

Lincy Institute Fellowship Final Report

Community Themes and Strengths Assessment

Project Description

The Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) is a strategic planning framework for improving community health. MAPP was developed by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to aid communities in devising creative solutions to public health problems in partnership with their local public health agency (NACCHO, 2010). The Lincy Fellowship supported a partnership between the fellow at the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) School of Nursing (SON) and the Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD) to complete one phase of this strategic planning process for improving this community's health. This phase was the Community Themes and Strengths Assessment (CTSA), which was intended to provide a deep understanding of issues by answering the questions:

- What is important to our community?
- How is quality of life perceived in our community?
- What assets do we have that can be used to improve community health?

Project Outcomes

The Fellowship proposal summarized the goal as completing the CTSA and then using the data for structure the other assessments and seeking external funding for them. The Fellowship achieved this goal. Specific project objectives and their status are described below.

1. To complete a qualitative assessment of the community's perceptions of issues of importance, health related quality of life, and resources available to improve health.
 - CTSA was completed and a report sent to community. See attached Community Themes and Strengths Assessment Public Report. A more detailed technical report was sent to the SNHD.
2. To structure the three quantitative MAPP assessments based on the CTSA data analysis.
 - The SNHD MAPP Task Force met to create a Values and Vision Statement (attached) based on the CTSA data. This Values and Vision Statement is serving as a guide for completing the remaining MAPP assessments.

3. To strengthen a partnership between SNHD and the SON to address regional health-related challenges in collaboration with diverse community stakeholders.
 - The SNHD and SON continue to work together to build community partnerships from the nexus of the CTSA participants and from segments of the community who did not participate (e.g., elected officials, Hispanics).
4. To identify appropriate federal grant funding sources to address identified community needs.
 - The SNHD applied for and received a grant of \$61,995 from NACCHO to complete the MAPP assessments, which will assist with its public health accreditation efforts. The Fellow has received a subcontract for 10% of her time to assist with MAPP completion. The two assessments she will complete are:
 - The Local Public Health System Assessment (LPHSA) focuses on all the organizations and entities that contribute to the public's health. The LPHSA answers the questions: "What are the components, activities, competencies, and capacities of our local public health system," and "How are Essential Services being provided to our community?"
 - The Forces of Change Assessment focuses on identifying forces such as legislation, technology, and other impending changes that affect the context in which the community and its public health system operate. This answers the questions: What is occurring or might occur that affects the health of our community or the local public health system?" and "What specific threats or opportunities are generated by these occurrences?"

In addition to supporting the Lincy Institute's Mission of "improving Nevada's health, education, and social services" and "efforts to draw state and federal money to greater Las Vegas," the project was projected to support the Lincy Institute's Goals and Objectives.

- Support the viability of the economic future of Nevada and the quality of life for its residents, especially in Southern Nevada.
 - Economic diversity was identified in the CTSA as key for a healthy community, with education a vital component for achieving a stable economic future. An engaged community is needed to demand political reform to value and fund education. The CTSA was a first step in engaging the community and uniting them in establishing a vision for improving quality of life. At the same time, the SNHD was able to view how low the community ranks quality of life in Southern Nevada, which

has raised questions of how to set priorities for improvement. In a state that ranks last in public health spending per capita, resources for improvement are most likely to come from the federal government.

- Create a new model for bringing together state, regional, and for profit and nonprofit agencies to address the large-scale challenges in Southern Nevada, with a particular focus on education, health, and social services/public policy.
 - The CTSA brought together many agencies now working on various aspects of the challenges facing Southern Nevada. The fact that there were many voluntary agencies was viewed as both a strength and a weakness, necessitated by the low level of government funding and lacking coordination to avoid duplication of services. Once the additional MAPP sections are completed, the SNHD will complete a strategic plan that will include more coordination of services and clearer responsibilities.
- Identify and attract federal, state, and private funding opportunities.
 - The completed CTSA was a factor in being awarded the NACCHO grant, one of only five given out nationally. See attached “11-17-11 Letter from BOH.”
- Provide baseline and follow-up assessments of agency activities that can, in turn, highlight applications for these funds.
 - The CTSA provides quantitative data on the quality of life in Southern Nevada, which can be used as a baseline to assess whether SNHD efforts in the future improve residents’ perceptions.

Budget

Funding was adequate to meet the project goals, with the \$1,464.31 unspent surplus to be returned.

Books and Papers Published

The Fellow has submitted an abstract to the Western Institute of Nursing to present a paper on this project at its annual conference in April 2012. If accepted, the abstract will be published in its proceedings. See “Abstract Menzel 10-16-11.” The Fellow plans future submissions to peer reviewed journals on this project as well.

Summary

This project was well-received by the community and welcomed by the SNHD, which did not have the resources (human or financial) to begin the MAPP and accreditation processes. As a result of the partnership enabled by the Fellowship, the SNHD has received outside funding to enable it to proceed towards accreditation. Accreditation will position the agency to be competitive for substantial external funding from agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In addition, the Fellowship has supported a partnership between the UNLV SON and the SNHD to work towards improving quality of life in Southern Nevada.

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