

**Loudoun County, Virginia  
Forces of Change Assessment  
July 2009**



In March of 2009, the Loudoun Health Check team conducted a work session with representatives of the Loudoun Health Council to analyze those forces which have the ability to impact the local public health system for the next 3-5 years. This assessment sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is occurring or might occur that affects the health of Loudoun County?
2. What specific threats or opportunities are generated by these occurrences?

The forces are included below, grouped into the following categories: Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Scientific, Legal and Ethical.

### **Political**

- Access to Care
  - New hospital
- Healthcare Reform
  - Cost & access to care issues addressed nationally

### **Economic**

- Access to Care
  - Increase in uninsured & underinsured
  - Increase in self-pay patients
- Aging Population
  - Business & revenue for aging related services
  - Increased volunteerism
- Number of Uninsured Residents Increases
- Decline in Elective Medical Procedures
- Increased Acuity in Patients
- Crime, Theft, and Violence Increases
- Mental Health Issues Increase (Depression, etc)
- Increase in Substance Abuse
- Increase in Homelessness
- Increase in Vacant/Foreclosed Homes
- Lack of Transportation
- Increased Unemployment Rates
- Decrease in Transient Population
- Increase in Identity Theft/Medical Fraud
- Less Emphasis on Emergency Preparedness
- Reorganization and Appropriation of Funding
- Less Focus on Environmental Protection
- Decrease in Public Safety Officers
- Insufficient Childcare Services
- Decrease in Emergency Preparedness and Response EP&R Funding
- Loss of West Nile Virus Program

## **Social**

- Aging Population
  - Increase in chronic diseases
  - Transportation concerns
  - Ability to pay for services
  - Increased need for eldercare
  - Business & revenue for aging related services
  - Increased volunteerism
- Access to Care
  - Increase in Medicare patients
  - Shortages of healthcare staff
- Communicable Diseases
  - Increasing number of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) diagnoses
  - HIV
  - Multidrug Resistant Organisms (MDROs) increase
  - Increase in parents choosing not to vaccinate their children
  - Introduction of novel diseases from international port of entry-Dulles airport (IAD)
- Limited Medical Education
  - Residency & fellowship programs
  - Nursing & allied health schools
- Behavioral Health
  - Increased diagnoses of autism
  - Increase in depression
  - Increase in substance abuse

## **Technological**

- Healthcare Reform
  - Electronic medical records system implementation

## **Environmental**

- Access to Care
  - Expansion of Metro Services into Loudoun County
  - New Hospital
- Communicable Diseases
  - international port of entry-IAD physically located within Loudoun County
  - Food safety and security in jeopardy
  - Continued evolution in food, water, and pool regulations
  - Lyme Disease
- Natural & Manmade Disasters
  - Floods, hurricanes, pandemic flu, acts of terrorism, global warming
- Crime
  - Increased drug & gang activity
- Environmental Protection
  - Septic system concerns
  - Increased development
  - Green/Eco-friendly lifestyle

- Traffic
  - Increased traffic congestion

### **Scientific**

- Access to Care
  - New Vaccines
- Limited Medical Education
  - Limited research & development activities
  - Residency & fellowship programs
  - Nursing & allied health schools
- Accreditation of Local Public Health Departments
- Project Public Health Ready

### **Legal**

- Access to Care
  - Legislation for influenza vaccines
- Healthcare Reform
  - Malpractice reform
- Communicable Diseases
  - Continued evolution in food, water, and pool regulations

### **Ethical**

- Healthcare Reform
  - Exchange of personal records electronically