

Health Services Agency Develops 'Wellness Directory' For Public

There's a free, simple, Healthstyle self-test that Nancy Shanfeld believes you should take both to determine and to improve your prospects for a long, healthy life.

Who's Nancy Shanfeld?

She's health educator in the county Health Services Agency headed by Elinor Hall.

Part of her job is to alert the public to ways in which the HSA works to reduce health risks by helping people improve their health habits.

The Healthstyle self-test is based upon recognition of that fact that lifestyle is one of the most important factors affecting health.

If you flunk any part of the test - and it is certain many of you will - the HSA has available for you, also free of charge, a directory that may be used as a personal guide to wellness and a long life.

The directory is called, appropriately, the Wellness Directory. It lists the countywide resources to reduce health risks: the agencies and programs to seek out to help with particular problems.

But first, take the Healthstyle self-test. This is contained in the Wellness Directory. The test covers seven categories of lifestyle through which you can determine for yourself what your future health prospects are. The categories are: cigarette smoking, alcohol and drugs, eating habits, exercise and fitness, stress control, safety.

Failure to pass the test in any of these categories should be taken as a sharp warning to change your lifestyle - and thus your healthstyle - in a hurry.

The directory was compiled and pro-

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duced by the HSA, with credits given to Melinda Uipi for conducting the health education-risk reduction survey, Nancy Shanfeld for her supportive supervision of the project, and Doris Drew.

The directory notes:

"Since the cost of sick care has risen so dramatically in recent years, we have begun to study ways to help people stay well. According to a 1979 Surgeon General's "Report on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention," medical care can contribute only 10 percent to improving health status, while the remaining 90 percent will be determined by environmental, economic and personal health styles."

The HSA asserts that unhealthy lifestyles can be changed. It reports that a survey for the American Hospital Association found that half those people who participated in health education programs changed their health habits.

"When we look at the things related to longterm illness and leading causes of death, we recognize poor lifestyles," the report states. Among these are listed:

- poor physical fitness
- obesity

- smoking
- excessive use of alcohol
- drug abuse
- poor stress management
- accident risks
- uncontrolled high blood pressure

Countywide, there are resources and programs dealing with the main factors and causes of death. The directory lists 91 places where help can be found with one or more of the problems, ranging from alcohol through stress reduction and accident prevention.

For example, Community Hospital of Santa Cruz is listed as providing programs on exercise, obesity, smoking and stress. Dominican Santa Cruz Hospital is listed as providing programs on alcohol, exercise, hypertension, obesity, smoking, stress and accident prevention. At both hospitals bilingual services are provided.

You can also get much information on accident prevention from the Department of Motor Vehicles both in Capitola and Watsonville, the directory shows.

The Dawson Learning Center helps with alcohol and drugs, the Counseling Center and the Janus Recovery Inc. help with alcohol.

Some 91 places are listed in the directory, along with the precise services provided, whether the program is free or charges a fee.

"We developed the Wellness Directory to encourage people to take responsibility for changing their unhealthy habits or lifestyles," Nancy Shanfeld says. "The directory shows the services available.

To get the directory free, call Nancy Shanfeld at the HSA at 425-2251.