

Mendocino County Community Health Improvement Plan Report

2016 — 2019
December 2019



*A collaborative project to identify priorities and set goals and strategies
for a healthier Mendocino County*



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Thank you!

On behalf of Healthy Mendocino thank you to all our partners, members of the Healthy Mendocino Steering Committee and Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) Planning Group Members, county agencies and organizations and the members of the Action Teams.

Healthy Mendocino Partners

Adventist Health Howard Memorial
Adventist Health Ukiah Valley
Alliance for Rural Community Health (ARCH)/Community Health Resource Network
Anderson Valley Health Center
Community Development Commission
Community Foundation of Mendocino County
First 5 Mendocino
Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency, Public Health Branch
North Coast Opportunities
Partnership HealthPlan of California
Redwood Community Services
Redwood Quality Management Company
United Way of the Wine Country

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Other Participating Agencies

Adventist Health Howard Memorial
Adventist Health Ukiah Valley
ARC Family Resource Center
City Council Members
City of Fort Bragg, Community Development
City of Ukiah, Community Development
City of Ukiah, Parks and Recreation Department
Coastal Mendocino Association of Realtors
Community Foundation of Mendocino County
Community Members
Consolidated Tribal Health Project
County Economic Development Committee
Court Appointed Special Advocates
Economic Development and Financing Corp.
First 5 Mendocino
Foster Kin Care
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Healthy Families Mendocino County
Housing Organizations
Legal Services of Northern California
Manzanita
Mendocino Coast Child Abuse Prevention Council
Mendocino Coast Children's Fund
Mendocino Coast Clinics
Mendocino Coast Hospitality Center
Mendocino Coast Recreation and Park District
Mendocino Community Health Clinics
Mendocino County Behavioral Health Advisory Board
Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency

Mendocino County Office of Education
Mendocino County Youth Project
Mendocino Office of Education, State Preschool
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Plowshares Peace and Justice Center
Project Sanctuary
Raise and Shine, First 5 Mendocino
Redwood Community Services
Redwood Quality Management
Redwood Valley Rancheria
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University of California Cooperative Extension, 4-H
Walk and Bike Mendocino
West Company

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Introduction and Background

Healthy Mendocino Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) is dedicated to supporting its residents in taking collective action to improve the community's health and finding collaborative solutions to address critical health issues. Healthy Mendocino is based at North Coast Opportunities and addresses the critical health issues and possible solutions to create a vibrant, healthy Mendocino County. Healthy Mendocino's definition of a healthy community is one that offers social, physical, and mental well-being to people in all stages of life, as well as affordability, stability, accessibility, safety and equity. Healthy Mendocino generates leadership opportunities, embraces diversity, and connects people and resources.

The first step in developing the CHIP for Mendocino County was to implement a Community Healthy Needs Assessment (CHNA) that entailed a two-year study of data from health and human service agencies, clinics, hospitals, and interviews with individuals throughout the county. The CHNA provides an information base and impetus for community members and organizations to set priorities and goals to develop plans to improve local health. The assessment is based on four sources: authoritative data on our health, well-being, and population characteristics; a survey of local residents (online/print in English/Spanish, with roughly 1,500 responses); interviews with local leaders in government, education, business, healthcare, and other sectors; and a workshop in which community partners assessed essential public health needs, assets and services.

The CHNA report, completed in 2016, presents information on the health of the county's population, including specific age, geographic, economic, racial and ethnic groups; barriers to health care and social services; the factors that influence health including education, income, housing, family life, the environment; and community assets and strengths.

On June 8, 2016, more than 100 residents from across Mendocino County took part in a Community Health Improvement Plan workshop in Ukiah. They joined the CHNA/CHIP Planning Group to choose a set of priority areas based on the severity of their impact on personal and community health. Guiding questions for identifying the priorities included:

1. How is quality of life perceived in our community?
2. What factors are most important to our community's health?
3. What are the underlying patterns or themes that are affecting the health of Mendocino County residents?
4. What assets do we have that can be used to improve community health?

