



## The Importance of Community in Rural Health

UND College of Nursing & Professional Disciplines

N548 Advanced Public Health Nursing

December 7, 2017

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Center *for*  
Rural Health

The University of North Dakota  
School of Medicine & Health Sciences

- Established in 1980, at The University of North Dakota (UND) School of Medicine and Health Sciences in Grand Forks, ND
- One of the country's most experienced state rural health offices
- UND Center of Excellence in Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity
- Home to seven national programs
- Recipient of the UND Award for Departmental Excellence in Research

**Focus on**

- Educating and Informing
- Policy
- Research and Evaluation
- Working with Communities
- American Indians
- Health Workforce
- Hospitals and Facilities

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Today's Objectives/Questions

- **What is rural health?**
- **What are the rural health issues and conditions?**
- **How are rural health and rural communities intertwined?**
  - Strengths and weaknesses of rural and urban communities
  - Rural Community Health Equity Model
  - Building healthier communities
  - A health community is....
  - Catalysts for a healthy community
  - Resources for building healthy communities
- **What is community engagement and how do we do it?**



***Our Values as a Society Shape Our Approach to Health***

**“It is not what we have that will make us a great nation. It is how we decide to use it.”**

**Theodore Roosevelt**

**“Vision is the art of seeing things invisible”**

**Jonathan Swift**

**“Americans can always be relied upon to do the right thing...after they have exhausted all the other possibilities”**

**Sir Winston Churchill**



## What is Rural Health

- **Rural health focuses on population health and improving health status**
  - “Health outcomes of a group of individuals, including the distribution of such outcomes within the group” Dr. David Kindig, *What is Population Health?*
  - Rely on **social determinants of health** and their impact on the population (Health care system, Health Behaviors, Socio-Economic factors, Physical Environment) – “**drivers**” of health policy (Better Health, Better Care, and Lowered Cost – Three Aims)
- **Historically, rural health has focused more on infrastructure:** facilities, providers, services, and programs available to the public (all with quality, access, and cost implications) – **In the ACA world more emphasis on population health, but infrastructure is still critical as it is the pathway to achieve better population health.**
  - HRSA (ORHP, SORH, Flex, NHSC) – Federal bureaucracy orientation
  - Infrastructure improvement- health orgs, systems, payment structures
  - More and more health networks – independence with collaboration
  - Delivery systems: CAH, clinics, public health, EMS, nursing homes/aging services, home health, mental health, dental, pharmacy, and others

Stutsman County



## What is Rural Health?

- **Rural health is not urban health in a rural or frontier area**
  - **Social determinants of health** vary between urban and rural (economics/income, education, health systems, environmental conditions)
  - Rural is older, poorer, less insured, and has a higher level of morbidity for a number of conditions
  - Rural culture, relationships, how we do things are distinct
- **Rural health needs effective health policy, and health policy needs to rely on competent research**
  - Policy process that is reflective of rural health needs
  - Policy advocacy that tends to be bipartisan
  - Variety of advocacy groups
  - Rural health research community

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## What is Rural Health?

- **Philosophy: rural people have the same right to expect healthy lives and access to care as do urban people – fairness frame**
  - Access essential services locally or regionally
  - Access to specialty services through network arrangements
  - Health outcomes should be comparable
  - Quality of care on par with urban
  - Availability of technology
- **Rural health is very community focused – interdependence frame**
  - Integral part of what a community is and how people see themselves
  - Community engagement – public input is fundamental
  - Sectors: Economic/business, public/government, education, faith/church, and health/human services
  - Direct services provided to the public and secondary impact for other sectors
  - Major employer



## What are the rural health issues and conditions?





### What are Some Important Rural Health Issues?

- Access to and availability of care
- Financial concerns facing rural hospitals and health systems
- Health disparities (inclusive of health conditions and behavioral risks)
- Health workforce
- Quality of Care (inclusive of patient safety)
- Health Information Technology/ Tele-health
- Networks – rural/urban, primary care/public health, acute/public health
- Emergency Medical Services – EMS, ambulance, quick response units
- Community and Economic Development – community viability
- Health Reform (cost, insurance, how we access care, community role)

Sources: 2008 Flex Rural Health Plan, 2009 Environmental Scan, and community presentation feedback surveys 2008-2015



### Preliminary CHNA Issues (2014-2016)

- 41 CHNA analyzed out of possible 45
- 182 ranked needs (range 2 to 8 ranked needs, average 4.4 )
- Issues
  - Behavioral Health 23 out of 41 (56%)
  - Mental Health 20
  - Health Workforce (recruitment/retention, specialists) 17
  - Obesity/Overweight 13
  - Elderly Services (availability or resources) 10
  - Wellness (lifestyle, exercise, physical activity) 10
  - Costs (healthcare, insurance, prescriptions) 9
  - Childcare/daycare 9
  - Jobs with Living Wages 8
  - Ability to Recruit and Retain Young Families 8
  - Poverty 2
  - Violence prevention 2

