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## **Health officials to use \$30,000 in battle against diabetes in Perris**

Residents of Perris are getting support as they try and reduce obesity and prevent diabetes and other illnesses through the use of \$30,000 in community improvement funds approved by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors Tuesday.

Diabetes Free Riverside aims to promote healthy nutrition and increase physical activity as a way of reducing the onset of diabetes for residents of Perris, said Susan Harrington, director of the Riverside County Department of Public Health.

The project includes conducting school and community health assessments of children and adults, population screenings, and the development of pilot projects for the prevention of obesity, diabetes, asthma and other chronic diseases in children, teens, adults and older adults in conjunction with current community initiatives such as Live Well Perris.

“Chronic illnesses like diabetes can be devastating to the health of the community and can lead to a variety of issues that can shorten life expectancy,” Harrington said. “We believe that something can be done to lessen the onset of these chronic illnesses, but it will take a collaborative effort like this.”

The money was part of the Community Improvement Designation funds for the Fifth District and overseen by Supervisor Marion Ashley. Ashley said Perris and Jurupa were chosen as the sites of two pilot programs to combat diabetes, high-blood pressure and obesity through better eating and exercising.

“These conditions cause heart and kidney problems, cost people more in health-care expenses and shorten lives,” Ashley said. “This is an important effort and one we really would like to see succeed.”

Ashley said the pilot program fits nicely with the ongoing Live Well Perris health initiative. Key partners will include Claremont Graduate University School of Community and Global Health, Inland Empire Health Plan, UC Riverside School of Medicine, City of Perris and the County of Riverside in partnership with the community.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch stated that the City is excited to be part of the partnership.

“Many of the residents of Perris have already embraced the Live Well Perris initiative and this will provide further opportunities to reach out to the community on these important issues,” he said.