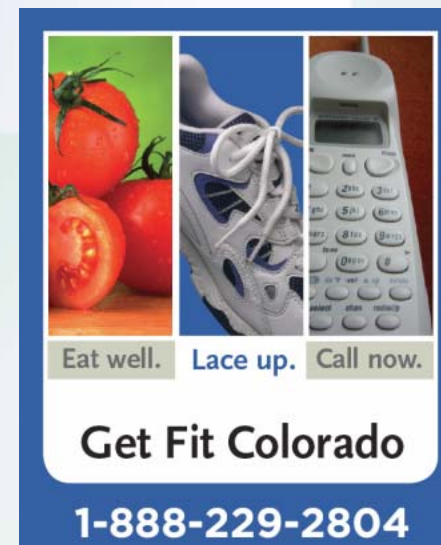


# Get Fit Colorado: A telephone-based weight loss program for rural residents

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# Presentation Outline

- Needs Assessment
- Formative Research
- Development
- Implementation
- Evaluation
- Future Directions

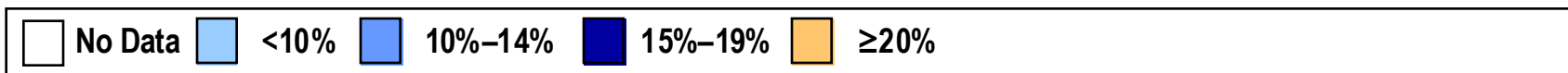
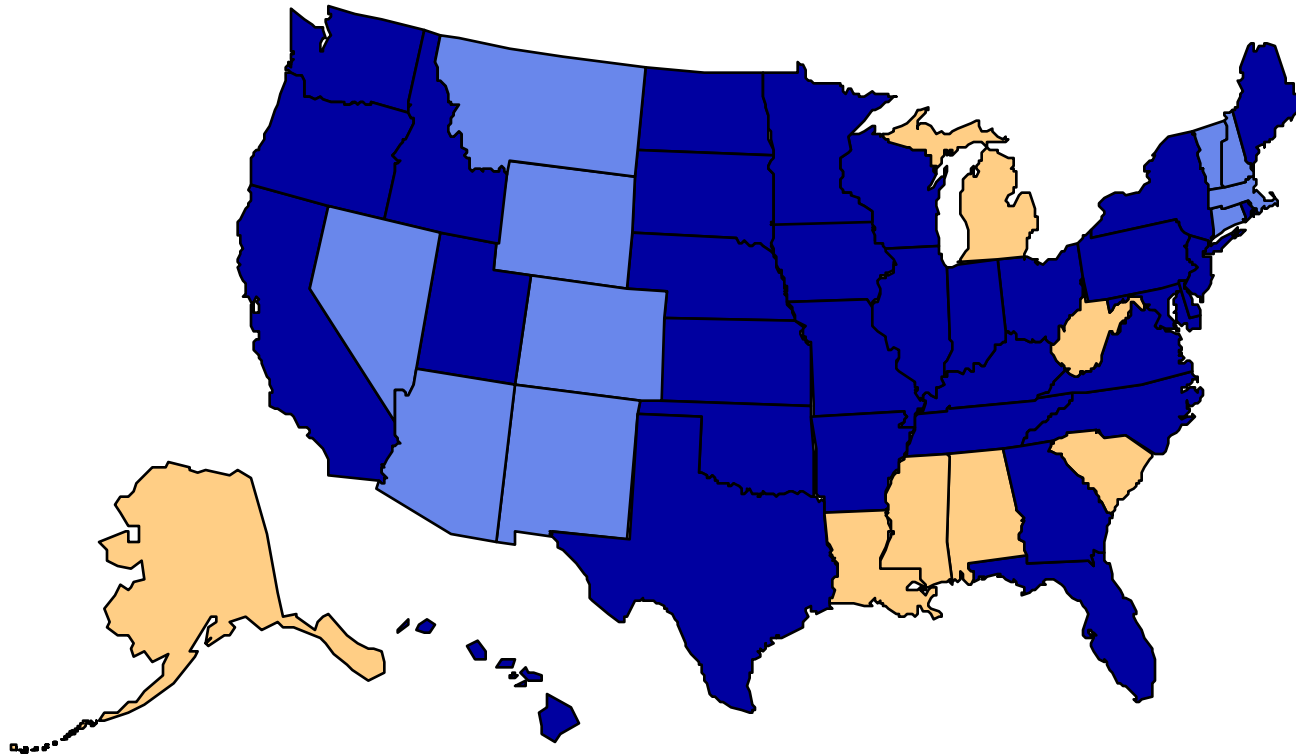
# Overview

