



Using Process Evaluation to Strengthen Partnerships

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HIV in North Carolina

- HIV in African American communities is an health crisis in the southeastern United States
- Prior research has focused on individual behaviors with limited impact on epidemic in African American communities
- Social and economic context contributes to spread of HIV by promoting risk behaviors and risk of infection associated with behaviors

Project GRACE and HIV

- CBPR Partnership developed in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Nash and Edgecombe counties
- Goal is to develop an intervention that addresses HIV/AIDS at multiple levels
 - Individual behavior
 - Social environment
 - Physical environment

Enhancing CBPR Partnerships

- Jointly develop principles and what it means to have a “collaborative, equitable partnership”
 - ☞ Use democratic processes and consensus decision-making
- Create a balance between time spent on process issues and tasks/products

Assessing Participatory approaches

- Conduct ongoing evaluation of the partnership process to document adherence to guiding principles
- Important in determining the quality of reports of CBPR projects

Specific Aims

- Expand, strengthen and evaluate the development of the Project GRACE Consortium
- Identify community needs and assets to support the development of interventions
- Define culturally responsive interventions that draw on community insights and available resources
- Test the feasibility of recruiting and training a network of lay health advisors

Staged Partnership Development

- *Initial mobilization* -inclusion of Consortium members who represent a range of institutions and constituencies;
- *Establishment of organizational structure*- develop operating guidelines; create working committees
- *Capacity building for action*- raising individual and group skill level and strengthening partnership capacity and evaluation of the CBPR process;
- *Planning for action*- identifying community needs, resources, goals and objectives, choosing strategies and planning for intervention implementation

Project GRACE Consortium

*Comprised of **51** organizations and **43** individuals*

Steering Committee

Area L AHEC

Better Days Ahead

CEO

Citizens of Edgecombe Co.

East Tarboro-Princeville CDC

Edgecombe Co. Health Dept.

Freedom Hill Community Health Center

Heritage Hospital

NAACP, Edgecombe County

Nash Co. Health Dept.

Nash Health Care Systems

New Sources, Inc.

Project Momentum, Inc.

Rocky Mount OIC

Sozo Ministries

Visions, Inc.

Wright Center, Inc.

UNC-Chapel Hill

Membership & By-Laws
Sub-Committee

Events Planning
Sub-Committee

Research Design
Sub-Committee

Communications &
Publications Sub-Committee

Fiscal/ Budget
Sub-Committee

Nominations
Sub-Committee

The Consortium

Mission

To improve the health of minority and/or high-risk populations by establishing collaborative structures and processes that respond to, empower, and facilitate communities in defining and solving their own problems.

Includes volunteers from many fields, including:

- HIV/STI prevention and/or care services
- Edgecombe County and City Government
- Health Care Services
- Education & Educational Support for Youth
- Daycare Services
- Housing Assistance
- Legislative Representation
- Education & Educational Support for Young Adults and Adults
- Local History/Genealogy for African Americans
- Recreation
- Private Business
- Mental Health Services & Support
- Character and Life Skills Training
- Employment assistance
- Religious/Spiritual Support

The Steering Committee

- Responsible for conducting the business of the Consortium and providing governance.
- Composed of:
 - 6 Community Based Representatives (CBOs)
 - 5 Agency Representatives
 - 4 Academic Representatives
 - 4 At-Large Representatives

Process Evaluation: Methods

- Visions, Inc.-independent contractors
 - Conducted semi-structured interviews with all steering committee members
 - Year 1 n=14; Year 2 n=18
- 4 areas assessed include:
 - Knowledge of the project
 - General climate
 - -Isms and cultural differences
 - Empowerment and operations

Methods: Process Evaluation

- Results presented to the Steering Committee at annual retreat
 - used as a basis for discussion and where necessary for changes in activities, procedures and policies

Process Evaluation- Year 1

- Need for specificity regarding the tasks to be completed, the resources needed, by whom they would be provided, and the process for collaboration and accountability.
- *Created timeline that detailed tasks to be completed, the resources needed, by whom they would be provided*
- Need for all members to attend a workshop to prepare for dealing with issues of racism, sexism, and classism
- *Hold additional workshops for new steering committee members who had not completed the initial training.*

Process Evaluation- Year 1

- Need for a process for addressing tension and conflict within the steering committee
- *Have a process consultant at each steering committee meeting to facilitate discussions when sensitive issues arise.*
- Pride in contributions of members to the design and initiation of the project
- *Continue to include community members in the decision-making for the project and look for opportunities to seek out and use the expertise of individuals and organizations within the community.*

Process Evaluation- Year 1

- Need for representation on working committee to reflect the population who are the focus of the project.
- *Community members to serve as chairs of working committees and balance academic and community representation on each committee.*

Process Evaluation- Year 2

- Officers felt like they are “hanging out there” with little support.
- *Provide coaching to the Steering Committee Chair and Vice Chair to support their work in leading the Committee and Consortium*
- Need to affirm the work of people on the Steering Committee
- *Spend a few minutes addressing what went well in the meeting and what did not.*

Process Evaluation- Year 2

- Resentment towards one subcontractor for lack of meeting attendance and accountability.
- *Develop clear policies, procedures, and practices around expectations of all subcontractors.*

Conclusions

- Has allowed an opportunity to address conflicts and provided greater transparency
- High level of commitment and involvement of Steering Committee members
- Because of careful attention to process partners believe their opinions are valued and thus are willing to stay engaged.

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Project GRACE Steering
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