



Performance-Improvement Plan VIHA Food Security

Model Core Program Planning

As part of BC's commitment to public health care renewal and improvement, the Ministry of Health has produced the **Core Public Health Functions Framework**. The framework defines a key set of public health services (core functions) that BC's health authorities will provide to strengthen the link between public health, primary care, and chronic disease management in a comprehensive, province-wide health care system. It provides a tool for health authorities to strengthen their public health infrastructure by reviewing their existing programming with 21 core programs defined in the framework. This performance-improvement process will result in increased consistency, capacity and quality of public health services across the province.

Under the Core Public Health Functions Framework, BC's health authorities and the Ministry of Health have developed the **Model Core Program Paper: Food Security**. The Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA) will use this evidence-based paper to determine opportunities to improve food security in VIHA's service area. Achieving a successful food-security program will depend on health authorities, all levels of government, and community partners collaborating and sharing accountability.

Introduction to Food Security

Access to safe, nutritious food is vital for a healthy population. It depends on a complex system of food production, processing, distribution, marketing, availability, affordability, and knowledge of food storage and preparation. Community food security is achieved when all people can obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritional diet through a sustainable food system that promotes dignity and social justice.

VIHA recognizes the complexity of food security and is coordinating its efforts with all levels of government and community stakeholders to improve the health of VIHA

residents and reduce health inequities. An effective food-security program requires integrating existing programs and services, implementing new initiatives, and mobilizing all available resources.

Food Security Performance-Improvement Planning

The performance-improvement planning process uses best-practice evidence from the model core program papers to identify opportunities to improve core public-health program activities. Using the Model Core Program Paper: Food Security as a standard, VIHA completed a gap analysis to identify areas for improvement in its food-security services and align its program with the provincial model. This information, along with baseline benchmarks and best-practices data, was used to develop a performance-improvement plan for food security.

Nutritionists, community developers, and public/community health nurses are among the many advocates for improved food security. Their efforts have resulted in increased attention to food-security issues in BC. Through a partnership between the Ministry of Health and VIHA, funding was awarded for local food-security programs and initiatives as part of the Community Food Action Initiative (CFAI) to benefit communities in the region. The goal of these projects is to increase awareness and access to local healthy food and improve planning for a sustainable food system in communities across the region.

VIHA is aligning its food-security program with the provincial government's goals and priorities. Implementing the food-security program involves collaborating with community partners and service providers to support VIHA residents in increasing food security and achieving better health through prevention and health-promotion activities.

Baseline Assessment

VIHA assessed current food-security activities against best practices, as defined in the model core program paper, to determine if current VIHA practices fall below, meet or exceed expectations. Baseline assessments were completed for four main program components:

- Food-security policy framework

- Programs and services
- Promotion and public awareness
- Surveillance, monitoring and evaluation

Main Opportunities for Improvement

The baseline assessment and gap analysis identified three key opportunities for improvement:

- Develop a strategic plan.
- Provide research and analysis to develop internal food-security policies.
- Continue to increase capacity and access information by piloting the Food Security Atlas database in communities and integrating it with the VIHA Public Health Observatory.

Key Strategies and Action Plan

Key Strategies	Action Plan			
	Year 1 (2007-2008)	Progress	Year 2 (2008-2009)	Year 3 (2009-2010)
Strategic Plan	<p>Develop strategic plan to increase intersectoral participation</p> <p>Develop internal infrastructure to integrate with other VIHA initiatives</p>	<p>Completed: Strategic planning meeting held with intersectoral representatives.</p> <p>In Progress: Draft VIHA food-security strategic plan developed and will be submitted for internal approval process in 2008/2009.</p> <p>Completed: Recruited aboriginal health food-security dietician.</p>	<p>Negotiate regional level food-security team.</p> <p>Expand linkages with aboriginal health food-security initiatives.</p>	<p>Review the 5-year food-security strategic plan.</p>
Comprehensive Food-Security Policy Framework	<p>Develop VIHA food-security policy options.</p> <p>Participate in provincial food-security initiatives as a member of the PHSA CFAI committee.</p>	<p>Completed: Vending Machine Policy Options completed December 31, 2007.</p> <p>Healthy Choices in Vending Machines BC Public Buildings May 25, 2007 policy reviewed for application in VIHA.</p> <p>In Progress: Food Security Policy Options in progress Participation on PHSA CFAI committee ongoing</p>	<p>Implement VIHA food-security policy.</p>	<p>Evaluate impacts of food-security policy.</p>

Key Strategies	Action Plan			
	Year 1 (2007-2008)	Progress	Year 2 (2008-2009)	Year 3 (2009-2010)
<p>Food-Security Programs and Services</p> <p>Assist communities in planning, evaluating & achieving best practices.</p> <p>Address the gap in aboriginal food-security initiatives.</p>	<p>Implement CFAI Funding.</p> <p>Participate in provincial food-security initiatives as a member of the PHSA CFAI operations and advisory committee.</p> <p>Develop the food-security program and foster linkages.</p>	<p>Completed: CFAI funding implemented with 15 organizations including 4 promising practice approaches.</p> <p>Participation on PHSA CFAI committee(s) included aboriginal initiative and regional consultation.</p> <p>Fostering Linkages with University of Victoria, Public Health Association of BC, Ministries of Agriculture, MEIA, MOH and local community organization</p>	<p>Apply lessons learned from results of the island-wide food-security survey.</p> <p>Link with VIHA healthy communities collaborative initiatives in high-risk communities.</p>	<p>Participate in developing an island-wide food- security network.</p> <p>Complete a food-security charter.</p>
<p>Food-security Promotion and Awareness Initiatives</p>	<p>Hold a food-security symposium.</p>	<p>Completed: Symposium completed March 27/28, 2008</p> <p>VIHA Food Security Web-site developed</p>	<p>Implement internal and external strategies to increase education & awareness of food security.</p>	<p>Develop a comprehensive communication strategy.</p> <p>Establish intranet and internet sites.</p>

Key Strategies	Action Plan			
	Year 1 (2007-2008)	Progress	Year 2 (2008-2009)	Year 3 (2009-2010)
Surveillance and Evaluation of Food Security	<p>Expand the Food Security Atlas database.</p> <p>Monitor food security over the long term.</p>	<p>In Progress: The University of Victoria, the Salvation Army and VIHA partnered to conduct a survey in the Municipalities of Victoria, Esquimalt & the West Shore. The new South Island Food Resource directory data will be included in the Food Security Atlas.</p> <p>Piloting will occur on-line in 2008/2009 Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) data will be available in 2008/2009.</p>	<p>Provide local food-security data at the community level via the Food Security Atlas.</p>	<p>Analyze data to help communities with local food-security planning.</p>