

Marion County Healthy Communities – Chronic Disease Prevention Project

After a year long planning process, which included forming an advisory committee, completing a community assessment, and developing a three-year community plan, the Marion County Health Department, in collaboration with the Chronic Disease Prevention Subcommittee of the Health Advisory Board, has begun implementation of the “Healthy Communities” project. The Healthy Communities project aims to reduce the burden of chronic disease by putting policies in place that: 1) increase opportunities for physical activity, 2) increase access to healthy food choices, 3) increase access to chronic disease self management programs, and 4) decrease access to tobacco. Staff and advisory committee members are now working toward meeting the goals/objectives in the three-year community plan.

The Healthy Communities project includes worksites as one of its four focus areas. Since many adults spend a great deal of their time at the workplace, creating a healthy environment at work has the potential to make a large impact on chronic disease prevention. Therefore, businesses are encouraged to implement policies that support chronic disease prevention, such as developing and implementing policies regarding tobacco-free environments, healthy foods (in cafeterias, at meetings, in vending machines), supports for walking/biking to work, health insurance coverage for tobacco cessation, etc. Establishing these policies will help create a worksite environment that makes the healthy choice the easy choice. To get started, businesses can complete the “Healthy Worksites Assessment” available at <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/worksites/toolkit/index.shtml>

For more information, please contact Tonya Johnson at 503-981-2459 tjohnson@co.marion.or.us or visit <http://www.co.marion.or.us/HLT/PS/chronic+disease/>

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