Data from the CHNA suggested three priority areas on which to focus:

- 1. Economic Development/Poverty**
- 2. Childhood Obesity/Family Wellness**
- 3. Mental Health**

Community partners at the planning workshop identified two additional priority areas:

- 4. Childhood Trauma**
- 5. Housing**

Participants self-selected into five breakout groups on these key areas of focus and developed action plans and next steps. They formed “Action Teams” for each of the priority areas and set up a time to meet again within the next month. The Action Teams met monthly and outlined their own goals and strategies.

Community Context

The Action Teams had varied success. The Mental Health, Childhood Trauma, and Childhood Obesity & Family Wellness had outcome measures they quickly identified, such as increasing access to mental health services, increasing awareness about and community resilience to childhood trauma, increasing exercise and healthy diets.

The Housing Team quickly identified two areas related to housing, increasing local housing stocks by re-zoning, development and in-filling: and solving the problem of homelessness in the county. These two issues, while related to a lack of housing, presented very different approaches and challenges. It took some time for the group to decide to concentrate on housing stocks.

The Poverty Team also struggled to find a scope that was not overly broad. There were multiple areas within the context of poverty to target, e.g., single mothers with children, or the Hispanic community, or people experiencing homelessness, or small business creation, etc. The problem of what to focus on was compounded by the thriving underground economy at that time, which partially obscured the true economic picture in the county.

Some teams struggled to achieve their goals during the first two years of the planned implementation because there was a lack of staff support and financial resources available.

The 2016-2019 CHIP was an ambitious plan covering five priority areas and large, complex social issues. The goal was to capture community enthusiasm and translate it into action for social change. We learned as a cross-sector collaborative that it is important to balance community input on identified needs, data-driven public health best practices, and organizational and community capacity in order to align resources accordingly. These lessons learned will inform changes in our next Community Health Improvement Plan for 2020-2022 with a narrowed strategic approach.

Progress on the Priority Areas: Inland and North Coast Action Teams

Childhood Obesity/Family Wellness



About This Priority

Forty-one percent of Mendocino County children are overweight, and the trend worsens as they get older. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, obesity during childhood can increase the risk for cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, asthma and sleep apnea, musculoskeletal discomfort, fatty liver disease, gallstones, and heartburn. It can also lead to low self-esteem and other psychological problems such as anxiety and depression, as well as being the victim of bullying and other social stigmas. Many of these health risks continue into adulthood; childhood obesity is linked to adult obesity and many serious chronic illnesses.

To combat obesity, children need to balance healthy, nutritious meals with physical activity. In Mendocino County, 59 percent of local children do less than one hour of activity a day and many families lack access to affordable, nutritious food, opting instead for relatively cheap and accessible fast food.

Vision

Healthy, active children in healthy families; wide access to healthy food and safe recreational opportunities.

Strategies

1. Write a letter to Assemblyman Jim Wood advocating for specific language to be included in any statewide sweetened beverage tax
2. Advocate for breastfeeding-friendly workplace policies throughout Mendocino County
3. Promote healthy environments at workplace, recreation, and community venues
4. Work with schools to increase student's physical activity
5. Promote use of community gardens by families and schools for access to healthy food
6. Organize and participate in healthy living events for local communities

Successes

- Walk and Bike Mendocino held a series of three workshops on bike safety and held ten community events countywide, such as Bike Month and Bike to Work Day to promote biking in the county.
- Walk and Bike Mendocino created educational and outreach materials for Walking School Bus including a Walking School Bus Guide and distributed to all Mendocino County Schools and provided direct support for four schools throughout the county to develop Walking School Buses.
- An annual KIDS Triathlon was created with low entrance fees and prizes, to promote family friendly opportunity for kids to move. The first year 181 children across the county participated in the first year.
- The team created a Healthy Food at a Community Event Guide for their partners and community partners to help change the food environment at community events
- City of Ukiah Department of Parks and Recreation removed soda from their community pool vending machine and snack shack.
- NCO Nutrition Basics created a food access resource list to help people struggling with food insecurity to find resources in their local area.

