

## Performance-Improvement Plan Summary 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**

In 2007-2008 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 completed in 2007-2008 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 with communities, the Public Health Association of British Columbia, and the University of Victoria.



## Key Strategies and Action Plan

Key Strategies	Action Plan				
	Year 1 (2007-2008)	Year 1 (2007-2008) Progress	Year 2 (2008-2009)	Year 2 (2008-2009) Progress	Year 3 (2009-2010)
<b>Strategic Plan</b>	<p>Develop strategic plan to increase intersectoral participation.</p> <p>Develop internal infrastructure to integrate with other VIHA initiatives</p>	<p><b>Completed:</b> Strategic planning meeting held with intersectoral representatives.</p> <p><b>In progress:</b> Draft VIHA food-security strategic plan developed and will be submitted for internal approval process in 2008/2009</p> <p><b>Completed:</b> Recruited aboriginal health food security dietician.</p>	<p>Negotiate regional level food-security team.</p> <p>Complete VIHA food-security strategic plan for internal review.</p> <p>Expand linkages with aboriginal health food-security initiatives.</p>	<p><b>Completed:</b> An updated VIHA strategic plan was developed through a consultative process with a regional food security team including cross-department collaboration within VIHA as well as the engagement of community partners to provide input and guidance to the focus and direction of the Food Security Program.</p> <p><b>Completed:</b> A cost-sharing collaborative partnership between Aboriginal Health and Public Health lead to the Food Foundations Conference in March 2009 focused on food security, community health and traditional foods.</p>	<p>Review the draft food-security strategic plan and adjust accordingly.</p>
<b>Comprehensive Food-Security Policy Framework</b>	<p>Develop VIHA food-security policy options.</p>	<p><b>Completed:</b> Vending Machine Policy Options completed Dec 31/07</p> <p>Healthy Choices in Vending Machines BC Public Buildings May 25, 2007 policy reviewed for application in VIHA</p> <p><b>In progress:</b> Food Security Policy Options in progress</p>	<p>Implement Vending Machine Policy</p> <p><b>In progress:</b> Food Security Policy Options requires continued research and consultation.</p>	<p><b>In Progress:</b> A draft food charter has been developed through the collaboration of key community partners.</p> <p>Presentations on the food charter have been given to community groups and municipal and regional leaders. Currently the food charter policy process is in the initial implementation phase through consultations with community partners and internally with</p>	<p>Complete Food Charter</p> <p>Continue implementation</p>

	Participate in provincial food-security initiatives as a member of the PHSA CFAI committee.	<b>Ongoing:</b> Participation on PHSA CFAI committee		VIHA program areas.	
<b>Food-Security Programs and Services</b>	<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><b>Completed:</b> CFAI funding implemented with 15 organizations including 4 promising practice approaches.</p> <p><b>Ongoing:</b> 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 organizations</p>	<p>Apply lessons learned from results of the island-wide food-security survey.</p> <p>Link with VIHA healthy communities collaborative initiatives (HCCI) in high-risk communities.</p>	<p><b>Completed:</b> CFAI funds were implemented with improvements identified from the island-wide food security survey. The introduction of multi-year funding was made available to help community groups to improve sustainability and implement longer term plans to address food security.</p> <p><b>Completed:</b> Linked with HCCI with Tahsis Growing Food Project</p> <p>Linked with community organizations, UVIC, PHABC to develop and pilot VIHA Food Atlas.</p> <p>Linked and partnered with Vancouver Island University on a feasibility study for an innovative food producing resource centre.</p>	<p>Review multi-year funding with Regional 'Hubs'.</p> <p>Review and Report on food security linkages.</p> <p>Develop additional partnerships to engage high-risk communities/populations.</p>
<b>Food-security Promotion and Awareness Initiatives</b>	Hold a food-security symposium.	<p><b>Completed:</b> Symposium completed March 27/28, 2008</p> <p>VIHA Food Security Web-site developed.</p>	<p>Hold a food-security conference.</p> <p>Implement internal and external strategies to increase education &amp; awareness of food security.</p>	<p><b>Completed:</b> Food Foundations Conference March 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009.</p> <p>VIHA implemented a monthly e-brief for communities focused on food security in partnership with PHSA and the other health authorities. This information-sharing tool has been key to increasing awareness,</p>	<p>Develop a comprehensive communication strategy.</p> <p>Build awareness of food security</p> <p>Further develop intranet and internet sites.</p>

				<p>understanding and recognition of food security.</p> <p>VIHA has also supported community events and forums focused on engaging the broader community around food security issues. This support has included, funds for events, resources, consultation and speaking opportunities.</p>	
<p><b>Surveillance and Evaluation of Food Security</b></p>	<p>Expand the Food Security Atlas database.</p> <p>Monitor food security over the long term.</p>	<p><b>In progress:</b> The University of Victoria, the Salvation Army and VIHA partnered to conduct a survey in the Municipalities of Victoria, Esquimalt and 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 2008/2009</p>	<p><b>Completed:</b> Survey completed and data consolidated for the pilot Food Atlas and a hard copy of a new South Island Food Resource Directory.</p> <p><b>In-progress:</b> When CCHS data is available, disseminate findings.</p>	<p>The Food Security Atlas has been implemented via a consultative pilot process with community members and organizations providing feedback.</p> <p>Additionally, the dietitians from VIHA were consulted and feedback gathered and implemented to ensure the Food Security Atlas meets the needs of many of the healthcare professionals.</p>	<p>Populate validated data from Central and North Island into the Food Atlas.</p> <p>Analyze data to assist VIHA and communities with food-security planning.</p>