

Mendonoma Health Alliance surveys community needs

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Community health needs are being surveyed by the recently-formed Mendonoma Health Alliance, so it can prepare a strategic plan to bring better coordinated health care to this area. The alliance has articulated four core programs: prevention and wellness, emergency care services, chronic disease management and access to specialty care in the rural area.

Two community forums are set in April about the alliance, its strategic plan and other local health care issues.

Redwood Coast Medical Services, Coast Life Support District and St.



Claire Freson and Bonnie Noble introduced the Mendonoma Health Alliance at Saturday's Community Wellness Resource Fair sponsored by Redwood Coast Medical Services.

Joseph Health (which owns Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital) formed the alliance last year to work together and with other community partners to improve local access to quality healthcare, health-related education and prevention services.

MHA network director Bonnie Noble told the ICO the alliance has already applied for two grants, and is currently working on another grant application. One of the possible grants would bring in wide range of local community groups: RCMS, Action Network, Coastal Seniors, Project Sanctuary, the local So-roptimist chapter, Point Arena High School and

Sonoma Indian Health.

Noble said MHA acts as a "convener" to pull all groups together so they can benefit from such funding opportunities.

The MHA solicited responses to the current survey at last month's Community Wellness Fair in Gualala. According to Noble, results from the current survey will be combined with information from previous studies and surveys conducted by RCMS and CLSD, as the planning group works to prepare its strategic plan. She said a total of about 50 surveys had been returned so far, including the ones turned at the

wellness fair and others distributed by members of the planning group to on-line communities.

Community forums will be held in two towns. In Gualala, it will be held on Tuesday, April 4, 6 p.m., at the Gualala Community Center. A second forum will be held Sunday, April 9, 2 p.m., at the Coast Community Library in downtown Point Arena. All are welcome to both forums, which will include refreshments.

Noble asked community members to answer the community health needs assessment online at www.surveymonkey.com/r/MHA_CHNA_2017.