

Let's Not Reinvent the Wheel: How to Leverage National Initiatives as you Conduct Performance Improvement Activities

NACCHO's Accreditation Preparation & Performance Improvement (PI) Webinar Series
Tuesday, December 9, 2014

In December 2014, NACCHO hosted a webinar entitled "Let's Not Reinvent the Wheel: How to Leverage National Initiatives as you Conduct Performance Improvement Activities." This webinar featured representatives from local health departments in North Carolina, Florida and Massachusetts who talked about using national initiatives in their work. A recording and other resources are available at www.naccho.org/accreditation/webinars.

The questions below were posed during the webinar.

What are some challenges you faced while engaging your hospital system in your work?

Marian Arledge, from the Buncombe County Department of Health and Human Services (NC), shared that one major challenge for them was not understanding that the hospitals are very large organizations with very different cultures and systems. There was a culture clash over the different kinds of data and its availability. The best way to overcome the complexities within these systems was to build and form relationships with individual staff at these hospitals.

Claude Alix-Jacob, from the Cambridge Public Health Alliance (MA) shared that their capacity and linkage to services has benefited greatly from the proximity of the health department and some clinics. He also works to identify and capitalize on commonalities in their health assessment work so that the relationships can be streamlined.

How did the Florida Department of Health select which HP2020 targets to choose in their work?

Terri Sudden, from the Florida Department of Health – Broward County, explained their approach to this work. The data from the MAPP process and its four assessments helped them identify the appropriate targets. Their strong community-based process with multiple groups allowed them to do a variety of collaborative activities for prioritization of these measures.

How many for-profit hospitals were in the Western North Carolina (WNC) coalition and how did you engage them?

Arledge indicated that the answer to this question has changed since their work due to mergers and acquisitions within the hospital system. She indicated that the involvement of for-profit hospitals in their work was a great success of their initiatives because it wasn't required for them in the same way that it is for non-profit hospitals.

What is the structure for accomplishing all the work of the various programs identified in the Cambridge CHIP? How are organizations kept accountable and how is progress tracked?

Alix-Jacob indicated that there is an advisory board who is in charge of this work. The board is currently planning how to reach the different nodes of the community in order to ensure their accountability.

How did you overcome issues related to obtaining data on a timely basis?

Sudden explained that they have not had many issues with getting data in a timely manner. Per their performance plans, individual employees are required to track their data for the performance management system, so there aren't usually problems there. The biggest issue they have with data is waiting on data from the BRFSS, which is usually at a significant time lag for reporting, especially at the county level.

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Arlidge agreed with the major challenges expressed by Sudden. She also indicated that using the results-based accountability scorecard system has driven people to want to update their data because they want to see it in this new and "exciting" manner.

How did you identify and apply for these various funding opportunities mentioned in the webinar?

Alix-Jacob explained that a local nonprofit organization with whom they work applies as the official 501c3 recipient of the grants even though his organization does most of the writing and application organization. Wherever possible, they create win-win scenarios with other organizations and partners in their community. They also try to remain flexible with individual funders and grant opportunities.

Arlidge explained that their county tries to always use the collective impact structure they have in place so that they can apply for grants jointly and without competing with local partners.

Sudden explained that they constantly review opportunities for funding by tracking various websites and databases. They seek to identify needs and then reach out to partners or groups who would be appropriate co-applicants.