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News from the Valley's Integrated Health Community



Finding Local Health Statistics is Easy Thanks to HARCSearch

By Desert Health

Do you ever wonder how many local people share your medical condition? Or are you a non-profit validating the need for your services for a grant application? Are you a teacher or student researching the socioeconomic profile of our local population? Or are you an employer wondering how the health of your employees stacks up to others?

Answers to these questions are now easier to find thanks to HARC, the Health Assessment Resource Center, which has recently launched a free online database to make this information user-friendly and accessible to all.

HARC compiles health statistics in Eastern Riverside County and the Coachella Valley every three years. HARCSearch provides current data on health and quality of life indicators for our community. This easy-to-use searchable database expands knowledge about the prevalence of local disease and mental health indicators, as well as the use of health prevention measures; supports public health and security planning; and aids businesses to meet customers' needs.

"Six months after launching the program, we surveyed how the database was helping our local community and businesses," said HARC CEO, Eileen Packer. "We determined that 53 non-profits had used our information to receive a total of \$4.7 million in grant funding." Educators can use it for classroom reports and projects, and health care providers can use it for business development.

The data is collected through extensive confidential telephone surveys conducted in both Spanish and English and presented in a clear tabular format that can be broken down by a range of demographics such as age, ethnicity, gender and income. Categories include searches that can be done by Eastern Riverside County or the Coachella Valley exclusively. Results from data compiled in 2007 and 2010 are currently available online and results of its 2013 Community Health Monitor survey will be added early 2014.

The data can tell you how many people have health care coverage, or who uses preventive measures; the percentage of people suffering from major disease; and even lifestyle considerations such as how many people drink alcohol, use drugs or take nutritional supplements.

"HARC is proud to present this resource," Packer adds. "It's a virtual desktop library open to all that fills a gap in knowledge about health and quality of life right here in the Coachella Valley and Eastern Riverside County."

Formed in 2006 by a consortium of more than 35 public and private healthcare agencies, HARC is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization funded in part by contributions from community partners, as well as entities that contract with the agency for customized public health research.

Start your search by visiting: www.harcddata.org. For more information, contact HARC at (760) 404-1945.