

Healthy People 2010 Process: What's Happening Now?

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After all that you've heard about Healthy People, you may be a bit confused by the process. You may also wonder how you can do your part to help shape the objectives. To understand the role that you can play, it may be helpful to know how Healthy People 2010 got started.

Healthy People was established as a result of a 1979 Surgeon General's report titled, *Healthy People: The Surgeon General's Report on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention*. The report set out five national health goals to monitor progress and to motivate action to improve the Nation's health. Released in 1980, national health objectives had initial targets for 1990.

Healthy People 2000, which followed in 1990, is a comprehensive agenda with 319 objectives organized into 22 priority areas. The goals are to increase years of healthy life, reduce disparities in health among different population groups, and achieve access to preventive health services.

Healthy People 2000 was developed by soliciting comments from more than 10,000 individuals and organizations. Ongoing involvement is ensured through the Healthy People Consortium—an alliance of 350 national membership organizations and 271 State public health, mental health, substance abuse, and environmental agencies. To date, 47 States, the District of Columbia, and Guam have developed their own Healthy People plans. Most states have modeled goals after the national objectives, and almost all have tailored them to their specific needs.

Development of national health objectives for 2010 has already begun. Through focus groups, public meetings, and a Web site, people from across the country have been able to make contributions.

Public involvement in Healthy People 2010 development is an essential component of the process.

The first round of comments on Healthy People 2010 was held in the fall of 1997. On September 15, 1998, a draft of Healthy People 2010 will be published for public comment and will be available via the Internet until December 15, 1998. The Healthy People 2010 home page, <http://web.health.gov/healthypeople/>, will enable the public to view and comment on the document electronically. Paper comments will also be accepted. Information on future events will be posted on the site as well. Healthy People 2010 will be released in January 2000.

Progress Reviews

As Assistant Secretary for Health and Surgeon General, Dr. David Satcher chairs the Healthy People 2000 progress reviews for the 22 priority areas, and holds the lead responsibility for the review. He is assisted by members of the interagency work group for that priority area and invited state agency and private organization representatives. Specific population progress reviews document data issues, barriers, and strategies to achieving the objectives, and implementation efforts underway to reach population targets.

Progress reviews have been held for all four minority groups, with the Office of Minority Health and the Indian Health Service working as the lead agencies. Most recent and future progress reviews are:

- Black Americans (10/98)
- Adolescents (7/98)
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases (6/98)
- Women (5/98)
- Substance Abuse (4/98)
- Cancer (3/98)
- Nutrition (2/98)
- Tobacco (11/97)
- People with Low Income (10/97)
- Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (9/97)
- HIV Infection (7/97)
- Hispanic Americans (4/97)
- Environmental Health (3/97)
- Surveillance and Data Systems (2/97)
- People with Disabilities (1/97)
- American Indians/Alaska Natives (2/95)

Reports of these meetings are posted on the Healthy People 2000 Web site.

Regional Meetings

To facilitate the public comment process, five Regional Meetings will be held to gather feedback on the draft 2010 objectives. Individuals, communities, businesses, private and voluntary organizations are invited to comment on the draft objectives.

Participants in the Regional Meetings may be individuals from: state and local agencies in the public health, mental health, and environment sectors, academia, businesses, the faith community, health care providers, advocacy groups, and community-based organizations, nonprofit and/or voluntary agencies.

According to Sheila Fleckenstein, associate researcher, ODPHP, the regional meetings will provide a forum where state and local constituents can give feedback on the draft objectives; participants can interact with representatives from the government agencies responsible for development of Healthy People 2010; and sectors such as business, usually not involved in public health planning can participate in setting the Nation's health agenda for the 21st century.

Each regional meeting will begin with a half-day, afternoon session where participants will discuss the successes and challenges encountered in meeting goals for the year 2000, as well as critical issues to be faced in improving health by the year 2010. The second day will be a public hearing to solicit comments on the draft objectives.

For information regarding meeting registration, call 1-800-367-4725, or browse the Healthy People 2010 Web site: <http://web.health.gov/healthypeople/>.

