

## **Binational Health Week October 12-19, 2001**

The California-Mexico Health Initiative (CMHI) is a collaborative program of the California Policy Research Center of the University of California Office of the President. CMHI aims to coordinate Californian and Mexican efforts to improve the quality of life of migrant/immigrant families by expanding their access to health care, increasing their health insurance coverage, and reducing their unmet health needs. CMHI will be implemented in California, where nearly half of the Mexican-origin population in the United States resides, and in seven Mexican states with high migrant mobility rates: Baja California, Guanajuato, Jalisco, Michoacan, Oaxaca, Puebla, and Zacatecas.

CMHI's framework is based on three core concepts: simultaneous efforts, complementary programs, and continuity of care. CMHI's bilateral responsibilities include negotiating agreements between health care organizations in California and in Mexico, fundraising, and project management. As part of its initial efforts, CMHI is coordinating the first Binational Health Week for migrant/immigrant families October 12-19, 2001.

### **Binational Health Week**

The Health Week consists of three main events:

1. Health education and promotion activities targeting migrant/immigrant Latinos in seven selected counties in California. The promotion activities and preventive messages will focus on the following health areas: cervical and breast cancer screening, STDs/HIV, immunizations, diabetes, nutrition and exercise, and work-related injuries. Activities will include outreach through existing community and county clinics, community-based organizations, and *promotora* networks; local health information and screening fairs; radio spots and the distribution of promotional materials such as posters, brochures, videos, and CDs at selected sites. The health promotion activities will be conducted in partnership with the Mexican Secretariats of Health and Foreign Affairs, the Presidential Office of Mexicans Abroad, border health organizations, the California Department of Health Services, the Centers for Disease Control, community clinics, county health services, community-based organizations, and the Mexican consulates.
2. A binational research forum on migrant/immigrant health issues organized by the University of California in collaboration with Mexican academic institutions. Top researchers from Mexico and the United States will gather at UC Berkeley on Friday, October 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss current research on migrant/immigrant health issues and strategize about future research needs.
3. Kick-off and closing events. The kick-off events of the Binational Health Week will coincide with the celebration of *El Día de La Raza* (Columbus Day) on October 12<sup>th</sup>. A press conference and media event will take place in Los Angeles and on that day. On October 13<sup>th</sup>, a mural depicting health themes will be unveiled in Fresno and a press conference will be held. To close the week's events, a third press conference will be held in Berkeley on Friday, October 19<sup>th</sup> at the binational research forum where the events of the week will be summarized.

High-level government officials from Mexico and California, UC representatives, foundation directors, legislators, and community leaders are expected to participate in these media events.

### **Background**

Since 1993, the Secretariat of Health (SSA) in Mexico has implemented three nationwide health weeks and immunization crusades targeting underserved populations. Through a massive media and social mobilization campaign, and with the cooperation of governmental, private, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Mexico has achieved a 98% immunization rate among its general population. For the first time, this year, California, with a population of nearly 3.2 million Mexican-born immigrants, will join Mexico's national health week efforts. In California, this first Health Week is conceived of as a demonstration project to improve health care for migrants/immigrants and will serve as the basis for future bilateral efforts.

### **Objectives**

The main objectives of the California activities during the Health Week are:

- To promote and reinforce healthy behavior among migrant/immigrant families;
- To reinforce California's health promotion activities by specifically targeting migrant/immigrant families, and to reinforce the efforts of the Mexican National Health Week crusade;
- To increase awareness and understanding among migrant/immigrant families of high-risk factors affecting their health;
- To collaborate with community-based organizations, county and community clinics in providing outreach and health promotion activities to selected migrant/immigrant communities;
- To provide migrant/immigrant families with information on health resources and services available in selected California counties;
- To supply health-care providers with an updated directory of migrant/immigrant health resources in California and Mexico; and
- To disseminate current research on migrant/immigrant health issues and to promote bilateral collaboration among researchers, health-care providers, and administrators in order to address service gaps and unmet needs.

### **Health Week Deliverables/Products**

1. Radio spots and public service announcements.
2. Health promotion posters and other materials.
3. Media coverage of some of the local events during the week with a statewide and regional impact.
4. Development and distribution of a pocket card with health tips and toll-free numbers to appropriate health services in selected regions in California. The card will be distributed at clinics, community-based organizations, and other selected sites.
5. A directory of migrant/immigrant health resources in California and Mexico.
6. The binational research forum on migrant/immigrant health including conference proceedings.

7. A mural produced by a local artist depicting Mexican cultural symbols.
8. A film (a visual memory) documenting the key week's events.
9. A final report summarizing the events of the week with recommendations for future activities.

### **Target Population in California**

The target population for the California activities during the Health Week is Mexican-born and other Latino immigrants and their families, including permanent and temporary residents in both rural and urban areas who work in different industries. Although the initiative emphasizes providing services to Mexican immigrants, this event will benefit all migrant/immigrant workers regardless of their national origin.

### **Selected Regions and Counties**

The California health week activities will be centered in the following regions and counties with a high concentration of Mexican migrants/immigrants: Northern California (Alameda, Sonoma, and Monterey), the Central Valley (Fresno), the U.S-Mexico border area (San Diego and Imperial), and Legislative District 22 (Los Angeles). The CMHI is currently organizing local Task Forces to coordinate activities during Binational Health Week.

### **Kick-Off Events**

In Los Angeles, a press event will be organized with the collaboration of county and community clinics, community-based organizations, and the Mexican Consulate. Fresno's main event will include the unveiling of a festive mural depicting health issues and cultural symbols painted by a local artist at a community clinic.

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