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Goal 1, Objective A: Establish a UC Merced medical school within 10 years.

Action: Work with UC Merced to identify and engage key leaders to champion effort.

Description of Quarter's Activity/Impact on Partnership

Work has been focused on finalizing the medical school proposal and business plan.

Planned Activities for the next 3-6 months

- To assist with medical school planning, UC Merced hired Frederick J. Meyers, MD. Meyers is professor and chair of the Department of Internal Medicine at UC Davis. He joins UC Merced as executive director of Medical Education and Academic planning. Dr. Meyers has a distinguished career in cancer medicine and research, in palliative care, and in medical education. Dr. Meyers will take a leadership role as the campus moves into clinical planning efforts in 2009.
- UC Merced also retained consultants from the Washington Advisory Group, a firm specializing in strategic advising services and management consulting to organizations. Recently, the Medical College of Georgia retained its services to meet rising physician needs.

Next Steps

- Valley Coalition meeting was held Monday, Oct. 20, 2008
- Planning for a medical school will continue in close consultation with faculty, expert consultants, academic partners such as University of California, San Francisco – Fresno (UCSF Fresno), UC Davis, and the University of California Office of the President to develop a plan that is attainable, meets the needs of the San Joaquin Valley and state and will meet accreditation requirements.

Challenges/Problems/Bottlenecks/Feedback

- With a state budget projected to reach \$40 billion over the next 18 months, state funding for the medical school is a significant challenge. Many new and proposed programs, including higher education, are being impacted.
- Maintaining interest and regional support will continue to be essential, especially during the internal planning phase.

Goal 1, Objective B: Establish Central Valley Nursing Education Consortium

Description of Quarter's Activity

- Dr. Maria O'Rourke presented two additional professional role-based workshops; one in Fresno and one in Modesto. These classes were to support nursing students, nursing faculty and nursing preceptors.
- Strategies to continue to increase NCLEX scores continued with the use of virtual Assessment Technologies Institute LLC (ATI) for selected graduating students to help them pass the NCLEX
- Completed second 2-unit graduate level online faculty training course offered through California State University, Fresno, which provided additional nursing faculty for the Valley
- Computerized Clinical Placement System put in place for spring semester 2009.
- 20 distance education nursing students graduated from West Hills College

Planned Activities for the next 3-6 months

- Computerized clinical placement system will be implemented for an entire year. Schools will be able to post open faculty positions; faculty will be able to place their availability
- Continue to contract with the individuals from the San Diego Nursing-Education Consortium for continued assistance with enhancing the computerized system.
- Limited local oversight for the computerized clinical placement system.

Next Steps

- Continue the faculty training course through the use of Song-Brown funds obtained by Fresno State and another grant.

Challenges/Problems/Bottlenecks/Feedback

We have been unable to secure funding. Some funds were transferred from the grant into 2009 to help continue the use of the computerized clinical placement system.

Goal 2, Objective A: Provide incentives for difficult-to-recruit health and medical professionals.

Action: Develop regionwide strategic plan for enterprise zones and financial incentives (Health Enterprise Zone project).

- Refer to Health Enterprise Zone (HEZ) seed grant report by Melanie Briones

Goal 2, Objective B: Enhance public health capabilities

Description of Quarter's Activity/Impact on Partnership

- Data collection continues in the eight-county region that includes assessment and development of products specific to epidemiology resources and staff time, as well as a regional template for reporting. (Data matrix)
- Integrate data collection information from the eight counties through the development of the data matrix

Next Steps

Complete the data collection in the eight counties and develop the data matrix

Challenges/Problems/Bottlenecks/Feedback

Data collection has been challenging based on limited county staff time and resources to complete this project. Counties are interested in the project but challenged with other priorities as they face budget cuts, resulting in program and staffing cuts.

Goal 2, Objective C: Develop a regional plan to address the needs of the uninsured

Description of Quarter's Activity/Impact on Partnership

- Since California's failed health reform effort, this objective has been "on hold." However, we continue to monitor President-elect Obama's interests/efforts related to national health reform and look for opportunities to align the Central Valley with national interests in health reform.
- Complete work through the HEZ project that includes preliminary regional stakeholder interests to increase Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP) rates in the Central Valley. Although FMAP rates do not assume coverage of the uninsured, there is regional conversation and interest in developing new strategies to address the needs of the uninsured.

Planned Activities for next 3-6 months

- Continue participating in the Children's Health Initiative efforts, both local and regional
- Participate in local farm worker expansion initiative
- Participate in and provide technical assistance to Specialty Care Access Initiatives
- Monitor political environment specific to health reform

Next Steps

- Continue participation in regional health expansion initiatives
- Monitor political environment and opportunities to address the objective

Challenges/Problems/Bottlenecks/Feedback

- Dramatic external and political changes result in uncertainty about the future
- Limited-to-no resources to support the Partnership work beyond current commitments
- Need time to monitor current political activity before implementing further actions specific to this objective.

Goal 2, Objective D: Improve delivery of health care services through the use of information technology infrastructure and services.

Action: Assess e-health readiness

Description of Quarter's Activity/Impact on Partnership

- Completed surveys 10/31/08
- Completed data analysis mid-November
- Completed draft report 12/31/08

Planned Activities for the next 3-6 months

- Complete final report 3/31/08

Next Steps

Complete final report 3/31/08

Challenges/Problems/Bottlenecks/Feedback

The major challenge was obtaining a large enough sample size to complete the report. We are pleased with the results.