- Health and Human Services Agency, Planning and Prevention Unit and Adventist Health Howard Memorial championed and implemented the Morning Mile Program at Blosser Elementary in Willits. In 2018/2019 196 students walked/ran 1094 miles and 45 staff and visitors walked/ran 596 miles. In 2019 through January 2020, 167 students walked/ran 432 miles and 24 staff and visitors walked/ran 340 miles.
- Ukiah Valley Adventist Health Pediatrics, Alex Rorabaugh Recreation Center, Walk and Bike Mendocino and Adventist Health Howard Memorial conducted outreach to the Ukiah Unified School District and provided support for one of their schools (Frank Zeek) in creating a Tiger March May program – a program that encourages children to compete in a walk/run contest in the early morning recess. Prizes included a backpack with water bottles and frisbees generously donated by Adventist Health. Information on how to implement a program was then distributed to all Ukiah Unified School District new teachers at the new teacher orientation training.

Organizations on the Childhood Obesity/Family Wellness Action Teams

Adventist Health Howard Memorial

Adventist Health Ukiah Valley

City of Ukiah, Parks and Recreation Department

Community Members

Consolidated Tribal Health Project

Health and Human Services Agency, Planning and Prevention Unit

First 5 Mendocino

Mendocino Coast Recreation and Park District

Mendocino Community Health Clinics

Mendocino Office of Education, State Preschool

North Coast Opportunities, Walk and Bike Mendocino

North Coast Opportunities, Nutrition Basics

Redwood Valley Rancheria

University of California Cooperative Extension, 4-H

Childhood Trauma



About This Priority

Childhood Trauma and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) have an extremely negative impact on the health, safety, and well-being of individuals and our community. They lead to harmful health behaviors, poor performance at school and work, and higher risk for serious health conditions in adulthood. The number of Mendocino County's child abuse and domestic violence calls are among the highest in California. Thousands of children are being raised by grandparents, while 28% of county households face severe housing problems. The number of substantiated cases of child abuse/neglect countywide was 355 in 2015 with a rate of 19.2%. The percent of students not completing high school is 9.4%. Children entering foster care is 11.3%, more than double California's rate of 5.3%.

Vision

All children will have the support and opportunity to grow up in stable and supportive families, and families will have access to support in times of crisis.

Strategies

1. Create trauma-informed training across sectors that interact with youth: schools, health care, mental health providers, judicial, foster system and juvenile detention
2. Advocate for county policies that create sustainable funding for Family Resource Centers and consider the impact of all policies on families and children
3. Develop and distribute educational materials to increase awareness of ACEs and toxic stress, provide information about child development and how to improve resiliency in children with multiple ACEs, share trauma-informed best practices
4. Offer at least two informational events per year for families and people who work in sectors that serve youth on how to prevent childhood trauma and help children build resiliency
5. Provide professional development and skills-based training to service providers to address the impacts of ACEs, secondary trauma, and the importance of building resiliency

Successes

- Team members developed a countywide asset map of all service providers, categorized by audience, age span, intervention/prevention and type of work done and developed a regional strategic plan that coordinates events, trainings, messaging, and policy advocacy. This asset map is updated monthly.
- Developed talking points and delivered several presentations to the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors providing information on Childhood Trauma and Toxic Stress and the impact to our community
- Developed and distributed the economics of child abuse in Mendocino County
- Reframe the Brain conference – Mendocino County Office of Education and partners
- State of the Child workshop – First 5
- Developed new child abuse prevention posters and distributed them to over 125 businesses in two cities during for the Child Abuse Awareness walkabout in April 2019 - CASA

- The North Coast Childhood Trauma and Mental Health Action Teams developed a resilience leadership initiative, three- part community workshop series.

Workshop 1: Community Resilience Leadership Summit with Elaine Miller-Karas
Topics: Community Resilience Model, Adverse Childhood Experiences, building individual and community resilience

Workshop 2: Cultivating Difference Makers: A Community Approach with Eric Barreras (Part1); Understanding Trauma: Trauma-Informed Response for Law Enforcement and First Responders with Eric Barreras (Part 2)

Topics: trauma and the brain, interrupting acts on the continuum of harm, trauma-informed interviewing techniques, bystander intervention

Workshop 3: Moving Through Trauma into Thriving: Building Resilience in Our Lives and Work with Patti Boucher

Topics: secondary trauma, understanding somatic responses to trauma, polyvagal theory, using mindfulness to process trauma response

