

PURPOSE:

Provide clear, consistent, culturally relevant, and compassionate outreach to affected communities and statewide (as appropriate) about current anencephaly investigation, folic acid recommendations and Apple Health's coverage of prenatal vitamins for all women capable of having children. Folic acid is a nutrient known to help prevent birth defects of the brain, spine, or spinal cord (also known as neural tube defects or NTDs). Anencephaly is one type of NTD.

OVERARCHING GOAL: To increase folic acid use among women of childbearing age in Benton, Franklin and Yakima counties.

IMMEDIATE GOALS:

- Increase number of Medicaid reimbursements for prenatal vitamin prescriptions for women of childbearing age.
- Address concerns about current anencephaly investigation and link affected families to resources in a culturally appropriate and sensitive way.
- Improve community capacity and readiness to address questions related to anencephaly, current investigation, and folic acid.

LONG TERM GOALS:

- Explore culturally relevant policy, systems, and environmental changes that increase access to and consumption of folate-rich foods and folic acid supplementation.
- Consider opportunities to reduce disparities in consumption of folate-rich foods and folic acid supplementation.

AUDIENCES:

- Health care providers (including community health workers, pharmacies and WIC clinics)
- Medicaid members
- Women capable of having children
- Undocumented women
- Families in Benton, Franklin and Yakima counties

BACKGROUND:

Elevated rates of anencephaly in Benton, Franklin and Yakima counties triggered an investigation that has been ongoing since August 2012. The cause of the elevated rates has not been found. Community outreach by Local Public Health, DOH, and March of Dimes has been ongoing since January 2013. Listening sessions were held in May 2014. We submitted Governor's alerts about this issue in January 2013, June 2014 and December 2015.

Health Care Authority recently announced changes to its policy to ensure coverage of prenatal vitamins under Apple Health for all women between ages 11-49 years. Prenatal vitamins contain folic acid, a nutrient known to help protect against neural tube defects, including spina bifida and anencephaly. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends that all women capable of becoming pregnant take 400-800 micrograms of folic acid a day.

Folic Acid

Central Washington Outreach Plan



WHAT WE ARE DOING:

Outreach about folic acid use is an ongoing activity for the Department of Health. This plan focuses on increasing awareness about the benefits of folic acid and the availability of prenatal vitamins through Apple Health. We are collaborating with Yakima Public Health, Benton Franklin Health District, Health Care Authority, and the Commission on Hispanic Affairs.

We included strategies at three levels to reach families and providers—statewide, community and health care. The community and health care strategies are specific to families in Benton, Franklin and Yakima counties due to the anencephaly investigation and recent media coverage. Strategies are based on activities evaluated and found effective for birth defects prevention by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (Reference CDC, available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/birthdefects/models/resource6-evaluatedactivitiesmatrix.pdf>)

PLEASE NOTE:

This is a working document that outlines potential activities as they fit into our current outreach efforts. This plan builds upon past and current outreach efforts, with a focus on ensuring all activities are culturally relevant for their intended audiences.

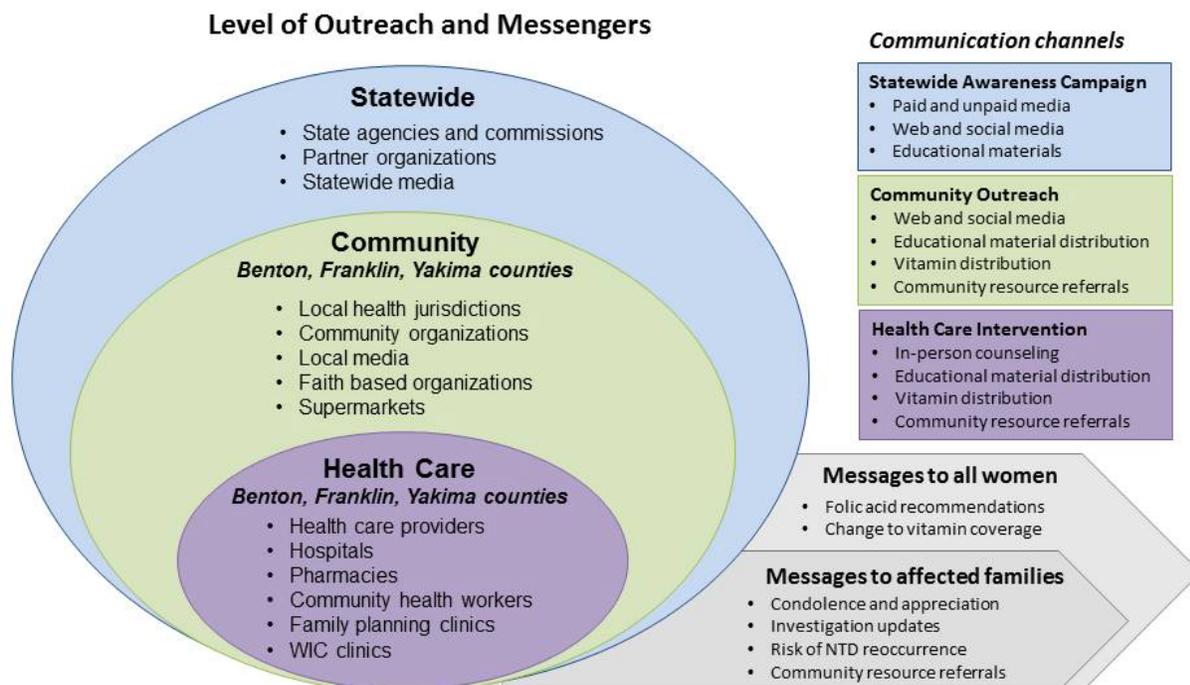
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VISUAL OVERVIEW OF OUTREACH PLAN



