Using Appreciative Inquiry to Engage Community Members in a Health Needs Assessment

Ellie Tinto-Poitier, NO/AIDS Task Force
Chatrian Kanger, Louisiana Public Health Institute
APHA Annual Conference 2013
Formed in 1983: WE’RE TURNING 30!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual Budget</td>
<td>$3.5m</td>
<td>$6.6m</td>
<td>$11.9m</td>
<td>$20.2m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid Staff</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>500+</td>
<td>600+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2012 visits & clients
- 3,404 HIV+ CM clients
- 1,239 PMC patients
- 3,062 CTR (tests)
- 1,340 MAP clients
- 24,955 Meals Delivered

A Partnership For Life
Identify within the target population:
- Unique characteristics that affect access to Primary Care, attitudes, preferences, etc.
- Special sub-populations otherwise not identified or served
- Existing resources

Identify key informants to assist with the planning process

Provide forum to obtain community input

Assist with prioritization of needs
Background / Context

- Post-hurricane Katrina New Orleans
- Over-taxed, over-surveyed, over-assessed resident population
- Little results → Leaving residents feel like their voices are not really heard
AI is a framework (i.e., “a lens”)  

Underlying assumption is that people and organizations are full of assets, capabilities, resources, and strengths that can be located, affirmed, leveraged and encouraged:  

- 1. The positive is the focus of inquiry  
- 2. Inquiring into stories of life—“ask for examples”  
- 3. Locating themes that appear in the stories and selecting topics for further inquiry  
- 4. Creating shared images of a preferred future  
- 5. Identify innovative ways to create that future.
Data Collection Strategy

- Defined catchment area:
  - 70112, 70113, 70116, 70117, 70119

- Created 5 neighborhood groupings:
  - Mid City / Bayou St. John
  - Bywater / Marigny
  - French Quarter / CBD
  - Iberville / Central City / Tulane –Gravier
  - Treme / 7th Ward / St. Roch / St. Claude

- Data collection activities: surveys, focus groups, interviews with FQHCs/stakeholders
How AI Was Applied to the CNA:

- **Survey Design:**
  - Which services are available? Vs. Which services are not available?
  - How satisfied are you with this service? Vs. What are the problems with this service?

- **Focus Groups:**
  - Began each session by asking “What makes your neighborhood unique?”
  - “What would be your ideal / wish list for health care in your neighborhood?”

- **Interview Questions:**
  - “Where do you see opportunities to partner w/ NATF for complementary services?”
  - “In what ways would having a CHC in these areas be beneficial for those residents?”

- **Reporting:**
  - Organized by neighborhood
  - Included neighborhood photos as section headers
What Worked Well Applying AI:

- Approach can be easily applied by staff w/o extensive evaluation experience
- Focus Group participants left feeling “good” and excited about their neighborhoods as a result of the discussion instead of “negative”
- Phrasing of questions to interview participants created non-threatening atmosphere & allowed for diplomatic responses
- Phrasing of questions facilitated data collection and analysis
Findings – Access Barriers

- 35% of respondents do not have a doctor or healthcare provider they see regularly.
- Reported most barriers: Black, 41+ years old, <30,000 hh income/year, Gay orientation.
- Other barriers:
  - Cost for medical appointments
  - Cost of filling Rx
  - Cost of Specialty Care
  - Cost of medical tests
- 34% report having to travel 6–10 miles to the place they usually go to for healthcare.
Groups Perceived as Having Difficulties Accessing Care:

- Bartenders
- Musicians / Artists
- Teens
- Adults
- People living with HIV or AIDS
- Women
- Children
- Chronically Ill
- Elderly
- Uninsured / Under-insured
After Hours / Weekend Services and Telephone Advice Line are most frequently noted needs

Single Most Important Barrier to Accessing Care in Neighborhood:

1. Health services not available
2. Health services not affordable
3. No health insurance
4. Lack of transportation
5. Location not easily accessible

Most important health concerns:
- Eating healthy / Nutrition services
- Dental services
- Physical fitness / Exercise
- Overall wellness strategies
- Finding respectful doctors and nurses
Availability of Health Services

Additional service needs:

- Medicaid enrollment
- Disease Support Groups
- Nutrition & cooking classes
- WIC

![Chart showing availability of health services]

- Smoking Cessation services
- Nutrition counselling
- Injury treatment
- Adolescent services
- Maternal/infant services
- Annual check-ups
- HIV/AIDS screening services
- Dental services
- Preventive services
- Pharmacy services
84% survey respondents say their healthcare needs are being met ‘somewhat well’ or ‘very well’.

4 out of 5 survey respondents feel doctors are judgmental & don’t understand them.
Neighborhood Suggestions

- Re-furbish a blighted building!
- Make it accessible to public transportation
- Make it reflective of the local flavor & culture!
- Rebranding:
  - Tie in with geography / historical aspects of community
Neighborhood Suggestions

Create partnerships for services:
- **Hospitals** for specialty care and dental services
- **Holistic providers**, such as ‘The Healing Center’
- **Schools** for adolescents (STD/HIV+ family planning)

Models for Care/Sustainability:
- “One Stop Shopping/mall atmosphere” – Primary Care, Mental Health, housing assistance, job/GED training, WIC, etc.
- Departmentalize – different entry points for different services
- Offer alternative medicine / holistic approaches
- Create a restaurant operated by volunteers and a community garden
- Consider a ‘campus’ style setting for hard-to-reach populations that could benefit from wellness offerings
Contact Information:

Ellie Tinto-Poitier  
CHC Project Manager  
NO/AIDS Task Force  
504.821.2601  
elliet@noaidstf.org

Chatrian Kanger  
Sr. Evaluation Manager  
LA Public Health Institute  
504.301.9840  
ckanger@lphi.org

Community Engagement Assistance  
Evaluation Assistance
Resources on Appreciative Inquiry:

- Appreciativeinquiry.case.edu
- Eval.org
- http://www.kstoolkit.org/Appreciative+Inquiry