The BCCHP provides health education and prevention strategies. If a client is diagnosed with cancer, the BCCHP helps them to fast-track onto the Washington State Medicaid treatment program. The King County BCCHP contracts with more than 50 providers, as well as with radiology and community partners that link BCCHP clients with life saving health and social services.

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At a time when uninsured rates are increasing and more families are finding themselves in poverty, important public health programs are facing reductions — and even elimination — in the face of federal and state funding reductions.

The program:
The King County Breast, Cervical and Colon Health Program (BCCHP) provided screenings to more than 8,700 low-income men and women in 2010 who have no health insurance. The number of people needing this service has risen each year since the economic decline began in 2008.

The impact:
In King County, the BCCHP has already had to cut services impacting thousands of lives. Program services have been streamlined and efficiencies reached to stretch limited resources. While funding has stayed level, health costs have gone up and as a result we are screening fewer clients. Further reductions will impact the number of clients the BCCHP can serve — having a ripple effect on families who would otherwise benefit from this program and the support it provides. Already, in 2011, the King County BCCHP is slated to serve 2,000 fewer clients than last year.

This year at risk is federal funding received through the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and state funding received through the Washington State Department of Health that Public Health – Seattle & King County receives for the BCCHP.

The bottom line:
Investing in prevention is investing in a healthier America! Reducing or eliminating funding for prevention and health promotion programs will weaken the core public health infrastructure, the workforce, and our capacity to improve health in our communities.

Advocating for healthier people through health education on behalf of the 30,000 members of the Coalition of National Health Education Organizations:

American Public Health Association:
Public Health Education & Health Promotion Section
American Public Health Association:
School Health Education and Services Section
American School Health Association
American Association for Health Education
American College Health Association
Directors of Health Promotion & Education
Eta Sigma Gamma
Society for Public Health Education

For more information, please e-mail CNHEOBudgetStories@gmail.com