STATEWIDE

Leads: Department of Health and Health Care Authority

STRATEGY	DISTRIBUTION	RATIONALE
<p>Bilingual, culturally relevant, and comprehensive statewide awareness campaign about importance of folic acid and new vitamin coverage</p> <p>Audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women of reproductive potential (ages 11-49) • Health care providers 	<p>DOH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital media ads on targeted websites • Social media • Educational materials • Listservs and newsletters • Media (e.g. news releases, interviews, stories) • Radio • Agency websites <p>HCA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managed care plans • Medicaid providers 	<p>Found effective in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Florida and Virginia showed a statistically significant increase in knowledge and awareness. • New Mexico saw increase in use of folic acid from 32% to 44% and a 50% decrease in spina bifida and anencephaly cases.

COMMUNITY

Leads: Benton Franklin Health District and Yakima Public Health

STRATEGY	DISTRIBUTION	RATIONALE
<p>Targeted bilingual folic acid education</p> <p>Audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Benton, Franklin, and Yakima County families · Women ages 11-49 	<p>Local Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Social media · Supermarkets · Agency websites · Community health workers, Promotoras, Patient Navigators · Schools, school nurses, counselors, social works, and natural helpers · Faith-based organizations <p>DOH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · WIC clinics · Community health workers (trained through DOH) · Geo-targeted digital media ads, radio ads · Guest interviews on radio shows by State and Local Health Experts <p>HCA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Field staff who enroll clients into Medicaid 	<p>Trusted sources in the community are best able to disseminate and adapt messages to meet the needs of local communities.</p>

HEALTH CARE

Leads: Benton Franklin Health District and Yakima Public Health

STRATEGY	DISTRIBUTION	RATIONALE
<p>Vitamin distribution and folic acid education</p> <p>Audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women ages 11-49 not covered by Medicaid and in financial need, including undocumented immigrants 	<p>Local Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community health workers, Promotoras, Patient Navigators Local hospitals and clinics Family Planning Clinics 	<p>Direct vitamin distribution found effective in some other states:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michigan distributed 1,000 bottles; increase in use from 35% to 82%. North Carolina distributed 73,000 bottles; increase in use from 25% to 82%.
<p>Folic acid counseling and prescription by health care providers</p> <p>Audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Women ages 11-49 	<p>Local Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health advisories and bulletins <p>DOH and HCA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mailing of educational materials to providers, pharmacies, hospitals, and family planning clinics 	<p>Randomized-control trial with statistically significant results; folic acid intake increased by 68% in intervention group that received folic acid counseling from a gynecologist, folic acid tablets and a reminder phone call to take tablets.</p>
<p>Outreach to women with a previous neural tube defect-affected pregnancy to share information about folic acid and the anencephaly investigation</p> <p>Audiences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families who have experiences an NTD-affected pregnancy Families who participated in the anencephaly investigation 	<p>Local Health:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health advisories and bulletins Medical birth attendants Birthing hospitals <p>DOH:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mailing of educational materials to providers and hospitals Direct outreach to interviewed families 	<p>Outreach to 113 mothers in South Carolina with previous neural tube defect (NTD)-affected pregnancy, accompanied by a statewide educational campaign. No NTD reoccurrences in the 113 mothers.</p>

APPENDIX A - KEY MESSAGES

FOLIC ACID

- Everyone needs folic acid to make red blood cells.
- All women of reproductive potential (ages 11-49) need 400 micrograms of folic acid every day.
- Folic acid helps prevent birth defects of the brain and spine (like anencephaly).
- Taking a vitamin is the best way to get folic acid because most of us don't get enough from food.
- Foods rich in folate include leafy greens (like spinach, asparagus and broccoli).
- Some foods are fortified with folic acid, including some breads, flours, cereals, rice, and pasta.
- Foods high in folic acid are an important part of the WIC food packages.
- Women who have already experienced a pregnancy affected by a major birth defect should talk with their health care provider about how much folic acid to take.

