

# Assessing regional need to build statewide capacity around integrating tobacco control and chronic disease issues

Jennifer D. Keith, MPH<sup>1</sup>, Tinesha Peterson, MPH<sup>2</sup>, Kathleen Coughy, PhD<sup>1</sup>, Marlin L. Williams, MBA<sup>2</sup>, Xuan-Shi Lim<sup>1</sup>, and Natalie Smith<sup>1</sup>.  
 (1) Research and Evaluation, Philadelphia Health Management Corporation, 260 S. Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19102. (2) Health Promotion Council, 260 S. Broad St., Philadelphia, PA 19102

There is a growing call to integrate tobacco control and chronic disease issues, especially as tobacco use and exposure greatly impact those with or at-risk for chronic diseases. In Pennsylvania, a new initiative, implemented by the Health Promotion Council and sponsored by the Department of Health, seeks to build the capacity of community health and government organizations to address this need for integrated efforts. The initiative, BE A BRIDGE - Bringing Evidence-Based Research Initiatives to Disparate Groups with Evaluation- (BAB), will conduct three regional summits, each with follow-up skill building workshops as part of its capacity building efforts.

To inform each summit, BAB assessed regional need through a statewide Capacity Survey. The anonymous survey was distributed through BAB partner networks to maximize reach. Survey questions focused on four areas of organizational capacity: leadership, adaptive, management and technical capacities. To further assess needs, participants were asked to rate and rank 21 potential skill-building trainings. Survey data were analyzed by region (approximated by zip code) to inform the structure and content of each BAB summit and workshop. Data were also used to analyze the reach of existing networks, inform discussions around current tobacco control and chronic disease integration at the community level, and identify baseline capacities for the new initiative. Survey results were shared with participants via face-to-face presentations and the BAB website.

## BE A BRIDGE Partnership

- Aims:
  - Use a collaborative approach to build capacity;
  - Work among a broad spectrum of organizations; and
  - Link tobacco resources and chronic diseases.
- Capacity building activities include:
  - Regional Summits statewide;
  - Tailored skill building workshops; and
  - Web-based resource sharing.

## Capacity Survey - Goals

- Conduct an easy to complete, concise capacity and readiness assessment from a sample of potential Summit and workshop attendees.
- Obtain feedback on training needs of potential Summit and workshop attendees.
- Assess the current reach of the BE A BRIDGE Partnership.

## Capacity Survey - Topics

- Organizational Description
  - Organization type, target populations, geographic focus, organizational size and focus areas
- Organizational Capacity
  - Leadership, adaptive, management and technical capacities
- Training Needs
- Regional Summit Interest

## Methods & Response

- Primarily web-based with additional mail-in option
- Distributed through existing networks of Partnership members
- Developed with partner input and literature from capacity, partnership and organizational assessments<sup>1</sup>
- N=209

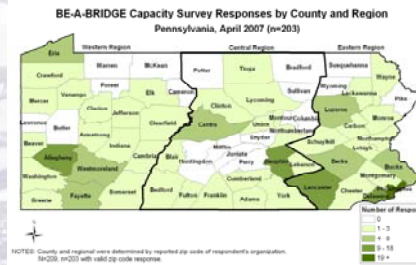
<sup>1</sup> Including resources from McKinsey and Company, The Marguerite Casey Foundation and Connelly.

## Findings – Training Needs

Most Frequently Cited Training Needs by Pennsylvania Region	
East	Community Mobilization Evaluation Planning/Outcomes Assessment Media/Marketing
Central	Evaluation Planning/Outcomes Assessment Implementation/Replication/Expansion of Evidence-based Programs Working with Health Care Providers
West	Community Mobilization Evaluation Planning/Outcomes Assessment Grant Writing

## Key Recommendations

- **Expand existing networks.**
  - Reach out to areas with low response.
  - Seek out connections organizations working on chronic diseases.
- **Factor in the complexity of building capacity.**
  - Tailor workshops based on regional needs.
  - Build on existing areas of capacity.
- **Continue to gather feedback.**
  - Evaluate Summits, workshops and other meetings.
  - Consider alternatives for gathering feedback, i.e. focus groups.



## Findings – Capacity

- **Leadership** – reported as strongest area of capacity.
- **Adaptive** – 9 out of 10 respondents report responding to community needs and an understanding of agencies in complementary areas.
- **Management** – More information needed about this type of capacity; regional advisors can provide context.
- **Technical** – Generally strong; regional differences most apparent in language translation.

For more information please contact:

Marlin Williams      Jennifer Keith  
[marlin@phmc.org](mailto:marlin@phmc.org)      [jkeith@phmc.org](mailto:jkeith@phmc.org)  
 215-731-6109      215-985-2527

Visit the BE A BRIDGE Website at: [www.beabridge.org](http://www.beabridge.org)

