



Missouri Effective Practices Project (MEPP)

Civic Participation in Public Health Practices

Name of LPHA: Clay

Name of Effective Practice: Civic Participation in Public Health Practices

Overall Description of Program: This innovative program provides the opportunity for the citizens of Clay County Missouri to participate in a new and constructive community-building program. It is designed to fuel the local social capital and, in effect, revitalize a sense of community surrounding the general public's health. The program integrates volunteers into the daily operations of the health center through placement in strategically designed positions. The public health volunteer program increases the agency's visibility, creates a greater understanding of general public health functions, increases the public's perceived value of the agency and maximizes existing resources. The volunteer program redefines Clay County Public Health Center's (CCPHC) ability to function on a daily basis while establishing the foundation for community-based public health preparedness.

Essential Skill: Policy Development

Essential Service: Mobilize Comm Part

Knowledge Domain: Disaster Con & Emerg

NACCHO Operational Definition: Engage the community to identify/solve health problems

Planning Time: 2 to 3 years

Experience/Imp of Program: 1 to 2 years

Number of staff: 1 full-time staff

Department of Program: Community Health Involvement

Basis for Need of Program: Three years ago we examined our infrastructure and questioned that in a worst case scenario (i.e., if we had to vaccinate 200,000 people in Clay County), could we do it. Were we prepared for an emergency? We only have 65 employees and our resources would be strained. If it is a contagious disease, then you only have your own community. The American Red Cross and the Medical Reserve Core, at this time, were just getting started in Clay County. These agencies set up a recruitment and training effort for emergencies. One of the questions asked was would you be willing to work with public health professionals in non-emergency situation. There currently existed no system to organize citizens to come together outside of an emergency. Our rationale for this program was that if a community were close during non-emergency situations, then when an

emergency struck, there would be more organization, communication, and solidarity. The more people that we empower, the more people will take our message of public health back out to those they know.

Characteristics of the Program:

Levels of volunteers:

There are currently four levels of volunteers:

- 1.Laymen services/nonregistered
- 2.Require Licenses and certification
- 3.Student Volunteers
- 4.One-time volunteer (flu clinic)

Examples include: Nursing students giving booster shots at school so students/parents don't have to miss school/work; Counseling on the Medicare Part D for senior citizens; Vocational Services Inc. sheltered workshop visits the Center three days a week to do office work.

Barriers to Implementation: Staff were not always committed to the program for various reasons. Some staff felt that the volunteers may not be adequately trained for HIPAA requirements. · Staff who would not usually be involved in seeking a volunteer are asking to be a part of the program (i.e., CPA recruiting an accounting student). · The program can be overwhelming. Coordination is the critical. Matching the volunteers to the program and then the volunteer to the staff is challenging.

Support of Effectiveness - Evaluations:

Process: The program does cost money, but we feel that it builds relationships with the community that cannot be achieved in other ways. An exit interview is conducted on volunteers after a period of time. This provides us information about whether the program is meeting their needs.

Impact: CCPHC has operated on the same tax levy since 1953. We initiated an increase in the levy three times and failed. A potential impact of this program could be success the next time. One outcome of this program is that people are realizing that our Center is not “just for the poor” or where they go to get birth certificates. We do real programs in the community that benefit people of all socioeconomic levels.

Geographical Description: 1,000,000 and over **Target Population:** General Population

Describe Necessary Funding: Funding Budget for this program in 2006 is \$49,700. This is divided among staff (\$28,000), contractual services (\$18,000), and Commodities (\$3,000).

Contact Information: Jodee Fredrick
Clay County Public Health Center
1940 W. Kansas St.
Liberty, MO 64068
(816)781-1142 jfredrick@clayhealth.com
<http://www.clayhealth.com>