

Executive Summary

The Washington State Public Health Action Plan for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention and Management guides a coordinated approach to state policy that supports what research has shown to be the most effective methods to prevent and treat heart disease and stroke. We work toward the following vision for the future:

It doesn't matter who you are, where you live, or what you know:

In Washington State, you have access to a coordinated and effective system of heart disease and stroke education, screening, and care that results in lower risk of vascular events and improved quality of life.

Heart disease and stroke are the first and third leading causes of death, respectively, in the United States and in Washington. More than 16,000 Washingtonians died from cardiovascular disease (CVD) in 2002—more than a third of all deaths in our state. Education and prevention programs to modify behavior would substantially reduce this burden of disease and death, as well as the great costs associated with related hospitalizations and medical procedures, which now exceed \$4 billion in our state annually.

To develop a program to reduce CVD morbidity and mortality, the Washington State Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Advisory Council sought to build on evidence-based guidelines for appropriate prevention and management of heart disease, stroke, and associated risk factors. It recognized the importance of supporting timely arrival of Emergency Medical Services, as well as public awareness of warning signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke. The council also drew on an Action Framework developed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that identifies major factors contributing to the progression of CVD and strategies to reduce the risk and manage the disease more effectively. As adapted for Washington State, these strategies are to:

- Control high blood pressure.
- Control high blood cholesterol.
- Recognize signs and symptoms and call 9-1-1.
- Improve emergency response.
- Improve quality of care.
- Eliminate disparities in health care access and health outcomes.

To develop specific goals and objectives for this plan, the advisory council mobilized around these approaches in a series of meetings during January-March 2005. The group developed goals and objectives for a comprehensive system that addresses heart disease and stroke prevention, as summarized on the next page:

- Goal 1:** A comprehensive set of heart disease and stroke data, integrated from public and private sources, is available to inform, guide, and monitor the action plan and system of care, from policy to practice.
- Goal 2:** Comprehensive heart disease and stroke prevention and management surveillance is used to transform the operations of the health care delivery system (public and private, local/state/tribal, program and provider) to assure identification of all persons at risk for and with heart disease and stroke.
- Goal 3:** Washington State residents know the risk factors and warning signs and symptoms for heart attack and stroke in men and women, and they know what actions to take to address their risk factors and seek care when needed.
- Goal 4:** A state heart disease and stroke prevention steering council is convened by the state Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program to sustain and forge partnerships, promote coordinated efforts to implement the action plan, and to support local coalitions, councils, and activities.
- Goal 5:** A dynamic, collaborative action plan and policies are adopted that empower consumers, result in improved health status and quality of life, reduce costs for the purchasers, and reward providers.
- Goal 6:** An ongoing process is established to assess and monitor Washington State laws and regulations and identify opportunities to support the implementation of the action plan through new or revised legislation.
- Goal 7:** Washington State maintains a coordinated and effective heart disease and stroke system of prevention, screening, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation that is available to all citizens.
- Goal 8:** Education regarding heart disease and stroke prevention and management is available and required for all licensed, registered, or certified health care providers working with CVD to increase awareness, clinical proficiency, and quality of care.
- Goal 9:** The heart disease and stroke prevention system's accessibility, effectiveness, and quality of care are measured against a consensus set of statewide (public and private) CVD performance measures that include established measurement benchmarks.
- Goal 10:** Research is integral to the action plan and is encouraged on strategic issues. The practice community is informed of the applicability of established research.

We need active and engaged partners to implement the Washington State Public Health Action Plan for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention and Management. Through partnerships with institutions, professional organizations, and other groups, we will develop and implement programs and focus work in our communities, worksites, and the health care system.

For more information, see http://www.doh.wa.gov/cfh/heart_stroke/default.htm.