- Partners provided more than 20 workshops throughout the county that provided quality professional development and skills-based trainings to service providers to address the impacts of ACEs, secondary trauma, and the importance of building resiliency. Examples include:

- Trauma, Depression and Anxiety: Addressing Mental Health Needs of Students through Collaborative Team Assessment, Planning, Implementation and Monitoring – Mendocino County Office of Education Special Education Local Plan Area (SELPA) and Tapestry Family Services
- Practical Application to Trauma-informed Care with Gabby Grant -Mendocino County Youth Project
- “Mending Broken Hearts – Youth Version” training facilitators to work with youth in a culturally sensitive way around intergenerational trauma of boarding school era - Mendocino County Youth Project
- Strategies 2.0 training: Using the Centrality of Relationships as a Protective Factor in Building Resilience: Infusing Early Childhood Mental Health Principles and Practices Across the Care Continuum of Children and Families

- Partners provided more than five trainings throughout the county for foster parents and others who work with children across sectors on building resilience and protective factor. Examples include:

- Protective Factors Deep Dive: social and emotional competence of children-Strategies 2.0

- Community Resiliency Model (TRM) - – Raise and Shine – First5 Mendocino
- Toxic Stress: Maternal and Infant Development – Foster Kinship Care and Mendocino Community College

Next Steps

The Childhood Trauma Action Team (CTAT) continues to advocate for sustainable funding for the Family Resource Centers to support the delivery of services in outlying areas. CTAT is planning to co-host fireside chats with three of the five Board of Supervisors in Mendocino County. These community forums will provide an overview on the science of ACE's and resilience and then have a facilitated discussion about how the impact of ACE's affect those communities and what resources are needed to address the impact and increase prevention.

Organizations involved in the Childhood Trauma Action Teams

ACES connection

Mendocino County Youth Project

Tapestry Family Services

Dan Gjerde, Mendocino County Board of Supervisors, District 4

Health and Human Services Agency, Community Outreach Unit

Redwood Community Services, Arbor on Main

North Coast Opportunities, Head Start

North Coast Opportunities, Rural Communities Child Care

Court Appointed Special Advocates

Project Sanctuary

First 5 Mendocino

SPACE (School for Performing Arts and Cultural Education)

Mendocino County Office of Education

Health and Human Services Agency, Adult Services

Health and Human Services Agency, Maternal Child and Adolescent Health

Redwood Valley Rancheria

Ford Street Project
Ukiah Police Department
Mendocino County Probation
Family Resource Center Networks
ARC Family Resource Center
Mendocino Community Health Clinics
Adventist Health Pediatrics
Redwood Quality Management Company
Hopland Band of Pomo Indians
The Community Foundation of Mendocino County
Mendocino Coast Clinics
Lilliput – Post Adoption Services

Housing



About This Priority

Prices for both rental and market-rate houses are more than most individuals living in Mendocino County can afford. The stock of all types of housing is limited. New development is costly; permits and fees take considerable time and money; and zoning can be a barrier. CHNA survey respondents named the cost of housing and food as major barriers to meeting their family's needs. Fifty-eight percent of residents who rent spend more than a third of their household income on rent. Twenty seven percent of residents have severe housing problems or "housing instability". The rate of homelessness in the county is very high. With a county population of approximately 90,000, an estimated 1,030 were homeless in 2015 – and that number is on the rise while housing assistance and emergency shelters are limited and falling short of the needs of people without shelter.

Vision

Assure that every person in the county has access to safe and secure housing that is accessible to everyone in every income bracket.

Strategies

1. Change zoning ordinances to include a wider range of multi-family option (e.g. tiny homes and small lot zones)
2. Revise policies and procedures for approving Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) and junior ADU's to streamline permitting, reduce costs, and encourage appropriate use of ADU's
3. Increase interagency coordination in planning and fund-seeking (eg., federal Community Development Block Grant Program funds)
4. Provide education and outreach to community on challenges and opportunities including rental and homeownership assistance and community land trusts
5. Engage community in identifying key recommendations for the General Plan Housing Elements for the County of Mendocino and the Cities of Fort Bragg, Willits, and Ukiah
6. Identify and recommend key policy changes to help develop additional housing stock for all economic sectors