- Obesity is a key factor in the leading causes of death, including cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer and asthma
- Weight loss is a primary strategy in the prevention and treatment of these chronic diseases

# Obesity Trends\* Among U.S. Adults

## BRFSS, 1998

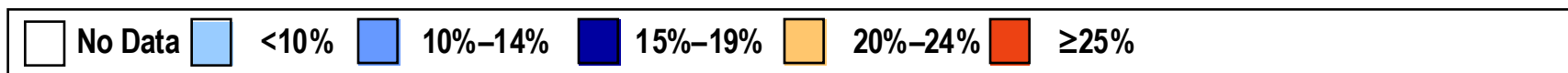
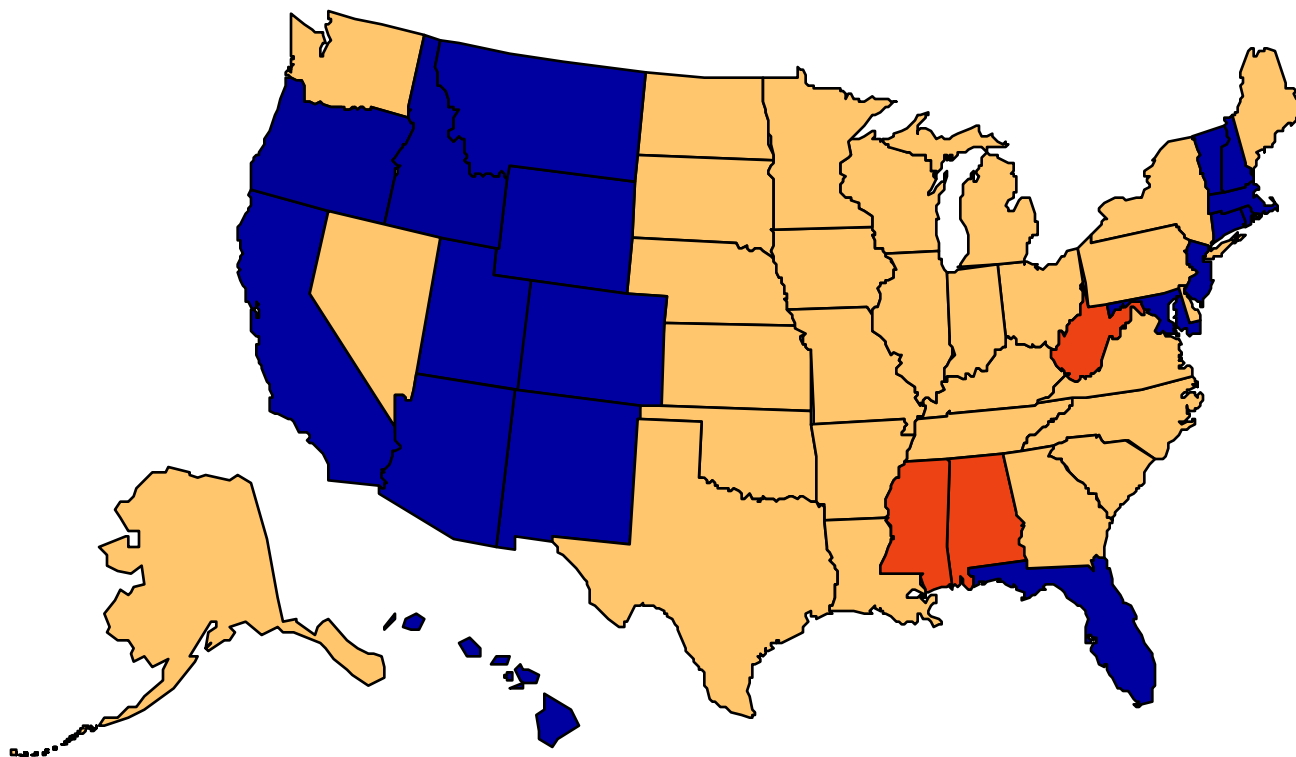
(\*BMI  $\geq 30$ , or ~ 30 lbs. overweight for 5' 4" person)



