

## San Diegans Encouraged To Give Input At Major Community Health Forum

*Public Invited to Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention and Treatment Public Forum*

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The American Heart Association is encouraging San Diegans around the county to make their voice heard at the Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention and Treatment Public Forum. The Forum, slated for March 25, 2004 from 4 to 6:30 p.m., will feature expert panelists and other health advocates looking for public input on the direction of a state-appointed Task Force.

The Forum will be held at the UCSD Medical Center Auditorium, located in the main hospital, 200 W. Arbor Drive (near Front Street and First Avenue) in San Diego's Hillcrest neighborhood. Parking is available in the multi-storied parking structure on Arbor Drive.

Established by the recent passage of AB 1220 (Berg), the *California Heart Disease and Stroke Task Force* is responsible for developing a strategic plan to address the prevention and treatment of heart disease and stroke - the state's #1 and #3 leading causes of death. The completion of a comprehensive master plan will make California eligible for millions of dollars of federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC) funds dedicated to advancing the campaign against heart disease and stroke in communities across the country.

Heart Disease and stroke touch the lives of countless San Diegans. These devastating diseases transcend gender, age and cultural background. All San Diegans are encouraged to participate in this important policy discussion.

Panelists and the public will have the opportunity to answer five key questions that will provide critical local input to the Task Force and shape the direction of the master plan. The purpose of the master plan is to reduce morbidity, mortality and the economic burden of heart disease and stroke in California.

Invited panelists will include representatives from medicine, healthcare, public health, funding agencies, business, urban planning, schools, nutrition and more. Input from the San Diego forum will be compiled with information from seven other forums held around the state in a comprehensive report submitted to the Task Force.

The Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention and Treatment Forum is sponsored by the California Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program (CHDSP) and the California Department of Health Services, and is made possible by the support of underwriters like the American Heart Association, Kaiser Permanente and an unrestricted educational grant from AstraZeneca.

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