



## *SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS and NEXT STEPS December, 2014*

Local support for the San Luis Valley Public Health Partnership was formalized in December, 2013 through an *Inter-Governmental Agreement* between the six participating Counties. We also created an *Operating Agreement* as a roadmap for collaboration between the Public Health Directors, who make up the Partnership. Local Public Health Directors have a long history of working together with the State Health Department, the *Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE)*. The *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation* and the *CDPHE Office of Planning and Partnerships* have been invaluable in establishing the Partnership's legitimacy and providing funding to find new ways to work together.

We now have five and a half shared regional public health employees with one more Environmental Health position to be filled in early 2015. Shared positions include Emergency Preparedness and Response, Epidemiology, Partnership Coordination and Environmental Health. As we move forward we seek to improve our structure for managing and evaluating shared employees and programs and to develop a pipeline for qualified public health candidates to work in our region. Staffing challenges include turnover in four of the six Public Health Directors during the last two years, and one Partnership county merging into a public health district with a county in a neighboring Partnership. We will fund the Partnership Coordinator position through grants in 2015 to keep us on track with our shared goals.

Our *Communication Plan* was a key to our success, and we offered a newsletter and website for information. We improved communications with policymakers and recently welcomed a new liaison to our Partnership from the *San Luis Valley County Commissioners Association*. Our site visit to Carson City, Nevada helped us imagine the possibilities of a regional Environmental Health program and understand the power of "branding". We developed a Partnership logo and will continue to develop our Public Health Partnership brand and our presence as a go-to entity for public health and environmental health initiatives in our region.

Engaging with existing alliances has made us stronger. We have been active participants in the *Colorado Coalition for the Medically Underserved* and are grateful to the *West Central Public Health Partnership (WCP)* for helping us establish a strong and flexible organization. We held a Summit in April, 2014 with the *WCP* and *CDPHE* related to Environmental Health services.

Our biggest accomplishment has been the development of a plan and funding structure to initiate a regional Environmental Health program to localize many services previously provided by *CDPHE*. The creation of this program has been complex and time-consuming. Thoughtful and intentional discussion, learning and planning have brought the Partnership to a place of greater understanding and confidence. Local Boards of Health and County Commissioners' support has remained consistent throughout: "cautiously optimistic".

Next year's work will focus on implementing the Environmental Health Program and priority projects in the areas of chronic disease prevention and care coordination. We will be working across two partnerships with the new public health district bridging those partnerships. Planned activities are in line with the goals laid out in our local Public Health Improvement Plans. We also hope to begin developing a curriculum for engaging and educating decision-makers on the scope of public health services. We will continue to work closely together to meet deliverables, explore new opportunities and build collaborative solutions and processes to help us remain a stable entity and continue moving forward in our work to improve public health.

# San Luis Valley Colorado

## Public Health Partnership

*Exploring sharing agreements to improve public health services throughout the San Luis Valley region of Colorado*



### Brief History of the Project

The Colorado Department of Health and the Environment: Office of Planning and Partnerships is joining with the Local Public Health Agencies in the San Luis Valley in southern Colorado to explore cross-jurisdictional public health sharing. This work is made possible through a generous grant funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and managed through the Center for Sharing Public Health Services. The Center for Sharing Public Health Services is a national initiative managed by the Kansas Health Institute with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The Center brings teams from around the country together for shared learning and discovery. The San Luis Valley was awarded \$124,980 for the two-year grant.

### In a Nutshell...

The project goal is to explore cross-jurisdictional public health sharing models to come up with a contract among the six Counties in the Valley that describes the process and the considerations that have to be made before agreeing to share services and equipment. The contract will define how decisions are made and each participating county will have an equal say in these decisions.

### SLVPHP Project Website Launched [slvphp.weebly.com](http://slvphp.weebly.com)

Please visit our website for more information. The website includes the mission and vision for the project, our organizational chart and a project schedule. We also link to the Center for Public Health Sharing website which has many resources and research related to our project.

If you have comments on the website or need any type of additional information on the project please feel free to contact us. You can use the contact form on the website or call our Project Coordinator, Kimberly Bryant [kbryant@saguachecounty-co.gov](mailto:kbryant@saguachecounty-co.gov) or call 719-588-4527. Thank you.

### SLV Public Health Partnership Steering Committee

**LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH REPRESENTATIVES**  
Della Vieira **Saguache**  
Pat Perry **Rio Grande**  
Joni Adelman & Betty Jo Bell **Mineral**  
Connie Edgar **Conejos**  
Vivian Gallegos **Costilla**  
Julie Geiser **Alamosa**

**OTHER PARTICIPANTS**  
Linda Joseph, Liaison, San Luis Valley Commissioners Association  
Ola Bovin, Regional Epidemiologist  
Linda Smith, Regional Emergency Planning and Response

**PROJECT DIRECTOR**  
Della Vieira, Saguache County Public Health

**PROJECT CO-DIRECTOR**  
Kathleen Matthews, CDPHE Office of Planning and Partnerships

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