



Monterey County

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Board Report

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Authorize the Health Department to serve as the primary contact with the California HealthCare Foundation (CHCF) for County of Monterey to act as a beta test county for CHCF's Health Data for Local Policymaking initiative, beta testing to begin following approval of Board of Supervisors for up to twelve (12) months.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

Authorize the Health Department to serve as the primary contact with the California HealthCare Foundation (CHCF) for County of Monterey to act as a beta test county for CHCF's Health Data for Local Policymaking initiative, beta testing to begin following approval of Board of Supervisors for up to twelve (12) months.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

Through its Free the Data initiative, California HealthCare Foundation (CHCF) seeks to unlock the potential of government health data by catalyzing development of tools to better access, analyze, and communicate information. Audiences include journalists, entrepreneurs and developers, consumers, and state and local policymakers.

One of the Initiative Projects is "Health Data for Local Policymaking." County supervisors and staff face challenges finding relevant data among numerous available sources and summarizing findings in succinct, visual ways to inform policy and budget decisions. CHCF established a roundtable of county policymakers, health department directors, and representatives from state agencies to provide guidance on how to make data more accessible to them. The result is a prototype tool that provides local policymakers with access to sophisticated displays of health data relevant to them and a system for integrating these data into summary briefs on key topics.

The California HealthCare Foundation (CHCF) has invited Monterey County to be one of six beta-testing counties to participate in the first year of CHCF's work to help county policy makers better leverage health data to inform county/local decision-making.

Through this partnership, the county (the Health Department, the Department of Social Services, County Administrative Officer, the Board of Supervisors, key nonprofits, etc.) would get access to a functioning version of the web-based tool. This tool enables staff to quickly create customizable digital data briefs/reports that can include interactive graphs/maps, explanatory text, photos, or other contextual elements. It is hoped that this tool not only can reduce the time it now takes for counties to create data reports/summaries used in local health policymaking, but also make these summaries more engaging and interactive.

CHCF plans to make available to counties the underlying "library" of local health data amassed

for this project, and hopes to offer other resources to the beta testing counties, which could include data scientists to help provide analysis on key topics and writers/data journalists to provide consultation to help frame stories/reports. Staff will be asked to participate through the contribution of good ideas and using the site to produce reports. This could mean county staff participation in initial interviews to help with CHCF triaging what features to build out first; using the data report tool starting in the first quarter of 2015 to build reports/short data briefs; and continued use throughout 2015 as new updates to the tool are released. Staff who beta-test the site will be asked for feedback about the tool's utility and, toward the end of this project, their insights on next steps the foundation should take in this realm.

CHCF also plans to provide some opportunities for the six-beta testing counties to work with and learn from each other through webinars and other convening's, and other CHCF funding opportunities may develop to support local health-related data projects for beta-testing counties.

This work supports all three of the Monterey County Health Department 2011-2015 Strategic Plan initiatives: empower the community to improve health through programs, policies, and activities, enhance community health and safety by emphasizing prevention, ensure access to culturally and linguistically appropriate, customer-friendly, quality health services. It also supports two of the ten essential public health services, specifically: (1) Monitor health status to identify and solve community health problems and (3) Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

Department of Social Services, County Administrative Office

FINANCING:

Authorizing the County's involvement as a beta test site has no impact on the County General Fund Contribution.

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