydia case rate	364.0.	402.6	+10.6	Influenza/Pneumonia age-adjusted death rate	32.1.	27.3	-15.0
Reported Incidence of Gonorrhea case rate	84.8.	99.9	+ 17.8	Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease age-adjusted death rate	36.8.	33.8	-8.2
Reported Incidence of Tuberculosis case rate	11.5.	9.8	-14.8	Chronic Liver Disease and Cirrhosis age-adjusted death rate	12.5.	11.1	-11.2
All Causes of Death age-adjusted death rate	742.6.	679.3	-8.5	Motor Vehicle Crashes age-adjusted death rate	8.8.	9.7	+10.2
All Cancers age-adjusted death rate	168.0.	154.8	-7.9	Suicide age-adjusted death rate	8.0.	7.2	-10.0
Colorectal (Colon) Cancer age-adjusted death rate	17.3.	16.2	-6.4	Homicide age-adjusted death rate	10.8	10.6	-1.9
Lung Cancer age-adjusted death rate	39.9.	35.4	-11.3	Firearm-Related age-adjusted death rate	12.5.	11.9	-4.8
				Drug-Induced age-adjusted death rate	7.7	8.2	6.5
				Unintentional Injuries age-adjusted death rate	22.6.	23.5	4.0

[Seniors, from page 3]

The MSN/MPH students have high hopes for continuing emergency preparedness efforts once they graduate in May. Future plans for Willowbrook include having the SPA 6 Emergency Preparedness-PHN and SPA 6 PHNs to conduct emergency preparedness lecture session throughout the year as well as collaborate with outside agencies to provide first aid training to staff and seniors and obtain emergency supplies for the center.



SPA 6 EXECUTIVE TEAM

Area Health Officer:	Martina Travis, MPH, BSN
Area Medical Director:	Maxine Liggins, MD, MPH
Director of Operations:	Willie Mae Howard, MPA
Nurse Manager:	Dee Warren, MSN, MPH, BSN
Nurse Supervisors:	Yesenia Eras, PHNS Deanna Jackson-Keeble, PHNS (Acting) Patricia Batiste, PHNS Ann Nelson, PHNS
Community Liaison:	Emily Moore, PHN Jameelah Harris-Mims, MSN, MPH, PHN
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Nicole D. Vick

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Chronicle 6

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