

The Healthy SI Delta Network

Mission Statement: Healthy SI Delta Network members are committed to working collaboratively to improve the health status of southern Illinois.

The primary goal of the Healthy SI Delta Network is to work together to create and improve existing cardiovascular disease prevention programs in the lower sixteen counties in Illinois. The network will bring together public health, community health centers, hospitals and others interested in improving the health of their communities.

The lower sixteen counties of Illinois have about 318,000 residents. This region has high heart disease death rates and low income levels. In 2002-2004 there was an average of 238 coronary heart disease deaths per 100,000 for these counties as compared to 172 deaths per 100,000 statewide. Each of the counties in this region has a greater percentage of residents living in poverty than the state average, with seven of the counties having 15% or more residents living in poverty. The adults in these counties as compared to residents statewide are more likely to smoke (23.2% adults vs. 20.1%) and be obese (27.1% vs. 25.6%). Adults in these counties are also less likely to meet or exceed physical activity standards (43.5% vs. 48.7%).

Because of these and other disparities, the lower sixteen counties are a part of the Delta Regional Authority, a federal-state partnership created to bring resources to the underserved areas of the Mississippi Delta. Connect SI, a collaborative, regional economic strategy whose vision is to be, "a national leader for collaborative rural economic transformation fueled by world class broadband and health care", brings vested interest in these counties and other resources to contribute to improved quality and access to healthcare for the most underserved and disadvantaged in Southern Illinois. Another initiative related to this programming is the conversion to electronic medical records which provide an opportunity for data and information exchange. Each of these larger efforts brings attention to the many needs of this region and provides some basis for this current effort. The Healthy SI Delta Network has been formed to further focus the attention specifically on cardiovascular disease prevention.

The planning and the implementation of programming to address cardiovascular disease prevention is being accomplished at two levels: first at the local level through the formation of health coalitions and then at the regional level through the Healthy SI Delta Network. Regional goals and objectives have been set related to physical activity, nutrition, tobacco use and health screening. Each local coalition has identified programs they plan to put in place to meet these region-wide goals and objectives. This entire effort is supported and facilitated by Southern Illinois Healthcare, a non-for-profit system of hospitals. The regional plan is summarized on the back of this document. The Healthy SI Delta Network is seeking additional funding from HRSA, Illinois Department of Public Health, the Delta Regional Authority and other sources for more fully implementing this plan.

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