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BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTOR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

The Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) in conjunction with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) would like to inform the public that an island wide random telephone survey for the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) will be conducted. Effective April 1, 2010, SMS Research and Marketing Services, Inc., will administer the Guam 2010 BRFSS survey. We ask the public: if you are called, please cooperate, as the information collected is important and is used to assess the island's overall health and wellness.

SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)?

BRFSS is a sophisticated telephone survey conducted randomly from adults within randomly selected households. It contains a series of questions, designed to assess and document current health trends and issues on Guam and across the nation. The CDC is sent the collected data, which is processed and returned so that we can compare our health behaviors with those of the other states and territories. The data is used to help identify and address emerging health issues or problems.

For example, we know that many people on Guam are diabetic. What we do not know is how many diabetics there are, and any correlating factors that go with diabetes: such as age, village, or sex; does it affect married people more than singles? Do other health issues contribute to being a diabetic? Is there a relationship between diabetes and being overweight or having high blood pressure? These are questions that BRFSS attempts to answer.

How is BRFSS information used?

The data gathered by BRFSS is used in many different ways: It can be used as a tool to justify and support various programs, such as the Diabetes Program, or to provide documentation to develop grants, or the data could be used to assess how effective an immunization or treatment program is working. Additionally, individuals conducting research on various health issues can use the data to study emerging health problems.

How are the persons responding to the surveys privacy protected?

The survey is completely anonymous. The CDC provides the interviewers a set of random phone numbers, which are used to contact the selected homes, and then an adult in the home is selected randomly by the computer to be interviewed. The interviewers have no way to identify the individual to whom they are talking.

How can I learn more about the BRFSS program?

For additional information on Guam's BRFSS program, please feel free to contact the Program Coordinator, Ms. Alyssa Uncangco at (671) 735-7289.



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