# Obesity Trends\* Among U.S. Adults

## BRFSS, 2002

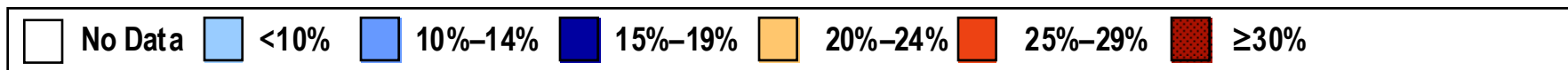
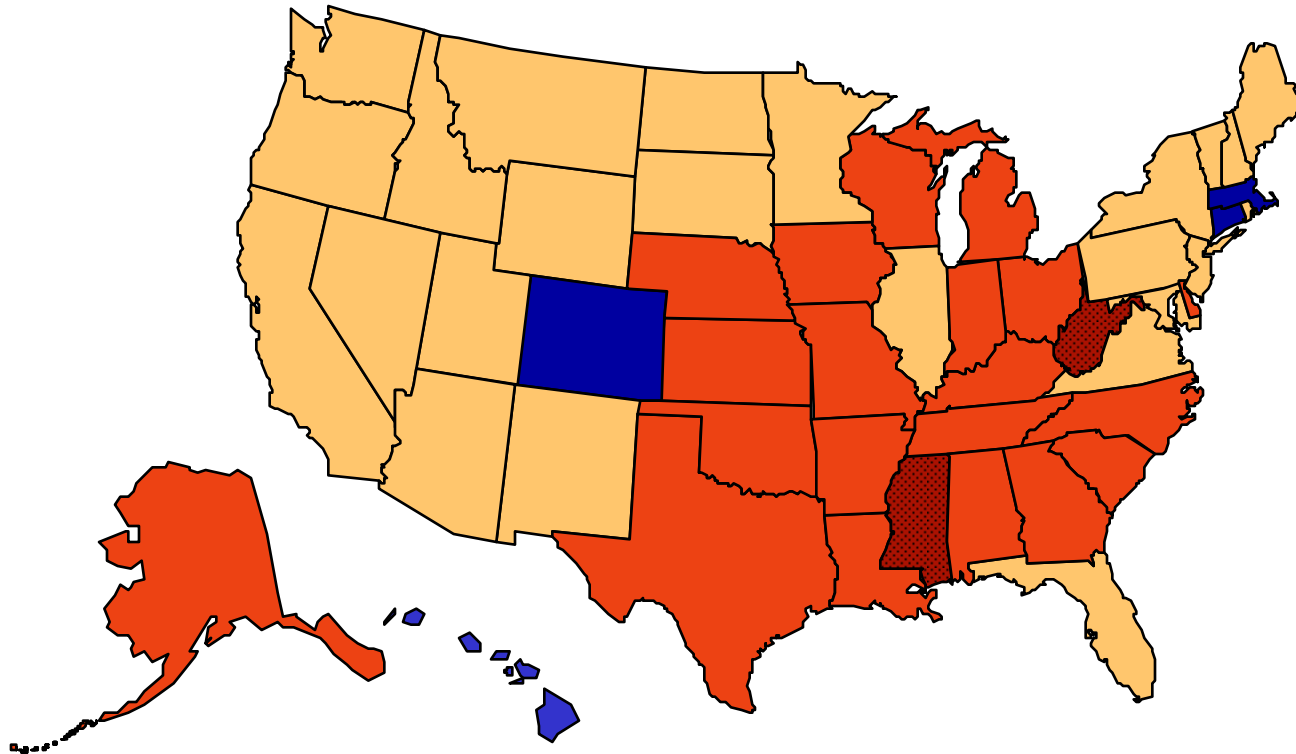
(\*BMI  $\geq 30$ , or  $\sim 30$  lbs. overweight for 5' 4" person)



