

August 6, 2024

More than 1000 People Find Services and Support in Antelope Valley

By *Desirae Tainatongo-Landin*

On Saturday, February 24, 2024, over 1,000 community members of various walks of life attended an event at the Parkview Educational Complex. The event was planned by California Association of African American Superintendents and Administrators and the Antelope Valley Community Public Health Team (CPHT) joined the event to introduce their project to a larger audience. Despite being breezy and overcast that day, community members arrived from all parts of the Antelope Valley region including Lancaster, Palmdale, Lake Los Angeles, and other unincorporated communities. As gates opened, participants were welcomed by tables of local government representatives, non-profit organizations, and Izzy's Taco House lining the edges of the open outdoor space. In the gym, guests could view entertainment and a cheer competition. Attendees could also help themselves to free books, groceries, food, and health services such as dental work and eye exams. Attendance was higher than expected, considering the well-known transportation barriers in the Antelope Valley, proving that there is a significant need for health resources and services throughout the region.

Urgent Health Concerns

The needs in Antelope Valley are well documented in the LA County DPH Community Health Profiles and 2023 LA County Health Survey. According to these reports, the Antelope Valley has the lowest population within LA County yet the highest percentage of adults who reported being homeless or not having their own place to live or sleep in the past 5 years at 13 percent. Despite the wide geographical area and undeveloped land in Antelope Valley, this area has the lowest percentage of people that live within a 10-minute walk of a recreation space such as parks, playgrounds, and sports fields compared to the other Service Planning Areas and the County overall. Just over a quarter (26%) of the population live with these spaces nearby. Antelope Valley also has one of the lowest percentages of children who were breastfed for at least 6 months (23.9%), the highest percentage of low birthweight (9.2%), highest percentage of preterm births (11%), and the highest infant death rate (5.7 per 1,000 births). Antelope Valley ranks highest or second highest in adult obesity (36.7%), and adult diabetes (15.1%), and death rates for lung (28.5 per 100,000), colorectal (18.6 per 100,000), and breast cancers (23.1 per 100,000). The region also has the second highest percentage of adults with current depression (15.1%).

Responding to Community Voices

At the event, staff spoke with over 100 community members, 60 of whom completed a survey on what services they wanted help with. Each of them also got to know how Antelope Valley CPHT can help and share their own ideas about the most concerning community issues. People were excited to learn about CPHT services and hoped it would expand to other areas. One person was surprised to learn about the home visits, "Wow, you're going to actually be knocking on doors?" Another person's reaction highlighted the need to bring services to people rather than expecting people to come to clinics, "I need that because I don't like going into the doctors." Using information gathered from community members, Antelope Valley CPHT staff will be following up to connect them to help and upcoming opportunities to get involved.



What brings you to this event?

I'm needing glasses and dental work. I went to this event last time and was able to get both.

Participant at Antelope Valley CPHT event