



Lane County Board of Commissioners

Bill Dwyer
Bill Fleenor
Bobby Green, Sr.
Peter Sorenson
Faye Hills Stewart

January 29, 2008
WD bc/fs/08003/T

Karen Gillette
Lane County Public Health
135 E. 6th Ave
Eugene, OR 97401

Dear Ms. Gillette:

On behalf of the Lane County Board of Commissioners, I am pleased to write a letter of commitment of our support for Public Health's application for "Addressing the Prevention, Early Detection, and Management of Chronic Diseases in Lane County."

Lane County's Board of County Commissioners has reviewed the county demographics provided and interpreted by Public Health's Chronic Disease Prevention program staff highlighting the health and financial burdens related to tobacco use, physical inactivity, poor nutrition, arthritis, asthma, cancer, diabetes, heart disease, obesity and stroke. We are greatly concerned about the impact of such chronic diseases on community health and our local economy.

The Board of County Commissioners is especially concerned about the impact of tobacco use and poor nutrition and physical inactivity on community health. We are however grateful to have strong DHS-funded programs and exceptional program staff coordinating both Tobacco Prevention and Education and Physical Activity and Nutrition efforts targeting policy and environmental changes. We welcome the opportunity this grant will provide for program staff and our Public Health administrator to enhance their skills and community capacity to prevent, detect early and manage chronic diseases.

As the county's Board of Health, Lane County's Board of Commissioners also looks forward to reviewing the assessment of policies, environments and systems addressing prevention, early detection, and management of chronic diseases our program staff will develop with support from this funding. We intend to use that report as a tool when setting county public health funding priorities in the future.

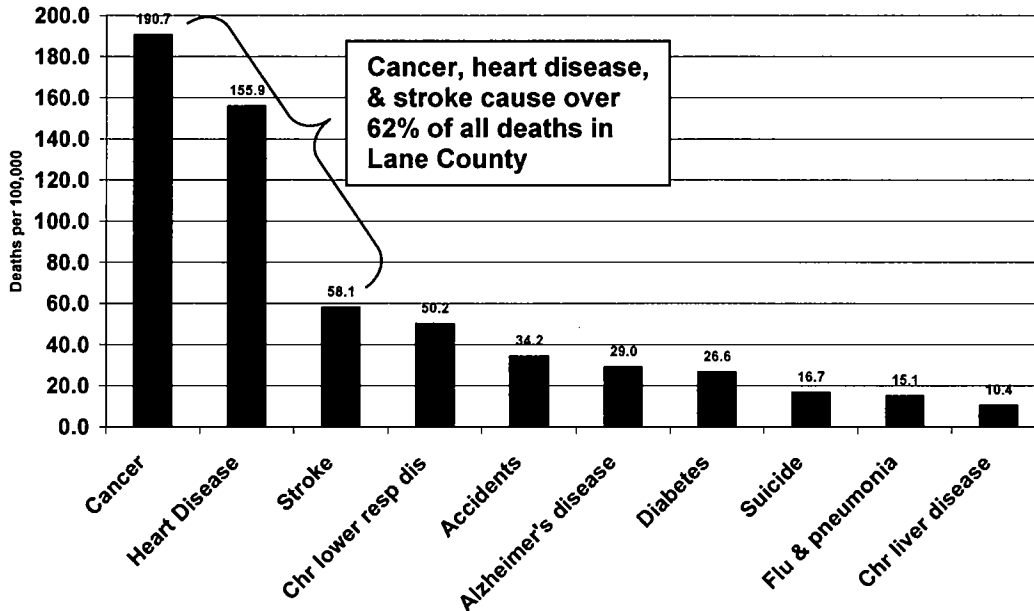
Sincerely,

Faye Stewart, Chair
Lane County Board of Commissioners

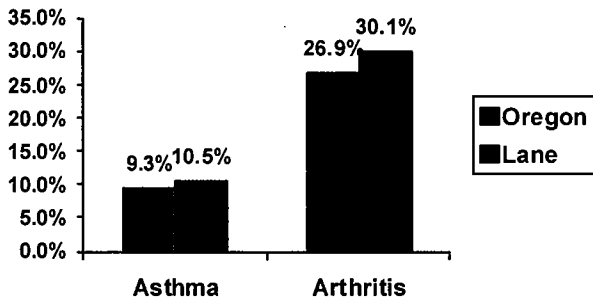
A Snapshot of Tobacco-Related & Other Chronic Diseases in Lane County

Chronic diseases are the leading causes of death in the United States, Oregon, and Lane County and are some of the most costly and preventable causes of death, disease, and disability.¹ As such, preventing chronic disease should be one of the highest priorities of public health agencies.