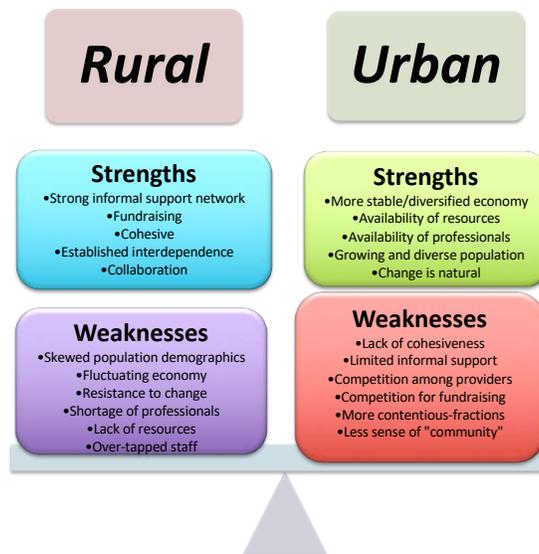
## Rural Health and Rural Community are Intertwined

- Strengths and Weaknesses of Rural and Urban Communities
- Rural Community Health Equity Model
- Building Healthier Rural Communities
- A Healthy Community is....
- Catalysis's for a Healthy Community
- Resources for Building Healthy Communities

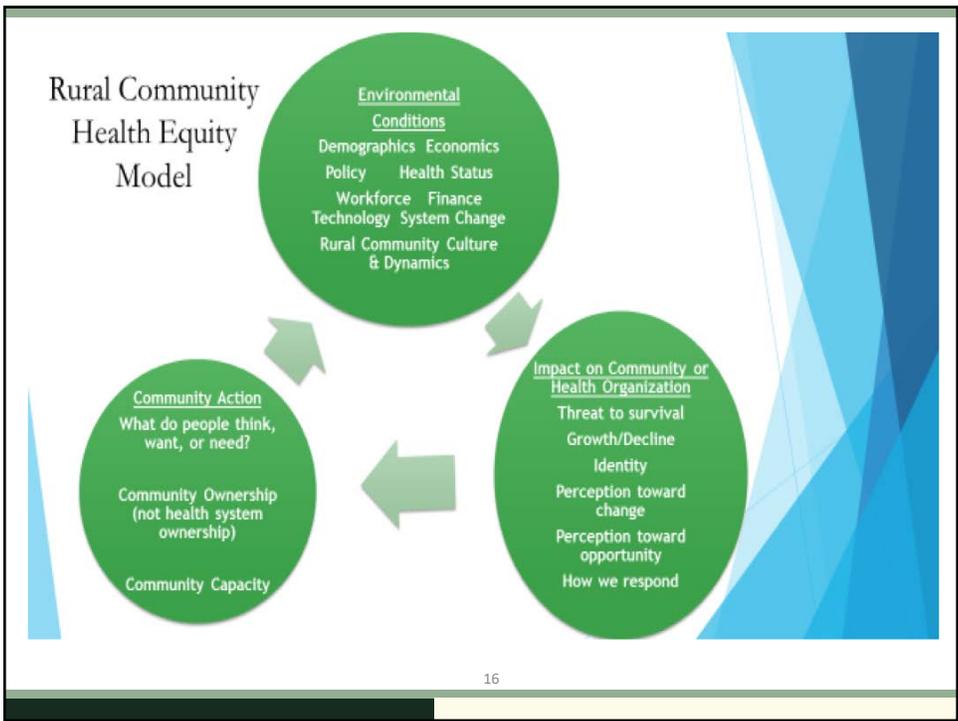


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## Rural and Urban Strengths and Weaknesses



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### Building Healthier Rural Communities Means What?

- Healthier population/clients/patients
- Underlying goal within health reform of the delivery system
- Sense of interdependency and equity
- Local leadership from health sector and other community sectors – partnerships and community coalitions
- Requires *sincere* community engagement
- Greater individual responsibility within the community for one's health but with community structures for support and guidance



- **A healthy community is a**
  - dynamic community
  - changing community
  - fair community
  - engaged community
- **In a healthy community,**
  - diversity is valued
  - people feel included, respected, and trusted
  - people work together
  - assets are valued
  - the goal is the overall health of the community



Source: adapted from <http://sarahefrost.blogspot.com/2011/07/what-makes-community-healthy-why-not.html>



## What Can Act as Catalysts for Building a Healthy Community

- **Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) and Implementation Plan**
  - Function within the ACA – understanding community needs and meeting those needs
  - Fosters a level of community engagement – needs assessment, key informant, and focus groups, CHNA team, individual committees
  - Collaboration between hospitals and public health (required) and other community groups (health, civic, business, school, faith-based)
  - Opportunity for community collaboration to develop an implementation plan for community health improvement
  - Follow through is imperative
  - What are the goals, objectives, time frame, and ultimately outcomes (how to measure the outcomes)?