Successes

Educational workshops included:

- In June of 2018, the Inland Team held an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) workshop in Ukiah, 60 people attended. They had a panel of experts that led the workshop for residents. The panel included a cross section of builders, planners, and policy makers.
- The North Coast Team held two free public education workshops on ADUs: one for the City of Fort Bragg residents and one for the county residents. The county workshop was held a few weeks before the approval of an amendment to the coastal plan that would allow second units to be built in the coastal zone. Each workshop covered building codes, tax implications and financing, were attended by more than 100 people and filmed so that they could be viewed by the larger public. In addition, the handouts were made available to the public. As of November 2019, the Team was discussing the possibility of hosting another ADU workshop for the South Coast.
- A panel on affordable housing and challenges to new development that included PEP Senior Housing, Corporation for Better Housing that does a range of affordable housing projects, and Guillion Construction.

- An overview of Community Land Trusts
- An overview of Housing Elements as a community planning tool
- The North Coast Housing Action Team HUD subcommittee also partnered with local nonprofit Project Sanctuary to host a tenant's rights presentation in Fort Bragg facilitated by Legal Services of Northern California. The subcommittee provided planning and promotional support.

Housing Element Engagement included:

- Conducted a Housing Element policy and program workshop
- Held a housing forum in Anderson Valley and participated in workshops in Fort Bragg and Ukiah
- Both teams submitted input on the County Housing Element and the Fort Bragg Housing Element including:
 - Develop an amnesty/legalization program for illegal residential units on non-conforming properties. Include new ways of increasing houses through variable multifamily zoning like tiny homes, small lot zones, ADUs and junior ADUs (streamlining permitting and reducing costs)
 - Change zoning on non-conforming properties to align with historical use of property, particularly in the 40- and 160-acre parcel areas
 - Create a collaborative long-term housing and infrastructure plan (identified as high priority, partially for advanced planning purposes and partially to make all of us more competitive in the pursuit of grants) with the municipalities and MAC's
 - Apply for or collaborate with a municipality or agency to receive CDBG funds to provide additional homeowners assistance, wrap around services and infrastructure (new and refurbishment)
 - Look for funding opportunities to get infrastructure AND allow for zoning revision for alternative technologies that allow for multi-family development in areas without sewer and water infrastructure
 - Establishing a Community Land Trust
 - Alternative designs for second units

Engagement with policy makers and other policy recommendations

- The North Coast team was able to attend at least six Fort Bragg City Council Meetings related to the development of the Georgia Pacific Mill Site and Coastal Plan Amendment as well as discuss options at their monthly meetings.

- Three of the five supervisors have been participating in the team meetings as needed.

Next Steps

The teams are continuing to develop educational workshops that have been identified by the community as issues of interest. They also have identified a countywide strategic plan for implementation of their individual housing elements as a possible action item for the next CHIP.

Organizations on the Housing Action Teams

Rural Community Housing Development Corporation
City of Ukiah, Community Development
Anderson Valley Housing Association
Anderson Valley Health Clinic
Community Members
Redwood Community Services
Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency, Public Health Branch
Community Foundation of Mendocino County
Northern Circle Indian Housing
City of Fort Bragg Community Development
Mendocino County Building and Planning Department
Mendocino Coast Hospitality Center
Coastal Mendocino Association of Realtors
Community Development Commission of Mendocino County
Coastal Street Medicine Project
Partnership HealthPlan
Fort Bragg TV
Noyo Headlands
Unified Design Group
North Coast Opportunities
Supervisors John McCowan, Dan Gjerde and Carre Brown

Mental Health



About This Priority

Mental health is a top concern of the Community Health Needs Assessment interviewees and survey respondents. Almost half (46%) of adults surveyed indicate that mental health issues are among the most important health issues facing our community (Community Health Survey 2015). Mental Health is strongly linked to homelessness with 41% of local homeless people reporting living with a serious mental illness. There are gaps in local mental health services, especially prevention, and wrap-around and full-service models, and stigmas prevent individuals from seeking the help they need and are a barrier to creating a sense of normalcy in the community around mental health issues.

Vision

Expand treatment and access to treatment, focusing on prevention, early intervention, and case management, and provide education to reduce stigma and increase awareness.