VITAMIN REIMBURSEMENT (FOR PROVIDERS)

- Washington Apple Health covers prenatal vitamins without authorization for girls and women between the ages of 11 and 49 years, when prescribed by a health care provider with the appropriate prescriptive authority. Prenatal vitamins for women outside of this age range will be covered on a case by case basis.
- Coverage provides a daily vitamin supplement containing 0.4 to 0.8 mg of folic acid which meets the recommendations of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force.
- Coverage is retroactive to October 1, 2015.
- To obtain prenatal vitamins women must get a prescription from their health care provider and have the prescription filled at a network pharmacy within their Medicaid plan.

VITAMIN REIMBURSEMENT (FOR WOMEN)

- Ask your health care provider for a prescription for vitamins.
- Vitamins for women are now covered by Apple Health and recommended for all women ages 11-49.
- Vitamins with folic acid may help prevent birth defects.

ANENCEPHALY INVESTIGATION

- Anencephaly is a rare birth defect where a baby's brain and skull don't fully form in the first month of pregnancy. Babies with anencephaly die soon after they're born. Anencephaly is one type of neural tube defect.
- There have been 64 pregnancies affected by neural tube defects including 41 anencephaly-affected pregnancies confirmed in Benton, Franklin and Yakima counties from January 2010 through October 2015.
- The rate of anencephaly for 2010-2014 is 8.6 per 10,000 births in the three-county area. Typically the rate is about 2 per 10,000 births.
- The Department of Health has convened an advisory committee of local health care providers, public health practitioners, neural tube defect experts including staff from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), community members and others to guide our work to investigate this tragic birth defect and promote the use of folic acid.
- While difficult to hear, it is rare to find a single cause for the increase in these types of investigations.

APPENDIX B – BASELINE POPULATION AND MULTIVITAMIN USE ESTIMATES

Total female population estimates			
	Total female population 13-49 years (2013)¹	Medicaid eligible 13-49 years (2015)²	Undocumented Women Uninsured, 15-44 years (2014)³
Benton County	43,777	72,260 ⁴	13,732 ⁵
Franklin County	21,584		
Yakima County	58,984		
Statewide	1,675,781	503,231 ²	54,990 ³
Pregnancies covered by Medicaid⁶			
	Total Deliveries	Medicaid Deliveries (% of Total Deliveries)	Deliveries to Undocumented Women (% of Medicaid Deliveries)
Benton County	2,623	1,538 (58.6%)	249 (16.2%)
Franklin County	1,631	1,158 (71.0%)	360 (31.1%)
Yakima County	4,104	3,354 (81.7%)	752 (22.4%)
Statewide	86,325	42,133 (48.8%)	5,450 (12.9%)
No Pre-Pregnancy Multivitamin Use, 2010-2012⁷			
Non-Medicaid		31% (95% CI: 28%, 33%)	
Pregnancy Medical		62% (95%CI: 57%, 66%)	
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)		70% (95%CI: 63%, 75%)	
Undocumented		70% (95%CI: 64%, 75%)	

¹ Office of Financial Management Single Year Intercensal Estimates, 2013

² Total Medicaid Eligible Women 13-49 years in 6/2015, Laurie Cawthon, personal communication

³ Undocumented Women, 15-44 years estimated by Laurie Cawthon based on Hoefer M, Rytina N and Baker B. 2012. Estimates of the Unauthorized Immigrant Population Residing in the United States: January 2011. Washington, D.C: US Department of Homeland Security, Office of Immigration Statistics, March. Available at:

https://www.dhs.gov/sites/default/files/publications/ois_ill_pe_2011.pdf . Adjustments for gender, age, and insurance status based on: Passel JS, Cohn DV, Gonzalez-Barrera. 2014. As growth stalls, unauthorized immigrant population becomes more settled. Washington, DC: Pew Research Center's Hispanic Trends Project, September. Available at:

http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/2014/09/2014-09-03_Unauthorized-Final.pdf.

⁴ County level Medicaid data for this age bracket is not available. Estimates calculated by pro-rating Medicaid births in each county to the statewide Medicaid population of reproductive age women.

⁵ County level undocumented population for this age bracket is not available. Estimates calculated by pro-rating undocumented births in each county to the statewide estimated undocumented population of reproductive age women.

⁶ Cawthon L. Managed Care Enrollment Status for Women with 2014 Medicaid-Paid Births in Washington. Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, First Steps Database, 11/3/2015.

⁷ Washington State Department of Health, Prevention and Community Health Division, Office of Healthy Communities, Surveillance and Evaluation Section, Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS), 2015.

