

2018 LGFCU Excellence in Innovation Award Project Evaluation

Project ID	IGC-3
Title of Program	Partnership for Community Prosperity
Program Category	
Submission Date	6/1/2018 2:20:29 PM
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Implementation Date	1-Jul-17
FLSA Designation	Both (if applicable to a team)
Project Team Members	Collaborative effort, over 10 county employees to varying degrees, as well as Board of Commissioner participation.

Description of Productivity Improvement

Cleveland County policymakers and community members are engaged to improve the overall physical, behavioral, and economic health of the county by addressing key social determinants of health. Recognizing that strong overall community health is a vital tool in securing economic development investments, Cleveland County leadership began meeting to explore best practices for improving community health. Community meetings allowed participants to gain deeper understanding of the challenges facing the community, identify county priorities, and exploring models to achieve strategic goals. Participants identified eliminating childhood poverty, improving access to behavioral health services, and decreasing alcohol and substance abuse as its top priorities. As a result, the Partnership for Community Prosperity was formed to target a specific community, with a local elementary school to act as the hub for service provision. The area served through the partnership was identified as a historically underserved community.

The Partnership for Community Prosperity (P4CP) is comprised of members of multiple county departments and over 10 organizations, including Cleveland County Administration, Public Health Dept. Department of Social Services, Cleveland Community College, the YMCA, the Boys and Girls club, Partners Behavioral Health, Benchmarks, the Transportation Administration of Cleveland County, Gardner-Webb University, Cleveland County Schools, and the City of Shelby. The group meets monthly to ensure the success of the three main goals listed above. These objectives are accomplished by removing barriers to employment, healthcare, and education. These main goals

were developed after extensive focus group meetings, and input from a citizen committee, which is comprised of residents from the community. All activities undertaken by the P4CP are first proposed and discussed by the community advisory committee, to ensure that solutions are developed “with” instead of “for” residents. Building trust and community buy in have been vitally important to the success of the partnership, in order to ensure that provided services are utilized and have the desired outcomes. Through this collaborative effort, organizations have been able to tailor their specific programs to best meet the needs of citizens, and have increased awareness of their services to the community. An integrated intervention and service array has been developed for families and children attending Graham Elementary School - a racially segregated area of concentrated intergenerational poverty, high unemployment, and crime - with the aim of improving overall community, family, and child health. Components of this program include:

- strategic fixed route, no cost public transportation system;
- primary care and behavioral health services for children, their families, staff, and the entire community;
- organized opportunities for physical activity through the YMCA and the Boys' and Girls' Club;
- onsite GED and vocational education opportunities to increase the learning opportunities for parents through Cleveland Community College;
- parenting, financial literacy, homeownership, and financial management classes for parents.

Description of why this project was initiated

Several years ago, it was identified that there existed disconnects between the governmental programs who serve people and families in crisis as a major challenge in preventing families from entering crisis. Communities, states, and the federal government invest in services to improve community well-being, including physical and behavioral healthcare, housing, education, law enforcement, job training, and other supports. Funding is tied to addressing “problems” that are often just symptoms of the social/physical environment where the person lives or has grown up. We wait until there is a crisis and then intervene to address the symptoms with expensive crisis services in an ineffective delivery model.

Partnering for Community Prosperity convenes various public, private, and community leaders to identify strategies to improve community well-being and to develop a collective approach around shared outcomes.

Community health and well-being is shaped by our families, our schools and workplaces, our playgrounds and parks, the food we eat, the air we breathe, and the water we drink. Healthy communities raise healthy and well-fed children who arrive at school ready to learn and thrive. Healthy communities support healthy adults who work and provide for their families.

Income, family structure, geographic location, educational and job opportunities, transportation, and other factors have come to be known as social determinants of health. These factors have a direct impact on the health outcomes of citizens, and the aim of this project was to identify strategies for mitigating barriers which result in intergenerational crime and poverty.

