



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

News Release

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**HAWAI'I AWARDED \$ 912,713 AS PART OF RECOVERY ACT
COMMUNITY PREVENTION AND WELLNESS INITIATIVE**

HONOLULU – The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services today awarded \$912,713 to Hawai'i to support public health efforts to reduce obesity, increase physical activity, improve nutrition, and decrease smoking—the four most important actions for combating chronic diseases and promoting health. The award to Hawai'i is part of \$119.1 million going to the states as the first of several initiatives that make up the comprehensive prevention and wellness initiative, Communities Putting Prevention to Work, which is funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

“The cost of managing chronic diseases in Hawai'i is growing exponentially,” said Hawai'i Health Director Chiyome Fukino, M.D. “Unless we do more to prevent cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and other chronic diseases from occurring in the first place we will never be able to bring health care spending under control.”

The supplemental funds from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) acknowledges the value of existing projects within the Department of Health's Healthy Hawai'i Initiative and supports them through additional funding. DOH was awarded \$428,713 to apply sustainable policy and systems changes in the areas of physical activity, nutrition and tobacco. Funded projects include:

- *State Worksite Wellness Policy*, to increase opportunities for physical activity in the workplace by providing liability immunity for state and county agencies that offer activities through worksite wellness programs, through state legislation.
- *Baby Friendly Hawai'i Project*, DOH will work closely with the Breastfeeding Coalition of Hawai'i to increase support for breastfeeding by changing policies in hospital maternity programs

statewide, to increase the likelihood of sustained exclusive breastfeeding after birth, a protective factor from obesity and diabetes.

- *Tobacco Advertising Project*, DOH will work with REAL, a statewide anti-tobacco youth coalition, to align through youth advocacy, existing county and state tobacco advertising and promotion policies to recent changes in the federal Food and Drug Administration regulations through establishing or changing existing state and county level policies. Interested youth can join the effort by visiting www.therealmessagene.net.

DOH was also awarded \$484,000 to join other states to reach the national goal of having 80,000 smokers nationwide successfully quit as a result of additional quit line services and media activity. DOH will increase the Hawai'i Quitline's evidence-based program that includes coaching and free nicotine replacement therapy to an additional 1,100 insured tobacco users in a 24-month period. A media campaign to encourage smokers to call 1-800-QUIT-NOW will target populations with high tobacco use. Research shows that people who get support while they're quitting are much more likely to successfully beat their smoking addiction.

Smoking and tobacco use are the leading cause of preventable sickness and deaths in Hawai'i and the nation. Tobacco use results in the death of over 1,200 residents of Hawai'i annually and costs \$643 million a year in medical costs and lost productivity. In 2003, obesity related medical expenditures for adults in Hawai'i were estimated to be \$290 million.

"The ARRA funds help to support our efforts to establish sustainable changes that make it easier for children and adults in Hawai'i to be more physically active, eat healthy foods, and live tobacco free," said Fukino. "These activities are part of a comprehensive effort to provide people with opportunities for living healthy in Hawai'i."

To learn more about Hawai'i prevention and wellness projects, visit www.healthyhawaii.com. To learn more about *Communities Putting Prevention to Work*, visit www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/recovery.

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