



Convergence

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Policy Brief Tackles Root Causes of Health Inequities

At the end of July, CHI published a policy brief analyzing the root causes of health inequities and identifying steps California can take toward achieving health equity among its residents. In light of national health reform discussions and the budget crisis in California, the brief highlights the need to address the role played by the larger social context in which people live and the inequities implicit within it. Building on policy principles including “embrace the concept of health in all policy,” “Targeting Root Causes to Address Health Inequities and Improve Health: Implications for Health Reform,” urges policymakers to: 1) Support healthy behaviors through increased opportunities to engage in physical activity and to access healthy foods; 2) Improve housing options; 3) Improve transit options by providing incentives for use of mass transit and non-motorized vehicle transportation; and 4) Improve air, water, and soil quality. Read the [brief](#).

CHI Is Hiring

CHI Needs Dynamic Vice President to Lead Community Programs Division

The Vice President for Community Programs will coordinate a portfolio of community health and health care programs and contribute to CHI's strategic direction. Read the [job description](#).

CHI Seeks Experienced, Well-Connected Associate Director of Health Policy

The Associate Director of Health Policy will manage the California Health Policy Forum and help develop CHI's health policy strategy. Read the [job description](#).

CHI Is Hiring a Research Analyst for Community Health Programs

The Research Analyst will assess existing knowledge and outline the evidence base to support the development of community programs. Read the [job description](#).

CHI Joins National Network of Public Health Institutes

CHI was recently accepted as an affiliate member of the National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI). NNPHI is a membership organization that fosters networking and collaboration among public health institutes and multi-sector partners. Together with its members and partners, NNPHI fosters innovations in health that address critical and emerging public health issues.

CHI Joins the National Quality Forum

CHI is a new member of the National Quality Forum (NQF), participating in the NQF through membership in the Quality Measurement, Research, and Improvement Council. NQF is a nonprofit organization that aims to improve the quality of healthcare for all Americans by: setting national priorities and goals for performance improvement; endorsing national consensus standards for measuring and publicly reporting on performance; and promoting the attainment of national goals through education and outreach programs. NQF's membership includes a wide variety of healthcare stakeholders, including consumer organizations, public and private purchasers, physicians, nurses, hospitals, accrediting and certifying bodies, supporting industries, and healthcare research and quality improvement organizations.

Health Promotion News Roundup

CHILD HEALTH

Too Much TV Time Bad for Kids' Blood Pressure

Too much time in front of the tube, even playing video games, may increase a child's risk of developing high blood pressure, researchers from the Michigan State University at East Lansing found. The findings held regardless of whether the children were overweight or thin. Results were published in the August 2009 issue of the Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine. Read the news report from [Reuters](#).

ADULT HEALTH

NCQA Annual Report Highlights Workplace Wellness, Health Promotion

The National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA) at the end of July released its 2008 annual report, "Putting the Health in Health Care." The report examines how employers—large and small—are increasingly supplementing traditional health benefits with innovative wellness programs that support healthy habits for employees, such as diet, exercise, stress reduction, injury prevention, and active management of personal health through use of online tools. Read the press release and access the [NCQA report](#).

Midlife Heart Risk Factors Linked to Later Dementia

The things that are bad for your heart in the middle years of life—high blood cholesterol, high blood pressure, smoking, diabetes—are bad for your brain in later years, new research indicates. One study, conducted by researchers at Kaiser Permanente in Oakland, Calif., and University of Kuopio in Finland, found relationship between high cholesterol levels in midlife and increased risk of dementia in later life. Their findings were published online in the journal *Dementia and Geriatric Cognitive Disorders*. A second study by researchers at the University of Minnesota, the University of North Carolina, John Hopkins, and the University of Mississippi Medical Center measured smoking, high blood pressure, and diabetes. They found that smokers were 70% more likely to develop dementia than nonsmokers; those with high blood pressure

were 60% more likely, and those with diabetes were twice as likely as those without diabetes to develop dementia. However, there was no link between midlife obesity and later dementia. They report their findings in the August issue of the *Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery and Psychiatry*. Read the report on both studies in the [Atlanta Journal Constitution](#).

More Evidence in Favor of Healthy Lifestyle in Prevention of Cardiovascular Disease

There is now a substantial body of evidence showing that the adoption of a healthy lifestyle pays huge rewards in the prevention of cardiovascular disease. Indeed, a report in the July 22-29, 2009 issue of *JAMA* suggests that men who exercised regularly, drank moderately, did not smoke, were not overweight and had a diet that included cereal, fruits, and vegetables had a lower lifetime risk of heart failure. According to an editorial in the same issue of *JAMA*, mortality rates after the onset of heart failure remain high, ranging from 20-50%, despite improvements in medical and surgical management. With the outlook so bleak for heart failure patients, the possibility that pursuing a healthy lifestyle may help reduce lifetime risk of heart failure is an important finding. Read the report on [Science Daily](#).

SENIOR HEALTH

Risk of Frailty in Older Women Dependent on Multisystem Abnormalities

A study published online at the end of July ahead of press in the *Journal of Gerontology: Medical Sciences* reports that the condition of frailty in older adults is associated with a critical mass of abnormal physiological systems, over and above the status of each individual system, and that the relationship is nonlinear. "This may explain the public health import of remaining physically active as we get older, since activity improves many aspects of biology and health," said lead author Linda P. Fried, MD, MPH, dean and DeLamar Professor of Public Health at the Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health. Read the [press release](#).

Exercising the Mind Could Hold Off Dementia

A study published in the August 4, 2009 journal *Neurology* found that every day per week that a person engaged in one of six mentally stimulating leisure activities delayed the onset of dementia by about two months. Read the article from [Reuters](#).

Learn More About CHI

Download our [brochure](#) and an [overview](#) of our services, programs, and customers.

CHI Resources

Center for Health Improvement www.chipolicy.org

California Health Policy Forum www.cahpf.org

California Health Policy Forum Resource Guide
www.cahpf.org/doc.asp?id=280

Health Policy Guide www.healthpolicyguide.org

California Hepatitis Alliance www.calhep.org

About the Center for Health Improvement

The Center for Health Improvement is a national, independent nonprofit organization dedicated to improving population health and encouraging healthy behaviors. For nearly 15 years, our team of public health, health services research, and health policy experts has worked to address the

causes underlying America's increasingly unhealthy population. CHI is located in midtown Sacramento close to California's Capitol.

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