APPENDIX C – PAST AND CURRENT OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Current Ongoing Activities

Activity	Lead Organization
WIC promotes folic acid through the WIC food package nutrition education.	DOH and Local WIC agencies
Anencephaly investigation web page with prevention recommendations and updates	DOH
Monthly Prevention Coordination call	DOH

Outreach Activities Completed in 2013

Start Date	Activity	Lead Organization
January	Local health communication to providers, blast fax regarding increase in anencephaly and prevention recommendations	Local Public Health
September	Yakima Health Bulletin article on case-control study of anencephaly	Local Public Health
October	Presentation to Perinatal Advisory Committee	DOH

Outreach Activities Completed in 2014

Start Date	Activity	Lead Organization
May	Yakima Health Bulletin update on anencephaly investigation, listening session in Sunnyside and prevention messages	Local Public Health
	Listening sessions in Sunnyside and Kennewick	DOH
June	Public Service Announcements – Shared PSAs in English and Spanish with 45 radio stations in Eastern Washington	March of Dimes
	Pre-pregnancy Advisory Group for Safe deliveries Roadmap project included best practices related to nutrition (healthy weight, active living, folic acid) Recommendation development	DOH and Partners
July	Launch of Anencephaly Prevention Workgroup from steering committee action plan	DOH, Community and Clinical Partners, March of Dimes
	Letters to radio stations encouraging airing of PSAs	Local Public Health
	NTD and Folic Acid Brochures in English and Spanish sent to community and technical colleges, and hair and nail salons in 3 county area	March of Dimes
August	NTD and Folic Acid Brochures in English and Spanish distributed to local health jurisdictions and community partners in 3 county area	DOH/March of Dimes
	Local health communication to providers in Yakima, Benton and Franklin counties; blast fax regarding elevated rate of anencephaly and folic acid recommendations	Local Public Health
	Presentation to OB Grand Rounds at Yakima Memorial Hospital	DOH
	Presentation at Kadlec Hospital	Local Public Health
	Presentation to Yakima Health District Board of Directors	DOH
	Letter from State Health Officer to Local Health Officers across Washington alerting them to Anencephaly in South Central Washington and sharing prevention messages to consider distributing.	DOH
	Initiated Monthly Prevention Coordination call	DOH
September	Yakima County Fair Health Education materials distribution	Local Public Health
November	Provided speaker on regional 30 minute Spanish language radio	DOH

Folic Acid
Central Washington Outreach Plan



	show hosted by WA State Commission on Hispanic Affairs in Puget Sound radio market. The content included general information about anencephaly, details of investigation and importance of folic acid in neural tube defect prevention	
December	Yakima Health Bulletin focus on Birth Defects Prevention	Local Public Health

Outreach Activities Completed in 2015

Start Date	Activity	Lead Organization
May	Airing of March of Dimes folic acid radio spots in English and Spanish on KEYW, KIOK, KMMG, KONA, KORD, KUJ, KZHR, KZTB, KATS, KDBL, KFFM, KHHK, KMNA, KXDD, KZTA; 2759 spots total	DOH
June	Airing of Spanish radio novella campaign, Amor y Salud on KZTA, KZHR, KZTB, KZML, KDNA; 817 spots total	DOH
	Provided speaker on healthy living for women including folic acid messages during regional 30 minute Spanish language radio show hosted by WA State Commission on Hispanic Affairs. Show aired in Puget Sound radio market.	DOH
	DOH partnered with WA State Hospital Association in their Safe Deliveries Roadmap initiative to develop best practice quality improvement recommendations around pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, labor management and postpartum care. Folic acid supplementation is included in pre-pregnancy and pregnancy care recommendations. Final recommendations. Materials available at http://www.wsha.org/0513.cfm%20	WSHA, DOH
	Education about dietary folic acid and dissemination of brochures and folic acid materials at Community Health Worker Conference in Granger, WA; conducted “How much folic acid is in your diet” card game activity	DOH
July	Local Health Officer on KLFD radio regarding anencephaly	Local Public Health
August	DOH met with local health staff and distributed mini tool-kits with sample Folic Acid promotion materials and fact sheet. Attended TriCities Community Health Fair in Richmond and disseminated brochures and folic acid materials. “How much folic acid is in your diet” card game activity	DOH, Local Public Health
September	Life Choices Clinic in Yakima and Sunnyside Hospital Clinic in Lower Yakima Valley began providing multivitamins to women of reproductive age.	Local Public Health
October	DOH Folic Acid Provider resource sheet added to DOH health education and provider sites	DOH
	DOH disseminating Folic Acid Provider resource sheet through email and at obstetric and primary care medical conferences, including the Washington State Obstetric Association annual meeting; Advanced Practice in Acute and Primary Care Annual Conference for Nurse Practitioners and Physician Assistants; Clinical Conference for Midwives at University of Washington	DOH
November	Benton Franklin Health District received vitamins from Vitamin Angels for distribution. Still developing their dissemination plan and coordinated activities to publicize availability	Local Public Health