

# **New Mexico Health Councils and Health Care Reform: Opportunities for Improving Health Outcomes for New Mexico Families and Children**

## **FACT SHEET**

🌻 Health Councils have served the people of New Mexico since 1991 helping to improve the health status of communities and families. Basic functions of Health Councils align with the 10 Essential Functions of Public Health, and include community assessment, planning, prioritizing, program implementation, policy development, and evaluation.

### **Health Council Priorities include:**

- Access
- Behavioral Health
- Obesity/Chronic Disease
- Teen Pregnancy
- Community & Family Wellness
- Family Resiliency
- Substance Abuse
- Violence/suicide
- Maternal & Child Health
- Other

🌻 In order to improve health status outcomes in these priority areas, Health Councils developed strategies in the following areas:

- Access
- Assessment
- Behavioral change
- Education
- Evidence-based programs
- Empowerment
- Process
- Policy
- Intervention
- Prevention

🌻 The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA) provides opportunities for participation and/or funding in the following areas that match those of Health Councils listed above:

- Assessment
- Education (in several of the priorities listed above!)
- Prevention/Intervention (in several of the priorities listed above!)
- Policy/Social Determinants of Health

🌻 Some specific ways Health Councils could serve:

- Educating the community about Health Care Reform.
- Serve as Navigators for the Exchanges.
- Provide expertise in assessment of communities and programs.
- Develop prevention programs for communities on national prevention priorities.
- Serving on key planning committees such as the Community Stakeholder Group.
- Help develop and implement policies for health improvement in New Mexico.

🌻 It is apparent that the skills valued in communities by the Health Councils would be a good match for assisting in planning and implementing Health Care Reform in New Mexico!