# Obesity Trends\* Among U.S. Adults

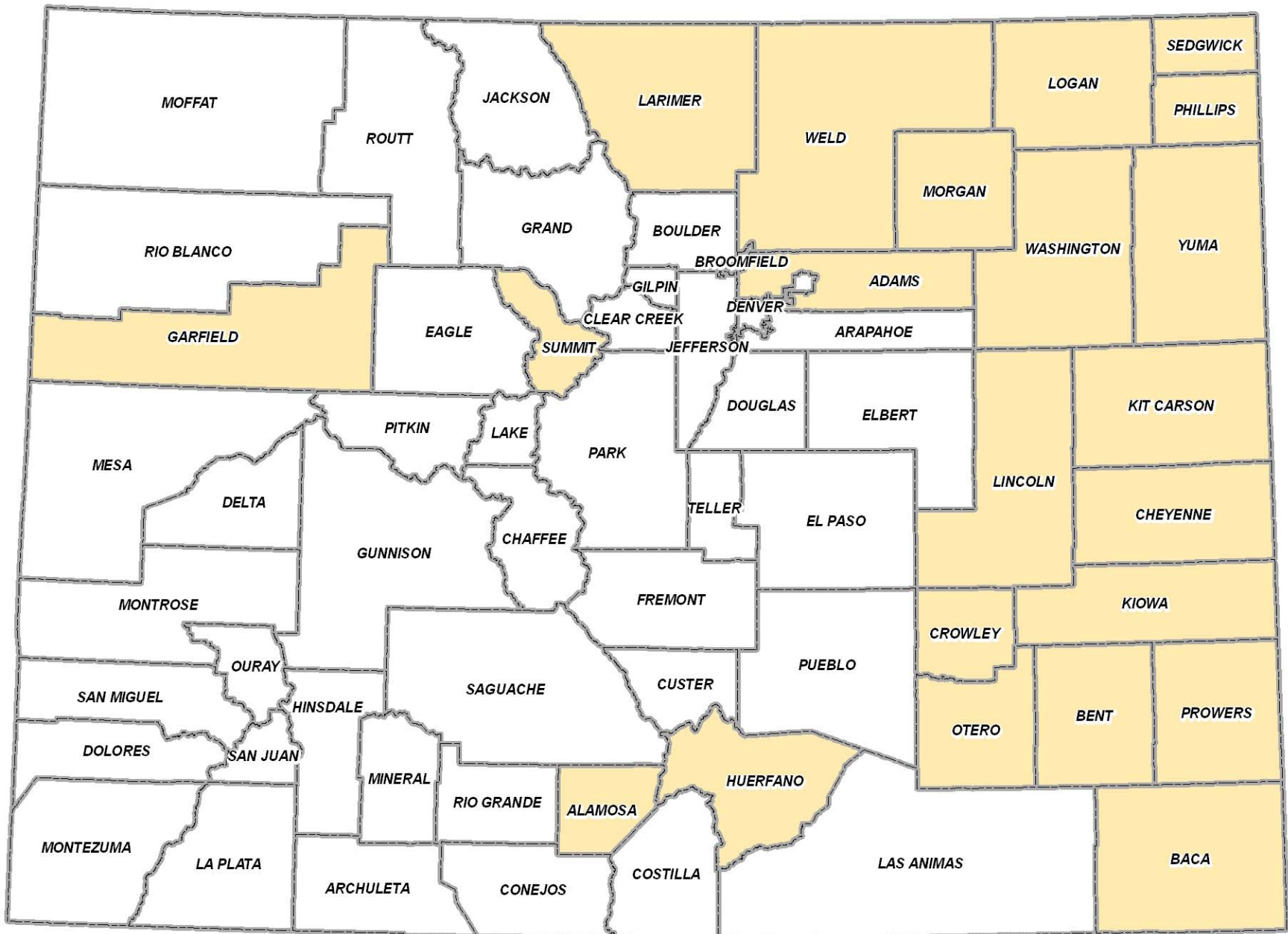
## BRFSS, 2006

(\*BMI  $\geq 30$ , or ~ 30 lbs. overweight for 5' 4" person)



# Needs Assessment

- There is a severe shortage of effective resources for patients, particularly those in rural areas.
- Hispanic persons have the highest prevalence of physical inactivity and the highest death rate from diabetes.



# Get Fit Colorado

 Participating counties



# Program Goal

- To provide a weight management program to reach low-income and Hispanic residents in rural areas.



# Formative Research

- Literature Review and Survey Data
- Key informant interviews
- Focus Groups

# Survey Results

- BRFSS data in Colorado indicates that 13% of overweight or obese respondents report being advised to lose weight during the last year.
- A recent survey of 1,465 primary care providers in Colorado revealed that 93% reported frequently or always counseling or referring overweight or obese patients for weight loss.

# Reported Barriers to Counseling

- Unsure of how to begin the conversation
- Unsure of subject matter
- Unable to obtain insurance reimbursement
- Lack of time for counseling
- Lack referral resources

CDC data indicates that patients are **three times more likely** to attempt weight loss if a healthcare provider suggests they do so.



# Patient Focus Group Results

- Ten focus groups were conducted with a total of approximately 100 participants
- The Eat Well message was the first choice with the Family message was a close second among the target audience.
- Hispanic males preferred the Family message and Caucasian men often selected it as their first choice as well.

Conducted by Kathleen Kelly, PhD, Professor of Marketing, Colorado State University

October, 2007

# Provider Focus Group Results

- Physicians felt positively about the program and the program sponsors added credibility.
- Physicians indicated that the most important aspect of the program must be an easy referral system.