Strategies

1. Create workplace policies promoting mutual support and help-seeking behavior
2. Increase availability of training for managers and supervisors to identify suicidal risk
3. Increase access to care, including the availability of telepsychiatry services
4. Reduce public stigma against those suffering from mental health challenges

5. Increase awareness about mental health challenges and how to access services
6. Increase suicide outreach and prevention

Successes

- An online survey of school districts was conducted to identify 1) existing suicide prevention policies in schools and 2) gaps that Health Mendocino might assist in filling. The major school districts on the coast indicated they need more support in addressing suicide prevention strategies specific to LGBTQ youth
- Team members became certified in QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer), a mental health and suicide intervention technique
- The North Coast Mental Health Team collaborated with the North Coast Childhood Trauma team on a series of resiliency workshops and trainings. The workshops covered building community resilience and support, promoting protective factors, processing trauma, and trauma-informed practices for law enforcement and first responders.

Next Steps

Mental Health services is undergoing changes and the teams decided end their work for now.

Organizations on the Mental Health Action Team

Adventist Health Ukiah Valley

First 5 Mendocino and Raise and Shine

Manzanita

Mendocino County Behavioral Health Advisory Board

Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency

Mendocino County Office of Education

Mendocino County Youth Project

NAMI of Mendocino County

Redwood Community Services

Redwood Quality Management Company

Community Members

Mendocino Coast Clinics

Mendocino Coast Hospitality Center

Poverty



About This Priority

Poverty has a profound negative impact on health. Nearly 30% of the county’s children live below the federal poverty level, compared to 23% in California, and 57% are eligible for a free lunch. In Mendocino County, 20% of residents live in poverty, compared to 15% in the state. Seniors, a growing segment of the county population, are also at risk. Many local jobs don’t pay enough to cover basic expenses, in 2017 the median income was \$46,528, almost a third lower than California’s median income. Some employers have trouble finding qualified people to take available jobs.

Vision

High quality of life and economic self-sufficiency for all; entrepreneurship and wealth-creation opportunities; strong locally owned businesses; more higher paying jobs; empowerment combined with responsibility.

Strategies

1. Expand Earned Income Tax Credit participation
2. Recommend the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors adopt a countywide position to focus on economic development and job creation
3. Create an asset map/resource list for addressing poverty in Mendocino County
4. Hold a poverty summit with key stakeholders countywide
5. Promote CalFresh enrollment

Successes

- The team built an asset map of all community programs and resources that address poverty and identified gaps in programmatic delivery and made several recommendations for policy changes. The map is shared on the Healthy Mendocino website.
- The Economic Development and Finance Corporation (EDFC) of Mendocino County received a grant to hold an economic summit in January 2019. The summit was a part of EDFC's Economic Recovery and Resilience Strategy and had breakout sessions to explore Poverty Alleviation, Entrepreneurship and Access to Capitol, Agriculture and Natural Resources, Workforce Development Education and Employment, Interdisciplinary Economic Development, Business Owners, Tourism and the Arts, Recovery Resilience Infrastructure and Broadband, and Housing. The summit resulted in the following report <https://www.edfc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Final-2019-Economic-Summit-Report.pdf>.
- First 5, the ARC Family Resource Center, Ukiah Vecinos en Action (UVA), West Company, and EDFC, developed a pilot entrepreneurial training program for low income families in the Ukiah area. The program was a four-part training to cover marketing, business development and finance. Each participant received the training and one on one mentoring through West Company. The partners created a community marketplace event, once a month for four months over the summer to provide an opportunity for the new entrepreneurs to market their new business to the general public. Thirty participants went through the program. The partners used the experience to develop a guide for other communities who want to implement similar programs.

Next Steps

While the Poverty Action Team's emphasis on poverty as a social determinant of health had some positive effects and helped educate community members, the team felt the subject was overly broad in scope and resources would be better utilized towards a more focused goal.

Organizations on the Poverty Action Teams

ARC Family Resource Center
Community Members
Economic Development and Financing Corp.
Legal Services of Northern California
Mendocino County Health and Human Services Agency
Plowshares Peace and Justice Center
United Way of the Wine Country
West Company