Greetings!

As we begin 2012, the National Forum would like to thank you for your support of the organization. We are grateful for your expertise, enthusiasm, and hard work. Without your help, the National Forum would not have been able to accomplish the following in 2011:

2011 National Forum Accomplishments:

- **Restructured for Effectiveness.** A restructuring plan was implemented in January 2011 to increase efficiencies and achieve greater effectiveness. The Board of Directors (BOD) was streamlined, Activity Teams were formed with milestone documents in place, staff were hired and focused, and WebEx and SharePoint were initiated to increase communication between members.

- **Increased Member Engagement.** Over the past 18 months, organizational members have increased their participation in National Forum activities, including Cohort Calls, webinars, live and virtual meetings, and one-to-one conversations with leadership.
New Members Added. Sixteen (16) new member organizations were added, including the National Forum’s first private-sector companies, first non-cardio focused organization, and several other nonprofits, which include: sanofi, C-Change, the American Public Health Association (APHA), the American College of Cardiology as well as others.

First Health Reform Webinar. The National Forum provided awareness to members by holding its first policy education webinar with a focus on protection of the National Prevention Fund with presentations by Dr. Ursula Bauer of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Richard Hamburg of Trust for America’s Health (TFAH).

IOM Surveillance Report 101 Webinar. The National Forum presented a webinar in September on the impact of the IOM surveillance recommendations on population health. Presenters included Dr. Thomas Pearson (University of Rochester), Dr. Steve Sidney (Kaiser Permanente), Robert Merritt (CDC) and Dr. Diane Bild (NHLBI).

9th National Forum. Transforming Leadership, Policy and Practice: A Partnership of Leaders was the theme of this year’s annual meeting which was successful in educating and providing networking and collaboration opportunities to the more than 130 participants from more than 50 organizations.

Leadership Roundtable. The 2011 National Forum Leadership Roundtable at the American Heart Association (AHA) Scientific Sessions created a “space and place” for a multi-sector input session addressing sodium reduction. 41 individuals representing 12 organizational members and 12 academic/health care systems attended. Dr. Thomas Pearson (University of Rochester), Dr. Larry Appel (John Hopkins), Kim Stitzel (AHA), Ed Gregg (CDC), and Doug Blanke (Public Health Law Center) presented as well as helped lead small group discussions around the implementation of the IOM Sodium Reduction recommendations.

National Forum as Partner. The National Forum joined several groups, including the National Salt Reduction Initiative (NSRI), the National Quality Forum (NQF), and the NCD Alliance. In addition, Keith Mason, National Forum Executive Director, was asked to participate as a member of the NQF Population Health Steering Committee, at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) Advocacy Workshop, and a variety of other national initiatives.

New Board Members. The National Forum added its first for-profit members to the Board of Directors with the addition of Laura Gordon of Edelman and Dr. Marty Kohn from IBM.

2020 Goal and Strategic Priorities. The National Forum launched its 2020 Goal and Strategic Priorities to focus and support the work of the organization and its members in alignment with environmental trends, as well as the National Forum’s Public Health Action Plan to Prevent Heart Disease and Stroke.

I look forward to an exciting 2012 as we move toward the achievement of our 2020 Goal and Strategic Priorities along with the other projects in our portfolio.

Warm regards,

Keith

Cohort Calls

The National Forum Cohort Calls provide an opportunity for five teams of twelve members in the heart disease and stroke prevention community to share major initiatives, discuss relevant topics, and highlight partnership opportunities within a group setting. By participating, members can achieve greater results by maximizing different pieces of information, collaborate to obtain greater impact, and scale and sustain policy and programmatic initiatives to reach an optimal audience. Cohort Calls will be conducted three times per year – March, July and November. Franz Fanuka, National Forum Initiatives Director, will send out meeting notices to organizational contacts in the near-term to schedule the 2012 Cohort Calls.
Two Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Events - Same Day, Same Location

Join WomenHeart and Million Hearts in a Special Presentation

Plan to join WomenHeart: The National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease for a special presentation about the Million Hearts campaign on Wednesday, January 18 from 8:30am – 10:00am EST at the National Press Club, 529 14th Street NW, Washington, DC.

Million Hearts – a joint initiative of the Centers for Disease Control and the Centers for Medicare Services to prevent 1 million deaths from heart disease and stroke over the next five years -- is the most ambitious public health effort of this century. Don't miss this informative presentation. Learn about the opportunities to be involved!

Lisa Tate, CEO of WomenHeart, invites you to hear Janet Wright, MD, Executive Director of Million Hearts and her staff brief attendees about the campaign and the exciting activities to date. Ways to improve the health and productivity of women through empowerment and a focus on the ABCS (aspirin, blood pressure, cholesterol and smoking cessation) will be presented. Dr. Wright is particularly interested in discussing how organizations would like to be involved in this landmark initiative!

Please RSVP by January 13, 2012 by clicking here.