Lane County Leading Causes of Death, 2005



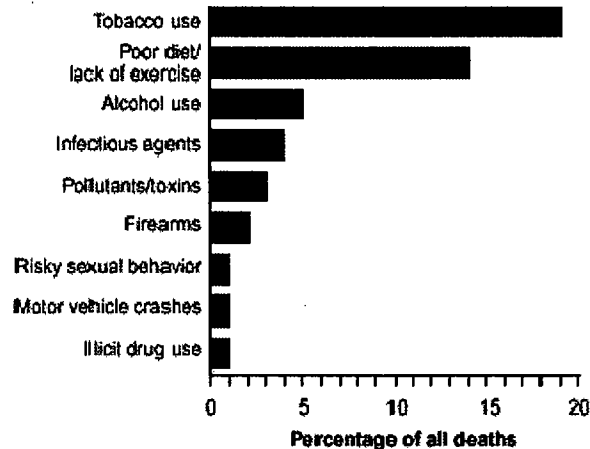
Adult Asthma & Arthritis, 2002-2005



Over the last 16 years, Lane County has seen decreasing mortality rates from certain chronic diseases such as cancer, heart disease, and stroke, but significant increases in diseases like diabetes. Other chronic conditions, such as asthma and arthritis have also been on the rise in Oregon and Lane County. Lane County experiences higher rates of both these conditions than the state.

The causes and course of chronic diseases make prevention very challenging. The “vectors” of chronic disease aren’t viruses or bacteria, but rather the complicated interaction of human behavior, genetics, and the environment. Tobacco-use, lack of physical activity, and poor nutrition have all been identified as the “actual” leading causes of death and together these areas account for roughly two-thirds of the risk factors for chronic disease.²

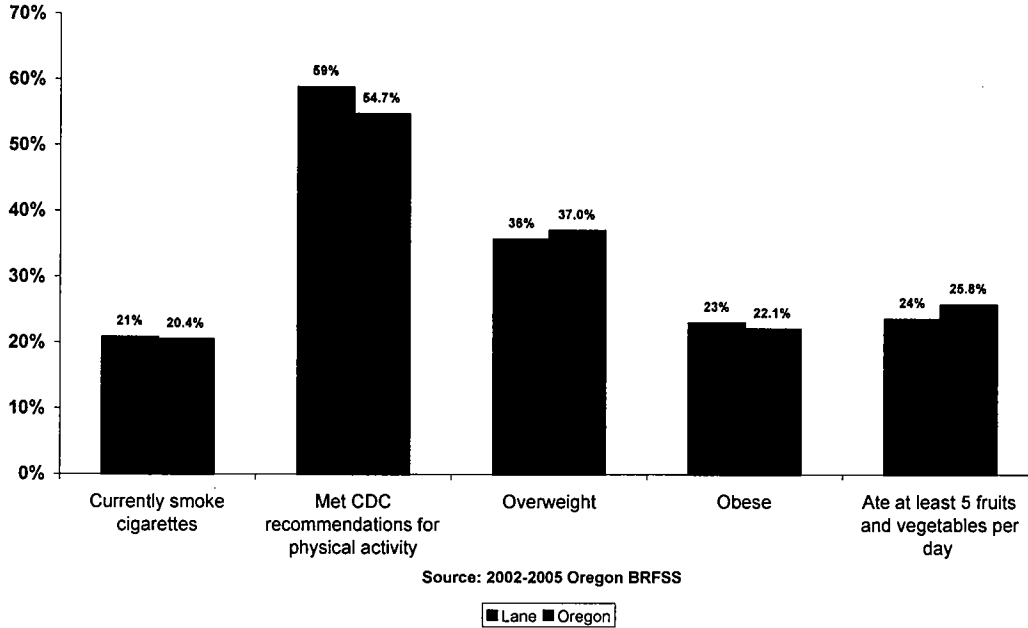
Actual Causes of Death in the United States²



A Snapshot of Tobacco-Related & Other Chronic Diseases in Lane County

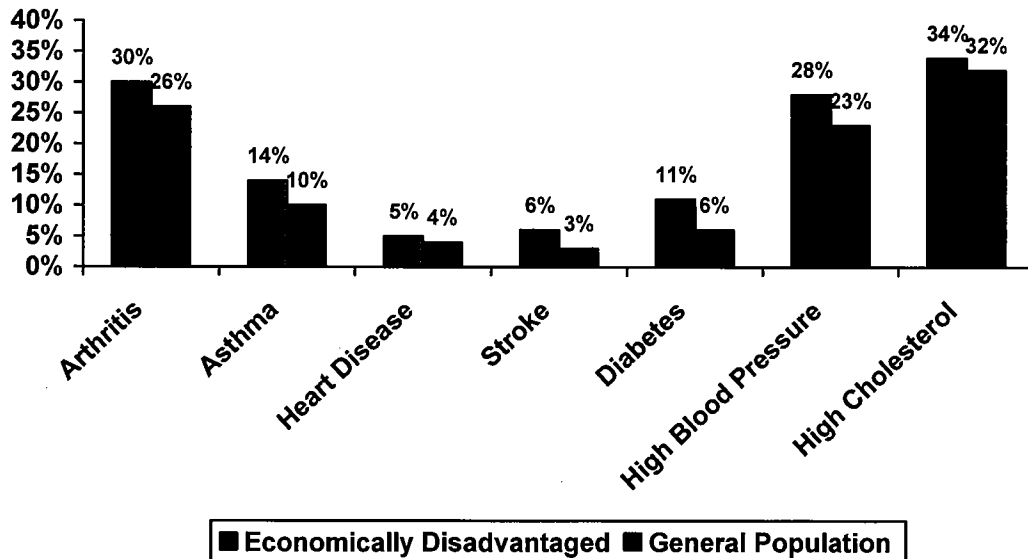
Data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System reveals that Lane County residents are more likely to smoke and be obese and less likely to eat at least 5 fruits and vegetables per day than the rest of the state.

