

## SUMMARY REPORT

On June 21, 2017, Be There San Diego convened a group of stakeholders to continue the dialogue about how leaders, partners and community can work together to create an **Accountable Community for Health** and **achieve heart health for all San Diegans**.

### *Building an ACH*

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**Ms. Kitty Bailey, Executive Director, Be There San Diego**, welcomed the group, and explained that part of the purpose of the meeting was to get to know each other which would lay the foundation for working together. Attendees introduced themselves and described their motivation for being at the meeting.



Kitty described an **Accountable Community for Health (ACH)** as the bridge between social determinants of health (such as childhood experiences, housing, and education) and downstream contributors to health (such as clinics and hospitals). By creating meaningful partnerships, an ACH seeks to increase attention on non-medical influencers of health to improve health, reduce disease, increase health equity, and generate long term savings by reducing the need for healthcare services. She talked about key components of an ACH including - 1) Stewardship and Engagement, 2) Collective Action, 3) Data Sharing and 4) Investment.

She compared the complex healthcare system to the parable of the blind men all touching different parts of an elephant, each one thinking they understood the whole while only really touching one part. Similarly, we all see our own individual part of the system. To see the system as a whole, we need to see each other's point of view. ***“We all bring different mental models, languages, context and experience to the table.”***

Kitty talked about the opportunity we have before us to work together in new ways to build a desired future, starting with the power of a positive vision. We should embrace a “creative tension” between telling the truth of our current reality and contrast that to the powerful vision we create for our future.

By working together and building trust, even with our diverse histories, we can collaborate to improve the health of our communities.

*“Dr. Ross talked about narratives of inclusion, and we believe in coming together and shining the light on what we can accomplish by working together.”*

*Kitty Bailey, MSW  
Executive Director  
Be There San Diego*

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### *Standing Stronger Together*



**Ms. Elizabeth Bustos, Director of Community Engagement, Be There San Diego**, reminded us of the story of Isaiah, who as a teenager was cured of leukemia, but as a young man died on the streets from poverty, hopelessness and despair, as reported by his doctor. At the ACH kickoff meeting in April, many attendees were moved by the conversation about his circumstances; some were brought to tears.

San Diego stakeholders agreed that we've all met too many Isaiahs whom the system failed. Looking to the future, it will take all of us to save others like him. By working together as a community, we can **"teach each other truths,"** and help prevent Isaiahs by **"curing the injustice as well as the disease."**

### *Creating a Shared Vision*

**What is our vision for an ACH in San Diego?** That was the question stakeholders were asked to consider as each table imagined what success would look like five years from now. Each table included individuals from different organizations and locations along the upstream-downstream continuum. After small group conversations, each table reported out on its vision for an ACH in San Diego including media headlines in the year 2022. Headlines included the following powerful statements:

***"Zip Codes No Longer Predict Life Expectancy in San Diego"***

***"ACH Initiative Has Eradicated Heart Attacks in San Diego"***



***"SDACH is Connecting Dots and Touching Hearts!"***

***"San Diego Community Reclaims Their Overall Wellbeing through ACH"***

The visions created and shared by the participants will be used to craft an overall vision statement to guide the work of the ACH and will be presented at the next meeting on August 23 for additional discussion and refinement.

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*Working Beyond the Clinical Walls*



**Dr. Christine Thorne, Medical Director, Be There San Diego**, shared the story of her patient “Lydia,” a 54-year-old African American with type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure who lives in San Diego. In addition to high blood pressure, she had high cholesterol, complications from diabetes, and mental health issues.

***“Even for people who have low genetic risk, if their lifestyle is bad, it is the same as having high risk.”***

As if living with her medical conditions wasn’t difficult enough, Lydia had many life challenges that made it difficult for her to care for herself. She could not afford her medications or to store her insulin properly. Mental health issues impacted her ability to follow her doctor’s treatment recommendations. Additionally, poor nutrition, drug use and intermittent incarceration complicated her ability to be healthy. Furthermore, she was a survivor of domestic violence as an adult, and had a history of abuse and neglect as a child.

In Dr. Thorne’s opinion, neither upstream prevention nor downstream treatment providers were successfully helping Lydia. Fortunately, during one hospital stay, Lydia encountered a case manager who, as Lydia said, “didn’t want to see me there again.” The case manager recognized the many barriers in Lydia’s life, and made an extra effort to help her. The case manager found housing for her in a new area of San Diego – an area where Lydia didn’t know any drug dealers and didn’t have the cues that would tempt her. She got assisted living and the help of an aide who reminded her to take her medication, made sure she got access to healthy food, helped schedule medical appointments, and arranged for transportation.

*“What is happening before someone comes into clinic matters more than anything I can do in clinic.”*

*Christine Thorne, MD  
Medical Director  
Be There San Diego*

As a result of getting social support services, medical care, and psychiatric care, her diabetes control improved remarkably and she began to feel better both physically and mentally. After being estranged for some time, her daughter allowed her back into her life, giving her the opportunity to develop a long-desired relationship with her granddaughter.

Dr. Thorne imagined what it would have looked like if Lydia was nurtured and protected as a child, got treatment for her addiction, lived in a better area, and got mental health treatment as soon as she needed it. Dr. Thorne challenged us to consider, “Can we do better?” Perhaps through the ACH we can.

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***Aligning Efforts for Collective Impact***

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**Ms. Dale Fleming, Director for the Office of Strategy and Innovation, County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency**, talked about the power of collective impact and the opportunities the ACH brings to the healthcare ecosystem. She recognized that many sectors are working to improve health and well-being in San Diego whether by changing policies, systems, and environments; conducting activities that impact outcomes; or collaborating with the County and/or other partners. By aligning our activities we can make a collective impact through a common agenda, shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, and continuous communication. She noted that there are many backbone organizations working on different elements of health.



***“Each partner uses their unique skills to do their part - differentiated but coordinated activities.”***

Dale shared that she is excited about the opportunity that the ACH brings to our wellness ecosystem and views it as a chance to increase our collective impact.

***Next Steps***

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The next stakeholder meeting will take place on **August 23 from 9:00 to 11:00 am** with registration and breakfast beginning at 8:30 am. The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- Present the vision developed on June 21 for discussion and refinement
- Discuss the structure for the ACH in Year 2, beginning September 2017
- Provide updates on community-based efforts

***Thank you, stakeholders, for sharing your vision and offering your insights and enthusiasm!***

***We look forward to meeting with you again in August to continue the discussion!***