



CALIFORNIA  
**Health Policy Forum**

## **Panelist Bios**

**Lisa A. Cirill, MS, PAPHS**  
**Acting Chief, California Center for Physical Activity**  
**California Department of Public Health**

Lisa Cirill is the acting chief for the California Center for Physical Activity, a unit within the California Department of Public Health, which creates opportunities for incidental, everyday physical activity through environmental and policy change. Cirill oversees numerous statewide projects to increase physical activity and promote active living for Californians of all ages and abilities. She started at the local level working as special projects coordinator for the City of Sacramento, Health and Human Services Department, managing active aging and community walkability programs. Cirill is frequently called upon to serve on national and state advisory boards, planning committees and grant review committees for federal agencies, associations, and philanthropic foundations as well as various programs within the California Department of Health and Human Services interested in developing strategies to increase physical activity and health among California's diverse population. She received a post-graduate certificate in gerontology and a master's of science degree in kinesiology from California State University, Sacramento. Cirill is a certified Physical Activity in Public Health Specialist, a professional certification of the American College of Sports Medicine and the National Society of Physical Activity Practitioners in Public Health. Currently, she is president of the National Society of Physical Activity Practitioners in Public Health.

**Gail Feenstra, EdD**  
**Food Systems Analyst**  
**UC Davis Agricultural Sustainability Institute**

Gail Feenstra is the food systems analyst at the University of California Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (SAREP). SAREP's Food Systems Program encourages the development of local food systems that link farmers, consumers, and communities. Dr. Feenstra's research and outreach includes: direct marketing, farm-to-school evaluation, regional food system distribution, food security, food system assessments and most recently, food carbon footprint analysis. Feenstra has a doctorate in



nutrition education from Teachers College, Columbia University, with an emphasis in public health.

**Lisa S. Hershey, MPH**  
**Chief, Coordinating Office for Obesity Prevention**  
**California Department of Public Health**

As chief for the California Department of Public Health Director's Coordinating Office for Obesity Prevention, Lisa Hershey advises the department's chief deputy director for policy and programs, serves as liaison to other state departments and facilitates external opportunities, and coordinates department-wide policy development and projects. Prior to the split of the California Department of Health Services, which created the California Department of Public Health, the director's office recruited Hershey to provide health education expertise in the development of the California Obesity Prevention Plan and to serve a Special Assistant on obesity prevention to Dr. Mark Horton, the state public health officer. For the previous 18 years, Hershey served as a health education consultant and held leadership positions within California's Office on Disability and Health, Vehicle Occupant Safety Program, and ON THE MOVE! physical activity promotion program. She has also worked in tobacco prevention programs and in worksite wellness programs. Hershey received an MPH in health promotion and education from Loma Linda University School of Public Health, with a minor in worksite wellness.

**Julie Williamson, MPH**  
**Project Director**  
**California Convergence**

As program director and leadership team member for the Partnership for the Public's Health, Julie Williamson designs and manages implementation of PPH projects and initiatives. She is the director of the California Convergence project, and directed The California Endowment's Public Health Department mini-grant program. She has been with the Public Health Institute for more than 20 years, leading cutting-edge programs that have forged new models for public health and community partnerships designed to promote community health equity, including: Community Oriented Primary Care Training project; the California Coalition on the Future of Public Health; the California Tobacco Control Resource Partnership; and The California Endowment's Partnership for the Public's Health initiative as well as the Healthy Eating Active Communities program. She has produced numerous training guides and manuals, the most recent being Roadmap to Improving Food and Physical Activity Environments: Tips and Tools from the Healthy Eating, Active Communities Program. She is a founding member and past chair of the board of directors of the California Center for Public Health Advocacy, and served on the California Public Health Association-North Governing Council for 16 years. She is a graduate of the School of Public Health at the University of California at Berkeley.