# Get Fit Messages

Five good reasons  
to lose weight.



**Get Fit Colorado**

**1-888-229-2804**



Eat well. Lace up. Call now.

**Get Fit Colorado**

**1-888-229-2804**

Cinco buenas  
razones para bajar.



**Pongase en Forma Colorado**

**1-888-229-2804**



# Development

- Original idea was to target health disparities
- Partners are National Jewish Research and Medical Center and Kaiser Permanente, Colorado
- The strategy is based on the tobacco cessation Quitline
- Other states have tried similar programs

# Implementation

- Get Fit Colorado is a bilingual toll-free telephone counseling system for weight loss designed for underserved areas of the state.



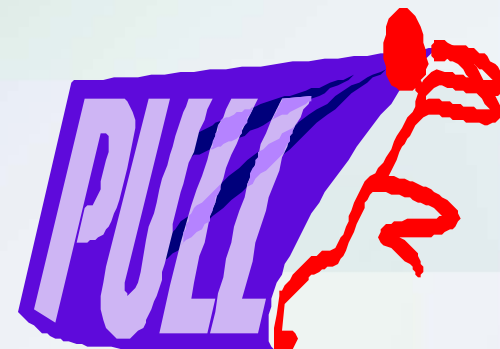
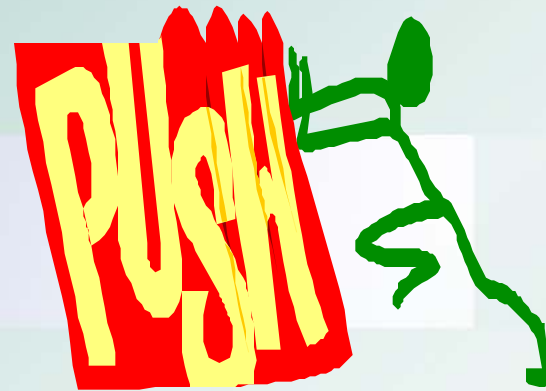
Photo courtesy of the Government of New South Wales

## How It Works

- Participants are self-referred or referred by a health care provider.
- On the initial call, the coach:
  - screens caller for a BMI  $\geq 25$
  - screens caller for co-morbidities
  - collects demographic data
- Participants receive 7 more calls over a six-month period and a final IVR evaluation call.

# Marketing Strategy Implementation

- Push
  - Healthcare providers refer patients to Get Fit Colorado
- Pull
  - Participants are drawn to Get Fit Colorado by media and marketing materials



# “Push” Partners

- Community Health Centers
- Local Public Health Offices
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Colorado State University Extension
- WIC Clinics



# Rapid Improvement Activity (RIA)

- Implemented during a one-hour lunch session
- All-staff are involved in the brainstorming
- Encourages the clinic to begin addressing obesity and offers support by providing referrals to Get Fit Colorado
- Resulted in a dramatic increase in callers

# Pull Technique

## Media Outlets

- Two press releases were distributed to approximately 20 newspapers
  - Spanish and English
- 43 English Radio Stations
- 22 Spanish Radio Stations

# Pull Technique (cont.)

## Tools and Materials:

- Introductory Letters
- Fax Referral Forms
- Posters
- Palm Cards





# Advantages of Telephone Coaching

- Coaches
  - develop individual action plans
  - use standardized protocols
  - bilingual and culturally competent
- Avoids group classes and provides anonymity
- Delivery is convenient and theoretically can be provided 24/7.

# Clinical Significance

- Recent evidence suggests that small weight losses (5 to 10% of initial body weight) can improve obesity-related health complications.

Jackson Y, Dietz WH, and Sanders, C: **Summary of the 2000 Surgeon General's Listening Session: Toward a National Action Plan on Overweight and Obesity.**  
*Obesity Res* 2002, **10**(12):1299-1305.

# Preliminary Evaluation Results

- Participants completing 4 calls:
  - 125 individuals
  - 5 pounds average weight loss
  - 3% total body weight loss on average
- Participants completing all 8 calls:
  - 61 individuals
  - 12 pounds average weight loss
  - 6% total body weight loss on average

October, 2007

## Preliminary Results (cont.)

- 63 participants were referred by healthcare professionals.
- 20% of the participants identify themselves as Hispanic.

October, 2007

# Future Directions

- Pilot to be conducted with Medicaid
- Possible partnership with tobacco cessation Quitline
- If results warrant...take the program statewide.

# Questions?

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