

LEGISLATIVE REPORT 2014



Mandate *Utah Code Title 26 Chapter 7 Section 2*

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Mission *To reduce health disparities in Utah and improve health outcomes for vulnerable populations as defined by socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, geography, as well as other populations at-risk for health disparities*

Increasing Access to Health Care for Utah's Underserved

Since 2012, our innovative *Bridging Communities & Clinics* program has provided preventive screenings and clinic referrals for over 2,000 Utahns from uninsured, low income, and minority communities. This program was highlighted as a community outreach best practice at the 2014 Utah

Governor's Health Summit for its robust network of community and clinical partnerships (12 referral clinics and 22 community partners in Salt Lake, Utah, Summit, and Weber counties) and for its unique training opportunities for future health care providers and public health professionals. We have trained 21 health science students as outreach assistants who are now equipped to effectively serve Utah's growing diversity.

Bridging Communities & Clinics:

A Record of Success

	2012	2013	2014
Participants	833	849	*978
Referrals to Clinics	178	263	*323
Telephone Follow-ups	35%	45%	*49%
Actual Clinic Visits	56%	70%	*72%

**as of 11/2014*

Enhancing Public Health Agencies

In order to provide optimal health care services for all Utahns, we continually promote the adoption and implementation of Culturally & Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) standards. Our new CLAS toolkit and skills-building video will be used by state and local health departments to elevate the quality of health services, as well as assist agencies to obtain national accreditation.

Improving Health Communication

As our population diversifies, Utah health care agencies and professionals need the tools and skills to meet the needs of patients with limited English proficiency (LEP). Our user-friendly language assistance toolkits for written translation and verbal interpretation provide guidance for health care providers and staff to ensure accurate and effective services.

Empowering At-Risk Communities to Promote Healthier Pregnancies

In 2014, we intensified our efforts to improve birth outcomes among the communities with the highest infant mortality rates in the state: African Americans (AA) and Pacific Islanders (PI). Milestone accomplishments include the formation of an AA birth outcomes task force, convening of AA community focus groups, ongoing survey research, and the completion of Utah's first interview study of AA and PI women who have experienced adverse birth outcomes. We are also pioneering the planning of an intervention to address infant mortality in PI communities.