Case Study

Riverside University Health System-Public Health

"We reviewed the Healthy Communities Institute (HCI) platform and found it to be an excellent tool to meet multiple PHAB requirements, including: conduct and disseminate assessments on population health status, inform and educate about public health issues, engage with the community, and evaluate and improve processes and interventions."

– Erin Curlee
  Research Analyst, Riverside University Health System-Public Health

At-A-Glance

Market Segment:
Health Department

Service Area:
Riverside County, California

Population:
2,369,751

Client Since:
2015

Solution:
Healthy Communities
Institute (HCI)
Engagement Platform

Most Used Feature:
Report Assistant

Results:

- Established community group concerned with health equity to conduct and disseminate assessments, implement ongoing process improvements, and educate and engage the community on public health issues

- Used HCI platform to develop competitive grant submissions resulting in a successful grant for TruEvolution.org

- Published Healthy City Resolution Toolkit on HCI platform, leading to the adoption of Health in All Policies by fourteen cities in Riverside County

Assessing Community Health Collaboration

Riverside County boasts over 2.3 million residents and is one of the fastest growing counties in the United States. It is recognized as a leader in improving environmental, social, and economic standards through a collective impact model. To make similar strides in community health improvement, the Riverside University Health System–Public Health (RUHSPH), determined they needed to objectively evaluate their quality and performance in comparison to national standards, and then prioritize top concerns.

"Due to our geographic and cultural diversity, separate community health groups maintained their own assessments and records, which were not easily compared," said Erin Curlee, Research Analyst, RUHSPH.

This lack of collaboration on health assessments and community health improvement plans often led to redundancies. Three full-time equivalents at the Department supported incoming requests for reports and analyses, however, "we were unable to keep up with the demand. This led to a backlog of requests, inconsistent priority tracking, siloed work-flows, and a lack of report dissemination and community engagement."

Curlee and her colleagues determined they needed a collaborative and structured approach to move forward.

Technology and Services to Support the PHAB Domains

In partnership with over 120 organizations, RUHSPH established a health improvement effort known as **Strategic Health Alliance Pursuing Equity (SHAPE)**. SHAPE aims to leverage local resources and work with non-traditional partners to identify key health priorities, ensure health equity issues are considered, and address the needs by aligning public and private interests.

The collaborative determined that obtaining Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) Accreditation would support their efforts and increase credibility among non-traditional community partners. PHAB's ten domains set standards for improvement, prioritization, performance evaluation, alignment of objectives, and delivering results.

To begin, SHAPE completed a community health assessment in which stakeholders determined their top PHAB priority was Domain 1: conduct and disseminate assessments focused on population health status and public health issues facing the community.

Next, SHAPE looked for a technology partner to support pursuit of PHAB accreditation. Curlee reported, "we reviewed the Healty Communities Institute Health Solutions (HCI) platform and found it to be an excellent tool to meet multiple PHAB requirements." These include:

- Domain 1 – Conduct and disseminate assessments on population health status
- Domain 3 – Inform and educate about public health issues
- Domain 4 – Engage with the community
- Domain 9 – Evaluate and improve processes and interventions
- Domain 10 – Contribute to and apply the evidence base of public health

Community Impact
SHAPE implemented the HCI platform and, as Curlee explains, "Instead of sending stakeholders to external sites to scavenge for public health data and analytic tools, we were excited to provide a central place that highlights priorities, tracks progress, and pinpoints disparities."

Community Research Exchange
SHAPE took the element of collaboration one step further by establishing a Research Exchange. "The Exchange brings together researchers from community organizations to share best practices and resources, provide a mechanism for ongoing improvement, and act as liaisons for their organizations." Due to the formation of this

group, public school, police department, justice organization, health department, and political organization officials now regularly use the site to support data-driven decisions.

"Since launching HCI, there has been a tremendously positive reaction," said Curlee.

Education, Engagement, and Health Equity
In educating and engaging the community on public health issues (PHAB Domains 3, 4), SHAPE has led over 40 in-person workshops, webinars, and/or trainings, in which the HCI platform is used as a tool to analyze the effect of social and environmental factors on health. "We use these opportunities to highlight our priorities and develop action plans with community partners," said Curlee. After these trainings, organizations are empowered to take action using the evidence base of public health with HCI's Promising Practices and Funding Opportunities tools (PHAB Domain 10). TruEvolution.org, a Riverside County non-profit organization fighting for LGBT justice and advocating for the prevention and elimination of HIV/AIDS, was awarded a Kaiser Permanente grant, through the use of data from the HCI platform.

Health in All Policies Initiative
Health disparities among certain populations in Riverside County demonstrate a need for equitable and culturally appropriate interventions. SHAPE launched a Health In All Policies initiative to ensure that health equity is considered in the development and/or review of all Department of Public Health policies. The health department developed and disseminated city health profiles to make it easier for local mayors and policy makers to incorporate health equity into new and revised policies. "On the HCI site we direct folks to our Healthy City Resolution Toolkit. Then, policies are reviewed and signed off by the new Health Equity Community Group. We now have fourteen cities that have adopted Health in All Policies."

Visit the SHAPE website:
www.shaperivco.org

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