National Forum Policy Action Gathering

The National Forum invites you to its inaugural Policy Action Gathering, “Translating Clinical Preventive Services Into Coverage for Essential Health Benefits and Exchanges” to be held January 18, 2012 from 10:30am - 2:30pm EST at the National Press Club, 529 14th Street NW, Washington, DC.

The Policy Action Gathering will follow the WomenHeart and Million Hearts event. It will convene policy, advocacy and key cardiovascular stakeholders to identify and develop an advocacy plan to ensure heart disease and stroke prevention preventative services are translated into covered benefits in Essential Health Benefits and Exchanges.

The agenda is as follows:

Welcome and Introductions
Jill Birnbaum, VP State Advocacy and Public Health, American Heart Association
Franz Fanuka, Initiatives Director, National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention

Health Reform Update
Stephanie Mohl, Government Relations Manager, American Heart Association

IOM Essential Health Benefits Recommendations
Paul Fronstin, Senior Research Associate and Director Health Research and Education, Employee Benefit Research Institute

State Health Exchanges Update
Joy Johnson Wilson, Health Policy Director and Senior Federal Affairs Counsel, National Conference of State Legislatures

Networking Lunch

Aspirin Counseling – National Coverage Determination Case Study
Jason Spangler, MD, Chief Medical Officer, Partnership for Prevention
National Forum Strategic Priority: Cardiovascular Surveillance System

A National Forum Surveillance Action Plan Strategy has been developed by the Surveillance Activity Team. The Team agreed that the National Forum would focus on three of the nine IOM Surveillance recommendations:

- The US Department of Health and Human Services establish and provide adequate resources for a standing national working group to oversee and coordinate the CV and chronic pulmonary disease surveillance activity;
- The national working group place priorities for surveillance on data systems that can track, evaluate, enable policy, improve outcomes, monitor results and improve disparities; and
- The Secretary HHS shall designate a federal office with the following responsibilities; produce reports, assure data is available to users, and implement working group recommendations.

The Team has developed seven surveillance strategic initiatives including the development of a National Forum Sign On Letter and Million Hearts article advocating for implementation of the IOM surveillance recommendations by cardiovascular community stakeholders.

National Forum Strategic Priority: Achieve Health Equity and Eliminate Cardiovascular Disparities

In order to achieve the Strategic Priority above, the National Forum will work over the next several months to develop a plan of action to motivate members and additional external stakeholders to address very specific tasks toward the goal. Key thought leaders have been invited to attend an inaugural Health Equity Advisory Meeting in February. Dr. Paul Underwood, Boston Scientific, will help lead this effort.

National Forum Strategic Priority: Reduce Sodium Intake

The National Forum is currently working to determine its role in reducing sodium intake in the US and will announce a plan of action over the next couple of months with the assistance of the lead for the activity, Monika Davis, American Heart Association.

In the meantime, members are asked to examine the CDC procurement guidelines in comparison to their own organization’s procurement policy to ensure alignment and maximum health. To access the guide, visit: Improving the Food Environment Through Nutrition Standards: A Guide for Government Procurement.

The National Salt Reduction Initiative (NSRI) is looking for new members. The National Forum is a member and recommends each of our members join this worthy endeavor. To find out more information, click here.

Final Reminder!!!!!!! The FDA and USDA have established a docket to solicit comments, data, and information on approaches to reducing sodium consumption. Comments are due by January 27. The formal docket requests information from the public, scientists, and the food industry on 15 specific topics. The docket can be found by clicking here. Resources to assist you in formulating your docket comments can be found by clicking here. We ask that each Member | Individual review the docket and determine how you and your organization will respond to the request for comments by January 27.
Million Hearts

Preventing 1 million heart attacks and strokes in the next five years will require the work and commitment to change from all of us. Forging strong partnerships is key to the success of Million Hearts. There are steps that National Forum members can take to reach this goal as a nation:

- **PHARMACIES AND PHARMACISTS**
- **INDIVIDUALS**
- **HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS**
- **CONSUMER, COMMUNITY, AND PATIENT ORGANIZATIONS**
- **EMPLOYERS AND PRIVATE-SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS**
- **HOSPITALS AND HEALTH CARE ORGANIZATIONS**

To get involved in Million Hearts, click [here](#).

**Member Spotlight**

The January Member Spotlight focuses on the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) and provides a brief interview with Sharon Moffatt, Chief of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention.

**What are the key activities of ASTHO?**
The Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) is a non-profit membership association representing the chiefs of state and territorial health agencies and the more than 100,000 individuals who work for them in all 50 states, five U.S. territories, three freely associated states, and the District of Columbia. ASTHO’s primary function is to assess, evaluate, and advise members on the impact and formation of policy with specific focus on providing guidance and technical assistance to its members to improve the nation’s health.

**How do these activities help prevent heart disease and stroke?**
ASTHO is one of the founding organizations of the National Forum on Heart Disease and Stroke. We are committed to the National Forum’s goal that “heart disease and stroke will no longer be the leading cause of death for all Americans by 2020.” ASTHO actively promotes the Million Hearts™ initiative, supports state efforts to reduce salt consumption, helps states improve stroke systems of care, and continuously enhances the linkages between public health and health care providers.

