

Annual Report from LWVSFC Community Health Study  
April 14, 2024

This study, approved at Annual Meeting in 2023, is a two-year project aimed at producing an actionable position from which our League can promote best practices in the complex field of Community Health. You may recall that the study was originally titled "Public Health" and was proposed to replace our current position on the Indigent Health Fund, which no longer exists. Our committee decided on the title change because it better reflects the responsibilities of our local governments. Our preliminary research indicated that the four major local governments in Santa Fe County (City of Santa Fe, Santa Fe County, Santa Fe Public Schools, and Santa Fe Community College) are engaged in community health programs, either because they provide services in these areas, or because they train providers or even use such services. We will provide background papers on these local governments and their relevance.

Our working definition of community health refers to the non-clinical approaches for improving health, preventing disease, and reducing health disparities. Our first big find was that the social determinants of health, those nonmedical factors that influence health outcomes, should be our main focus. This emerged from several basic sources of information including the US Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization, as well as from a few preliminary local interviews. We have identified a long list of the social determinants of health, among which we will identify our local targets, partly because of local needs and partly because of the backgrounds and interests of our study group.

Our group consists of seven members, five of whom have studied or worked in healthcare. We have produced a project plan and timeline as well as a working definition of community health. These are living documents that we keep updated as we move along. We have accumulated several background plans, reports, and studies, some local, and we are awaiting others, such as the county's updated Health Action Plan, a five-year plan due out soon. We have files in a Google docs drive, which allows us to share documents, even as we conduct interviews and meetings. Will technological wonders never cease!

Our committee members have conducted two interviews with key officials of the city and county, and we are now setting about interviewing managers at lower levels of our four local governments, as well as collecting relevant plans and reports from all of them.

We aim to produce background papers for the LWVSFC membership that will serve as the foundation for our consensus questions and meetings. The questions will present choices for members to determine the components of our position, framed as "Should the League support [or oppose] ...?" Each will feature pros and cons drawn from our research and supported by the background papers. These papers and questions will be distributed online by Constant Contact, just as the content of the Voter is done these days. Local League members will be able to download them. Consensus meetings will be for members only.

Our local position, based on study and consensus, will emerge from this process, but there may be other outcomes as well, such as recommendations for advocacy and for further study. This topic is large and complex, and we want to ensure that our initial focus is on components that matter most to our local population. We are excited about the possibilities this study presents,

and we hope all LWVSFC members will engage with our information and participate in the consensus process enthusiastically.

Jody Larson and Judy Williams, Co-Chairs  
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