

Executive Summary

Overview

Focus on Prevention is a county-wide, multi-sector initiative aimed at improving quality of life by focusing on prevention and addressing root causes.

Challenge

While substantial resources are spent each year to address critical quality of life challenges within our community, most efforts support addressing symptoms and not root causes and long term solutions. Additionally, current efforts are operating in silos, often working towards common program-level goals with little or no strategic alignment disallowing opportunities for the leveraging of resources. Most importantly, there are no strategic performance measurements to assess the impact of our collective efforts that would allow us to monitor service systems, inform community partners, and determine strategies and targets for improving system performance.

Innovative Solution

The Focus on Prevention Initiative is about shifting our focus from treating symptoms of our major social and economic issues within our community to focusing on prevention, addressing root causes, and long term solutions. This approach requires partnerships and resources beyond government and the sectors that traditionally are engaged in such efforts. Therefore, we've convened leaders that are key influencers from across ten major sectors (neighborhoods; businesses, education; faith; health; non-profits; philanthropy; media; arts, entertainment, and sports; and local government) in our county to mobilize agencies and communities within their respective sectors to align activities, strategies and outcomes towards a common set of shared results over the next decade that will set the framework for long term results.

Originality

This is the first coordinated effort, to our knowledge, by a County Board of Supervisors and County Chief Executive (CEO) Office convening an effort with such a broad range of sector leaders including city officials and community stakeholders that focus on developing results and strategies to address root cause issues.

Cost Effectiveness

Currently, it is estimated that as much as 75% of the County's budget is committed to addressing symptoms of a broken society. The Board of Supervisors has committed \$1 million annually for the next ten years to support the development of this initiative and fund innovative multi-sector strategies that emerge from the planning. In addition, the CEO has convened an Internal Department Head Workgroup to strategize how to begin to align the resources towards these efforts. The goal is that as we move forward with these investments and multi-sector coordinated efforts, we will realize fiscal savings and sustainable improvements in the quality of life for our community as a result of leveraging resources and improving performance through this strategic process. Most importantly, the aim is to address root causes that will warrant long-term healthy outcomes that lead to reduced caseloads in our system.

Results

The initiative aims toward achieving the following results (1) Our families are healthy—physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually; (2) Our families are supported by strong and safe neighborhoods and communities; (3) Our children and young people are getting a first-rate education; (4) Our families are participating in and supported by a healthy economy' and (5) Our families and neighbors who are homeless, or at risk of being homeless, permanently escape homelessness. The Stewardship Council, a volunteer leadership group that includes two representatives from each of the ten sponsoring sectors, will be leading dialogues with sector leaders and community stakeholders to align efforts and build shared commitment to effect these results through sustained action. Additionally, all nine city managers within our County have now joined this effort, and are convening within their respective cities to mobilize and organize these sectors as well. Our community is also working together, across sectors and cities, and having substantive conversations about the major challenges that we're experiencing and will be facing over the next decade. This level of support and engagement in the process has not been seen in our community in recent memory. The fact that we now have a set of long-term results, and commitments from multi-sector leaders and city officials to begin to strategize on how to break down silos, and mobilize and organize prevention-focused efforts across our community is a promising foundation for improving the quality of life for our community.

Project or Program Contact

Ruben Imperial, Community Development and Empowerment Manager

(209) 225-0315 imperialr@stancounty.com