

Community Health Assessment (CHA) Strategies that Influence Public Policy and Systems Changes

Priti Irani, MS, New York State Department of Health

November 7, 2007

NYSDOH - APHA

1

Sincere thanks to....

- CDC Assessment Initiative
- Jean Audet, MA, Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS)
- Patricia Harrison, MS, BSN, Washington County Public Health
- Sabrina Jaar Marzouka, JD, MPH, Dutchess County Department of Health
- Larry Pasti, MA, Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS)
- Sue Ellen Wagner, Healthcare Association of New York State
- Vicky Wheaton-Saraceni, Adirondack Rural Health Network

Also many thanks to...

New York State Department of Health

- Cate Bohn, MPH
- Delton Courtney, MHA
- Lucy Mazzaferro
- Mike Medvesky, MPH
- Marie Miller, MS

Local Health Departments

Community Health Assessment Strategies?

Community Health Assessment

Community health assessment (CHA) is defined as **part of a strategic plan** that describes the **health of the community** by **collecting, analyzing and using data to educate and mobilize communities, develop priorities, garner resources, and plan actions for improvement.**

Strategy

Patterns of action, decisions, and policies that guide a group toward a vision or goals.

Outline

- Five Community Assessment Strategies
- Process
- Stories from the field
- Role of government in translating assessment information into effective health policy

Five Community Assessment Strategies



“PTIRL” with a Silent ‘T’

Partnerships

Training and Technical Assistance

Information and Data

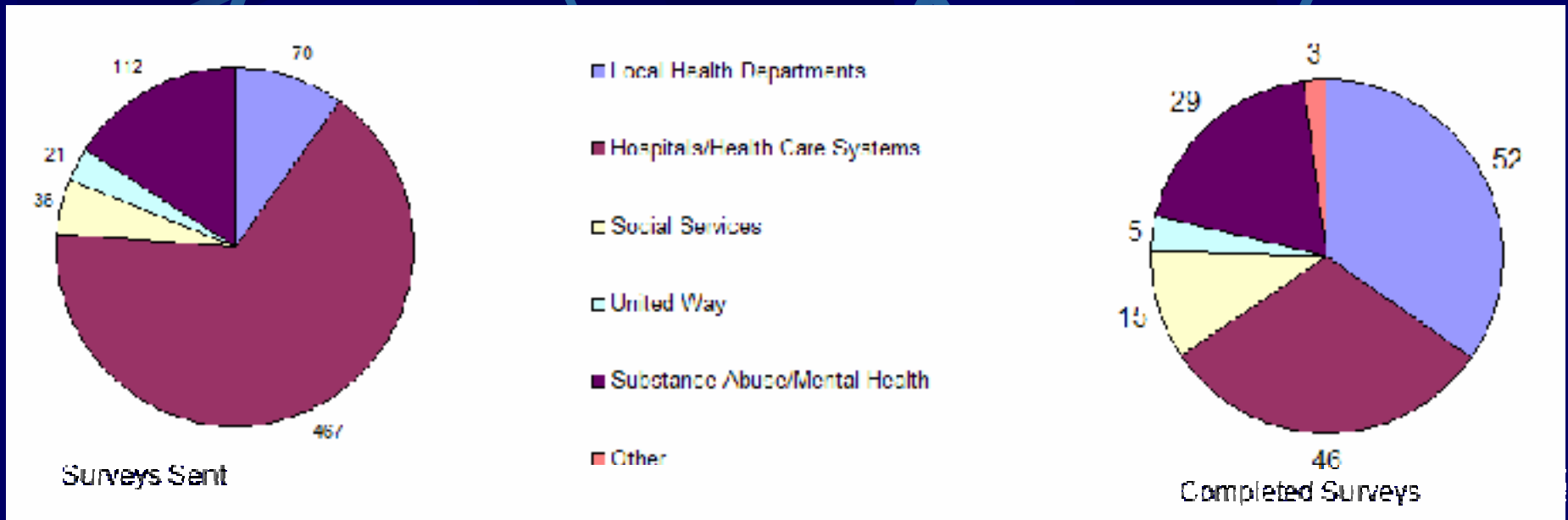
Resources: funding, staffing, equipment

Leadership

How did we learn about PTIRLS?

- Spring 2007 Survey Responses from 149 assessment practitioners
- Follow-up interviews with eight practitioners
- Fall 2007 conference with 70 practitioners
- Interviews to learn about community assessment strategies

Who participated?



n = 706

n = 149

Similar representation from major organizations in interviews, conference and community assessment strategies

Partnerships

Surveys/Interviews:

- Quality of Partnership among top three factors that influence CHA impact
- Significant effort and resources invested in partnerships

Observed Strong Partners:

- Significantly contributed to funding or staffing
- Bought into Performance Measures



Strong Partnership

Monroe County (City of Rochester) Health Action Network (www.healthaction.org)

- Local health departments and hospitals collaborate on assessments
- Their reports illustrate they are tracking the performance measures related to priority issues e.g. obesity

Training and Technical Assistance

The Silent “T”:

- Did not learn much about role of training and technical assistance on CHA Impact from practitioner perspective
- 12 month follow up of individual trainings indicated that participants found it useful

*Irani P. R., Byrne C., Medvesky M. G., Young C. D., and Waltz, E. C..
Measuring the impact of a public health data training program.
Journal of Public Health Management and Practice, 2002, 8 (4), 54-62.*

Information and Data

Surveys/Interviews:

- Consensus that relevant data is critical
- “Relevant” varies: sub-county, special populations, financial
- Access to data has increased

Observed:

- Practitioners use current data when available
- Data requests are getting more sophisticated
- Primary data is valued;
- Data Uses: intermediate measures, baseline, guide action



Getting Data

The Dutchess County Department of Health and the Dutchess County Children's Services Council worked in cooperation with a large pediatric provider to establish baseline data for the prevalence of childhood obesity.

Resources

Surveys/Interviews:

- Staff dedicated to CHA process a key factor in impact
- Resources: staff, funding, partner contributions

Observed:

- Creative use of resources: pooling, contacts/influence/leadership



Resourceful

- Five small, rural local health departments pooled their resources, and worked with the Adirondack Rural Health Network to conduct a strong assessment
- Assessment helped counties leverage approximately \$2.4 million in health care grants including funding for a USDA tele-health project and a federally qualified health center

Leadership

Surveys/Interviews:

- Leadership of CHA process a key factor in impact
- Leaders:
 - Spend time to think through, and select data that is relevant to results
 - Pre-plan
 - Prepare for evaluation from the start
 - Attract resources

Translating assessment into effective health policy

Which levels of government?

Federal, state and local

What areas?

Assessment and Strategic Planning share common ground with:

Public Health ♦ Health Care ♦ Social Services ♦
Substance Abuse ♦ Mental Health ♦ Youth
Services ♦ County Planning ♦ Non-profits ♦
Business ♦

Role of govt - Translating assessment info. into effective health policy

Data and Information

- Increase access to data and information
- Disseminate assessment strategies

Workforce

- Support opportunities for implementation and evaluation of training and technical assistance

Role of govt.: Translating assessment info. into effective health policy ..contd.

Research

- Advocate to fill the gaps in assessment practice research

Resources

- Facilitate access to funding, partnerships, equipment

Thank You

Priti Irani, Research Scientist
New York State Department of Health

pri01@health.state.ny.us

(518) 474-2543