Oklahoma 2010-11 Public Policy Agenda

The American Heart Association is a national voluntary health organization whose mission is to reduce disability and death from cardiovascular diseases and stroke. Cardiovascular disease ranks as the number one cause of death in Oklahoma and nationally. Stroke ranks as the third greatest cause of death in Oklahoma and nationally is a leading cause of disability.

Tobacco Control: Tobacco use is a major cause of disability and death in the United States. More than 400,000 American smokers die each year from their habit, and tens of thousands of nonsmokers die from inhaling secondhand smoke. The crisis continues as more than 3,000 American children start smoking every day. The American Heart Association is committed to reducing the consumption of tobacco products among youth and adults; expanding protections of the public from secondhand smoke and supports the implementation of fully funded comprehensive tobacco prevention and control programs.

To decrease the use of tobacco in Oklahoma and the deadly impact of secondhand smoke, the AHA will work to enact a comprehensive statewide smoke-free work place law that would protect all workers in the state.

Obesity Prevention: 30.6% of adult Oklahomans and 16.4% of Oklahoma’s children are overweight or obese and the rate of obesity among Oklahomans has doubled since 1990. According to a recent report released by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Oklahoma ranked 6th among the number of obese adults; we tied for 22nd for the number of blacks who are obese; and ranked 15th in the number of obese Latinos.

We will be supporting legislation to create a task force to examine clarifying liability rules for the use of school owned recreational facilities by other government and non-governmental entities for the purpose of physical activity.

We will be supporting legislation to require nutrition standards that are consistent with the beverage and snack guidelines for the Healthy Schools Program or with other appropriate scientific standards and eliminating trans- fats in schools.

Acute Cardiovascular Care: Stroke is the 3rd leading cause of death in the United States and is the #1 disabler. Every year, approximately 795,000 people have a stroke or experience a recurrent stroke across the country. Every 40 seconds someone in this country has a stroke. It is imperative that we work to capture as much data around stroke as we possibly can in order to prevent strokes in the future.

We will be monitoring the efforts to update the current Stroke Systems of Care laws in regards to Primary Stroke Center designations in accordance with Joint Commission standards.

We will also be supporting the use of the Get with the Guidelines data platform for any statewide stroke registry proposals that may arise.

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