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Hospitals Join Together to Identify and Address Hawaii's Biggest Community Health Needs

The 2013 Hawaii Hospitals Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) reports released today identify top community health needs by county and across the state. The goals of these reports are to offer a meaningful understanding of the health needs in the islands for community stakeholders and to provide the foundation for the hospitals in their community benefit planning efforts.

Hawaii's nonprofit hospitals have all come together, not just to identify the community health problems, but to address them as part of their communities. This is a new mandate under the Affordable Care Act that local hospitals have taken a step above and beyond the requirements. "Across the nation, charitable hospitals were required to conduct the studies within their own communities," said **George Greene, Esq., President and CEO of the Healthcare Association of Hawaii**. "What's unique about Hawaii is that local hospitals took this to a whole new level by collaborating on the research and resulting programs, rather than having each hospital work in its own independent silo. Rhode Island was the only other state that worked this way. This collaboration broke down barriers and put the needs of local communities at the forefront because these findings will shape new hospital community benefit programs."

The CHNA process represents a new partnership for Hawaii hospitals and the State Department of Health, and the intersection between clinical delivery of care and population health. "It's encouraging to see the alignment of priorities between Hawaii hospitals and public health based on the new health data released today," said **Hawaii State Health Director Loretta J. Fuddy, ACSW, MPH**. "The areas of chronic disease prevention and behavioral health are highlighted in our health department's current strategic plan, as well as reducing health inequity and increasing access to quality care. This first statewide assessment is a great start in identifying areas where we can engage and create partnerships between hospitals, communities, the DOH, and our business sector to work toward better health for all Hawaii. It comes down to addressing the social determinants of health and looking at how we structure and invest in our communities to support health and well-being."

Private hospitals on a July-June fiscal year have also completed individualized community health needs assessments based on their specific community needs and priority areas of focus. "We are pleased to have participated in this statewide assessment of community health needs," said **Dr. Ginny Pressler, MD, MPH, FACS, Executive Vice President for Hawai'i Pacific Health**. "Our four hospitals—Kapi'olani, Pali Momi, Straub and Wilcox—have all completed their own assessments and implementation plans. In addition to creating better access to

health services, our hospitals will focus on maternal, fetal and infant care; exercise, nutrition and weight management; and heart disease and stroke. The CHNA is another example of how health care organizations are transforming health care to not only improve outcomes for patients, but to also create greater accountability for bettering the health of all our communities. We look forward to working with the communities we serve to create a healthier Hawai'i."

This collaborative process led to unprecedented partnerships that will impact local communities in new ways. **Joy Barua, MBA, MA-OC, Director of Community Benefit and Health Policy for Kaiser Permanente**, addressed how we can put this information to use to benefit the health of Hawaii's people. "The collaborative needs assessment provides a starting point for organizing and enacting on opportunities to improve health in Hawaii," he said. "To make an impactful difference it will require an integrated approach—changes at policy, systems and environmental levels in addition to empowering everyone from from keiki to kupuna to lead healthier lives. It will be important to thread together our collective resources, thought leadership and partnerships in the community to yield better health outcomes for our island communities."

Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) reports available online at www.HAH.org

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