Lane County Chronic Disease Risk Factors



The burden of chronic disease is not distributed equally across our community. People with economic disadvantages (income <100% of Federal Poverty or not completed high school) are more likely to experience chronic diseases and may be less prepared to manage or treat them. Currently 16% of people living in Lane County live in poverty.

Prevalence of Selected Chronic Conditions Among Economically Disadvantaged and the General Population in Oregon, 2005



A Snapshot of Tobacco-Related & Other Chronic Diseases in Lane County

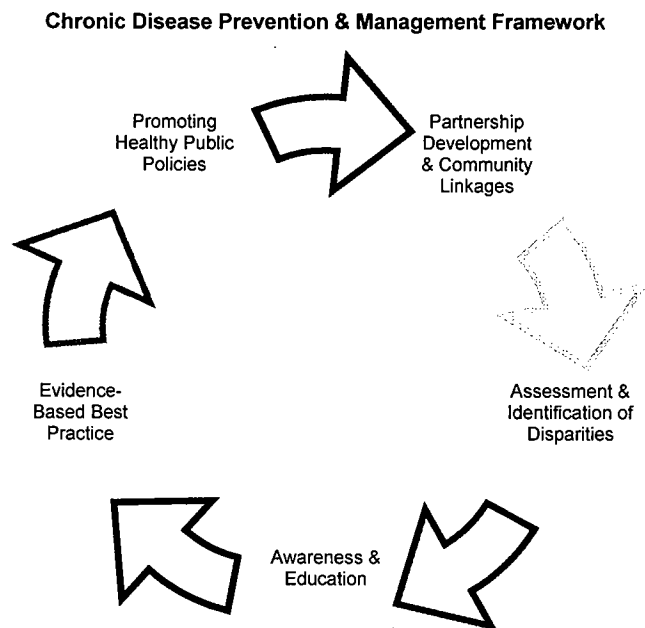
It is difficult to analyze disparities among racial and ethnic subgroups in Lane County due to the relatively small numbers of these populations. Public Health has found, however, that when looked at as a whole, the Non-White population has not experienced the same significant decreases in chronic disease mortality as the White population over the last 16 years.

Beyond the toll on human life, the economic burden of chronic disease is significant. In 2003, \$3.4 billion was spent in the state of Oregon on treating chronic diseases. The impact of lost workdays and lower employee productivity resulted in an annual economic loss in Oregon of \$13.1 billion in 2003.³

Tobacco use alone plays a significant role in the prevalence and cost of chronic diseases. Each year in Lane County, tobacco use causes:

- 636 deaths
- 12,431 serious illnesses
- Over \$100.3 million to be spent on medical care for tobacco-related illnesses
- Over \$101.2 million to be spent on lost productivity due to tobacco-related deaths.⁴

Impacting the factors that contribute to chronic diseases is critical to reducing the prevalence of chronic disease. The first step is building capacity in the community to assess the burden of chronic disease and identify disparities or areas of need. This information can then be used to build awareness and motivate action that is based on evidence-based best practices ultimately producing policies and environments that promote health and reduce disease.



Funds from the “Addressing the Prevention, Early Detection, and Management of Chronic Diseases in Lane County” grant will support community chronic disease assessment, planning and outreach activities by building capacity within Public Health and the community. Partners will provide input on a community-wide assessment of chronic disease and a strategic plan based on best practices. Together, these outputs and partnerships will significantly improve Lane County’s ability to advance the policies and environmental changes necessary to address the root causes of chronic disease in our community.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. *Profiling the Leading Causes of Death in the United States: Oregon*. November, 2005. Accessed January 22, 2008. <<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/publications/factsheets/ChronicDisease>>; Death Certificate Data: Oregon Department of Human Services, Center for Health Statistics, Accessed January 22, 2008.

² McGinnis JM, Foege WH. Actual causes of death in the United States. *JAMA* 1993; 270:2207–12.

³ DeVol R., Armen B. *An Unhealthy America: The Economic Burden of Chronic Disease*, Milken Institute, October 2007. Accessed January 22, 2008. <http://www.chronicdiseaseimpact.com/state_sheet/OR.pdf>

⁴ Oregon Tobacco Prevention and Education Program, *Lane County Fact Sheet, 2007*. April 2007. Accessed January 22, 2008 <<http://oregon.gov/DHS/ph/tobacco/2007countydatasheets/a07LaneCoTobData.pdf>>