**Why do you partner with other organizations?**
ASTHO’s work is supported by its members; senior state and territorial health agency leadership, including senior deputies; an Alumni Society of former health officials; a network of 20 affiliates; eight policy committees; and its staff. ASTHO provides expert technical assistance by drawing on evidence based research including the Guide to Community Preventive Services and the Guide to Clinical Preventive Services and shares best practices among states and territories.

**Who are some of your partners?**
The national Million Hearts™ initiative offers an important platform for ASTHO members to bring attention to the opportunities to prevent heart attacks and strokes over the next five years. Health officials can advance policy and highlight the “ABCS” of prevention (Aspirin for people at risk, Blood pressure control, Cholesterol management and Smoking cessation) as the lead spokesperson on health in their states. Importantly, state and territorial health officials can link the expertise and resources of public health with health care providers, insurers, and clinical and hospital care settings. Additionally, ASTHO provides technical assistance to our members to advance strategies for enhanced stroke systems of care and sodium reduction.
**Enhanced Stroke Systems of Care**

ASTHO, with CDC’s Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, is building the capacity of state and territorial health agencies to deliver comprehensive stroke systems of care. ASTHO recently funded the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and the North Carolina Division of Public Health to support the development and implementation of state plans for coordinated, comprehensive stroke care. These plans ensure quality care along the continuum of prevention, identification, and treatment of stroke to reduce death and disability, eliminate disparities in delivery of care, and assure access to care. Both states use the Paul Coverdell National Acute Stroke Registry and leveraged various partnerships and existing structures for health care delivery change. Their experiences serve as models to other states:

- The MDPH built upon its success in pre-hospital and hospital stroke collaborative quality improvement, statewide partnerships, and its evidence-based Stroke Heroes Act FAST media campaign for recognition of stroke signs and symptoms.
- The North Carolina Division of Public Health used infrastructure already in place through the North Carolina Stroke Advisory Council of the Justus-Warren Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Task Force to develop a system of stroke care.

ASTHO helped both states document their process for developing stroke systems of care plans to be used as models for other states. These resources are available by clicking [here](#).

**Sodium Reduction**

ASTHO, in collaboration with CDC’s Division for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, has actively engaged in several activities to raise the awareness of sodium levels in foods and sodium’s impact on heart disease and stroke.

- In 2009, ASTHO convened key national stakeholders to develop a national strategy and action plan to reduce sodium in foods. This summit led to targeted support to states to increase awareness of the impact of sodium on heart health.
- ASTHO engaged state and territorial health officials in the 2010 CDC Public Law Forum on Sodium Reduction.
- In 2011, ASTHO hosted a series of “Salt and Your State” webinars, which featured national, state and local sodium reduction policies and best practices to provide recommendations for public health leadership.
- Currently, ASTHO is working with several states to further their work on sodium reduction and will provide intensive technical assistance on various policy options for sodium reduction, especially the development for nutrition standards in procurement policies.

For more information about ASTHO’s sodium project and to view archives of the webinars, click [here](#).

**Volunteer Member Opportunities**

The National Forum is looking for members to serve on its Board Committees. The committees include Corporate Operations and Finance, Governance, Development, and Mission. If interested, please contact Franz Fanuka.

**Member Updates and Happenings**

- The American College of Occupational & Environmental Medicine will present a Public Policy Briefing on The Prospects for Occupational and Environmental Medicine in 2012. This teleconference is January 13, 2012 from Noon to 1:00pm ET. For more information, click [here](#).

- The American Stroke Association’s International Stroke Conference 2012 is February 1-3, 2012 at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, New Orleans, Louisiana. For more information, click [here](#).

- The American Heart Association’s National Wear Red Day is February 3, 2012. For more information, click [here](#).

- The Association of Black Cardiologists and the Cardiovascular Research Technologies are presenting Disparities in
Interventional Cardiology, February 6, 2012 at the Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington DC. For more information, click [here](#).

• The American College of Cardiology 61st Annual Scientific Session & Expo (ACC.12) is March 24-27, 2012 in Chicago, Illinois. For more information, click [here](#).

• The American Society of Hypertension 2012 Annual Scientific Meeting & Exposition is May 19-22, 2012 at the Hilton New York in New York City, New York. For more information, click [here](#).

• The National Conference of State Legislators, 2012 NCSL Legislative Summit is August 6-9, 2012 in Chicago, Illinois. Registration opens February 1, 2012. For more information, click [here](#).

**About the Newsletter**

The Action Update newsletter, a bi-monthly publication, provides regular updates about the organization, our strategic priorities and initiatives important to our members and key stakeholders. Please send happenings, news briefs, updates, etc., to [Julie Harvill](#).

**Newsletter Archives**

To view archives of past issues, click [here](#).

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