

# ACH PROFILE

HEALTH  
EDUCATION  
COUNCIL

## City of West Sacramento

### West Sacramento Accountable Community for Health Initiative

*Leveraging the power of relationships to create systematic changes to support 'healthy lives and happy hearts.'*

**The California Accountable Communities for Health Initiative (CACHI)** was established to spearhead efforts to modernize our health system and build a healthier California. To realize this vision, CACHI utilizes a model known as **Accountable Communities for Health (ACH)**, where multiple sectors align goals and collaborate to address the leading health issues facing our communities.

#### **PROBLEM: Health Inequities, Heart Disease and COVID-19 Demand a Holistic Response**

One in five West Sacramento residents is expected to die from heart disease, a preventable illness. What's worse, that rate is 23 percent higher than the Yolo County average, and 70 percent higher than California's. In total, cardiovascular diseases cost the county over \$200 million each year in medical expenses.

This astonishing financial and human cost is frequently the result of risk factors like smoking, high blood pressure, obesity and limited physical activity—all of which are linked to social and environmental conditions, like park accessibility, access to healthy food and grocery stores, the availability of tobacco and poverty. One in three city residents earns less than \$20,000 each year.

#### **SOLUTION: 'All in for Mutual Benefit'—Amplifying Community Voice & Investing Beyond What Any One Organization Can Do Alone**

To prevent premature deaths and reduce the cost of treatment, West Sacramento's Health Education Council embraced a new paradigm that acknowledges the oft-forgotten fact that upstream prevention accomplishes more than treatment after the fact. They embarked on a shared journey with community stakeholders to solicit resident feedback and strategically address common community-based risk factors for heart disease and other community-identified health issues.

#### **ACH IN ACTION: Collaborating with Residents to Identify and Implement Effective Community-Based Strategies**

The West Sacramento Accountable Community for Health Initiative (W-SACHI) is a multi-sector alliance of health, local government, education, business, agricultural and community-based organizations that partners with city

residents and is dedicated to the promotion of health and well-being in West Sacramento.

To accurately reflect community priorities, W-SACHI organized a resident engagement strategy called "Asset-Based Community Development" (ABCD), providing West Sacramentans a real opportunity to work with the collaborative. After synthesizing thousands of data points and holding dozens of conversations with residents, the collaborative's "Community Connectors"—engaged influential neighborhood residents—identified three key focus areas that have evolved into a comprehensive portfolio of interventions: access to healthy food, walkability and community connectedness.

The collaborative has since adopted a governance charter and has signed agreements with local partners to ensure a strong coalition that aligned on a shared vision and ready to tackle heart disease through tangible community change.

To date, W-SACHI has: 1) engaged residents, empowering them to identify over 200 community assets and distribute COVID-19 grants to struggling families during the pandemic; 2) successfully mobilized community resources to address food insecurity and educate community members about COVID-19; 3) supported the passage of a citywide flavored tobacco ban; 4) funded a solid collaborative that has worked to address the needs of West Sacramento residents. Furthermore, having the ACH's essential infrastructure in place has allowed for a more effective response to the pandemic, including access to testing and vaccinations.

#### **NEXT STEPS: Moving Toward Environmental Change**

West Sacramento residents can look forward to new programs and policies that encourage the development of walkable and bikeable communities, attract farmers markets and grocery stores, and establish networks that connect people from every corner of the community. W-SACHI is establishing a Wellness Fund that helps braid funding and fuel future initiatives and is deploying a storytelling strategy that helps build community and move people toward action. These projects collectively aim to bring down the city's heart disease rates and save lives.

**Learn more at [www.healthedcouncil.org](http://www.healthedcouncil.org) or read Population Health Innovation Lab's Spotlight on Community Engagement at [bit.ly/hecwestsac](http://bit.ly/hecwestsac).**