The area served through the P4CP was identified as a historically underserved community. With a poverty rate estimate of 35% based on Census data, the community was in need of concentrated, unified effort to address issues of unemployment, crime, and poor community health.

Quantifiable results (sustainability, cost savings, cost avoidance and/or a higher level of service).

Indication of what resources were used and what was done with any accrued time savings

The partnership is funded through a collaboration of over 10 organizations, and includes components both large and small. The core services are split into three categories: transportation, healthcare, and workforce development. While many organizations provide in kind support, major funding is received from the local healthcare foundation, the County Board of Commissioners, Cleveland County Schools, and Partners Behavioral Health. This funding primarily supports operation of a local bus route, and the cost of one employee to organize and direct efforts. Key services and components, along with performance metrics are included below.

REACH Transit route

- The Transportation Administration of Cleveland County operates a bus route on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with stops at the community college, the public health center, grocery stores, the hospital, and other key locations.
- Launched in October, average daily ridership has fluctuated between 9 and 17 riders.

Healthcare

- In partnership with the hospital system and the Shelby Children's Clinic, telemedicine technology has been implemented in the local elementary school, allowing students to have a virtual visit with a doctor, assisted by the school nurse. This technology allows the doctor to perform standard observations, such as ear, throat, and skin conditions remotely, and prescribe medication, all without the child having to leave school. Students have received virtual healthcare for sore throat, abscessed tooth, asthma, ear infection, infected boils, rash, and other ailments.
- Before telemedicine, a child signed out of school through the school nurse 1 in 5.4 days, after implementation child signed out 1 in every 10.7 days.
- Over 9 parents have indicated that if telemedicine was not present, the child would be unable to go see a doctor, as the parent was unable to call out of work without fear of being fired or facing disciplinary action.
- Reduction in emergency room visits due to children being seen during school hours, rather than after hours for non-emergency situations. Reduction from 13 ER visits to 5 ER visits in a 5 month period prior to starting vs 5 months of service. Results in a 61.5% reduction in ER visits.
- No show rates for CLECO, a local healthcare clinic for low income individuals, has dropped dramatically.

Education

- On site GED classes have had over 15 participants.
- Gardner Webb hosted a community day, in which students at Graham school went to the university campus. The goal was to inspire and motivate students to believe that they could achieve a higher education, and to connect university students with the community. Over 80% of students attended.

Other descriptive information

The efforts of P4CP are continuing to change as issues are addressed, and currently the organization has split into subcommittees around each of the following goals:

1. Access to education and training to obtain and keep a living wage job
2. Access to transportation
3. Children arriving to school healthy and ready to learn
4. Access to safe and affordable housing.

Each committee, comprised of both local residents and service providers, is mapping out the current resources, and the barriers to success for the above goals. From this, an action plan will be developed for each group, in order to see measureable progress and comprehensive change.

One large opportunity for growth will be the statewide Medicaid reform, which will likely provide funding for programs which address social determinants of health. These programs will address the root cause of healthcare inadequacies, including access to safe housing, living wage jobs, and education. Staff is hopeful that this program may be selected as the first in the state to receive such funding, which could have a significant impact on the scope of services provided, and could serve a model for integrated and holistic services for other low income communities across the state.

To further quantify the successes of the telemedicine program, the following are three real success stories achieved through telemedicine.

- Student had numerous absences due to illness but was unable to access health care due to transportation issues. School Social Worker was involved due to truancy issues. After student was seen by the virtual care clinic, absences stopped completely and student received medication at home and school for undiagnosed asthma.
- Student initially had vague symptoms of headache and nausea but after school nurse assessment and virtual care visit, student received treatment for a urinary tract infection. Parents had been unable to access health care due to work and transportation issues.
- Student had an infected splinter and needed refills on his inhaler for asthma. His mother works as a waitress and doesn't not have transportation. Student was seen by virtual clinic, and student received medication for asthma and infection. Mother did not have to miss work and student was able to remain at school.