## Resources to Aid in Building a Healthier Rural Community

- **CHNA** – process and platform that can lead to a Healthier Community
- **Community Health Improvement Plan** – results from the CHNA and is a road map to build a healthier community
- A Healthier Community comes from the **dedication and hard work** of the people who take **responsibility and provide leadership**
  - Workgroups and committees – diversity, build leadership, build confidence



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### **Resources to Aid in Building a Healthier Rural Community**

- **General Advice: Think Team – Remember Values and Common Beliefs**
  - A team, a coalition of committed people working together
  - Many hours of work over time (but think of eating an elephant ☺ )
  - Compromise – don't expect to get everything you want
  - Flexibility – listen, adjust, try/fail, and keep moving
  - Big picture – what is needed for the community (common good)
  - Methodical small steps to get there – goals, objectives, action steps



## Resources to Aid in Building a Healthier Rural Community

- **CDC Making Healthy Living Easier**  
(<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dch/programs/index.htm>)
  
- **Building Healthier Communities Key Resource List**  
([http://www.muskegonhealth.net/programs/educational/building\\_healthy\\_communities\\_resources.pdf](http://www.muskegonhealth.net/programs/educational/building_healthy_communities_resources.pdf))
  
- **Rural Health Information Hub (RHInfo)** (<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/>)
  - Grant Writing for Rural Healthcare Projects  
(<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/grantwriting>)
  - Healthcare Access in Rural Communities  
(<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/healthcare-access>)
  - Conducting Rural Health Research, Needs Assessment, and Program Evaluation (<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/rural-health-research-assessment-evaluation> )



## Rural Health Information Hub (continued)

- Evidenced Based Toolkits for Rural Community Health  
(<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/community-health/toolkits>)
- Rural Health Models and Innovations  
(<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/community-health/project-examples> )
- Supporting Rural Community Health  
(<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/community-health/support> )
- Finding Statistics and Data Related to Rural Health  
(<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/statistics-and-data>)
- Community Vitality and Rural Healthcare  
(<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/community-vitality-and-rural-healthcare>)
- Rural Tribal Health (<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/rural-tribal-health>)
- Social Determinants of Health for Rural People  
(<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/topics/social-determinants-of-health>)

## What is Community Engagement and How do We do it?

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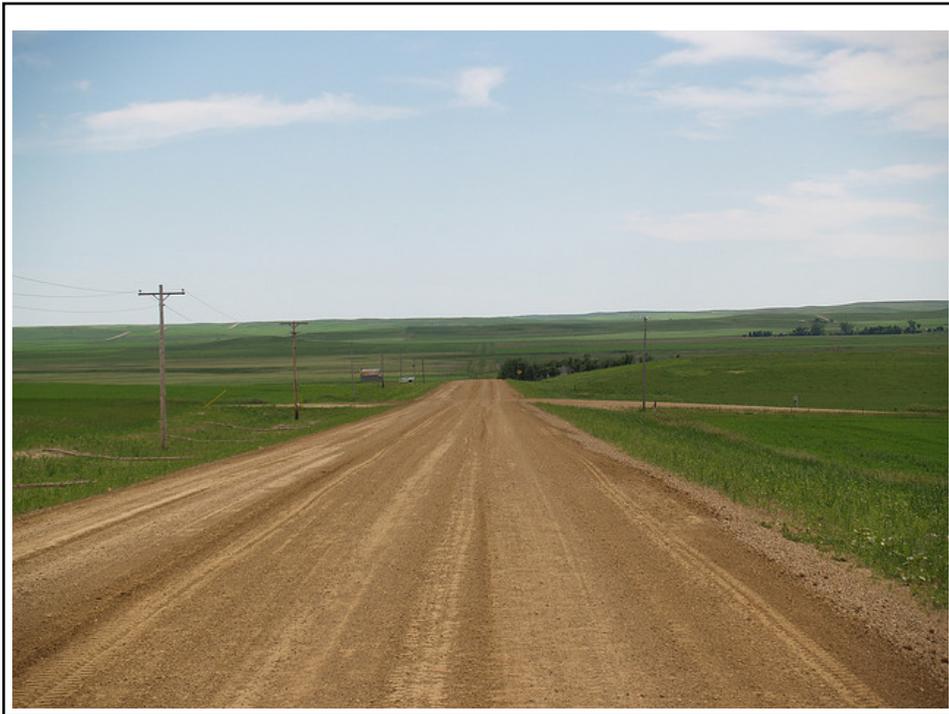
### Why is Community Engagement Important to Rural Health?

- Health care providers and organizations cannot operate in **isolation**
- Community engagement is even more important now as we **redesign the U.S. health delivery system** – re-focus on **population health**, providers are to be assessed and reimbursed on outcomes and patient satisfaction, re-designing the delivery system with alternative payment options (e.g., ACO)
- **Community ownership** – identify needs and work for solutions- community focused
- **Building local capacity and leadership** – think of the next generation of community leadership
- Communication and shared understanding, **shared values**
- **SIMPLE ANSWER: You Need to be Engaged Because You Need to Survive**

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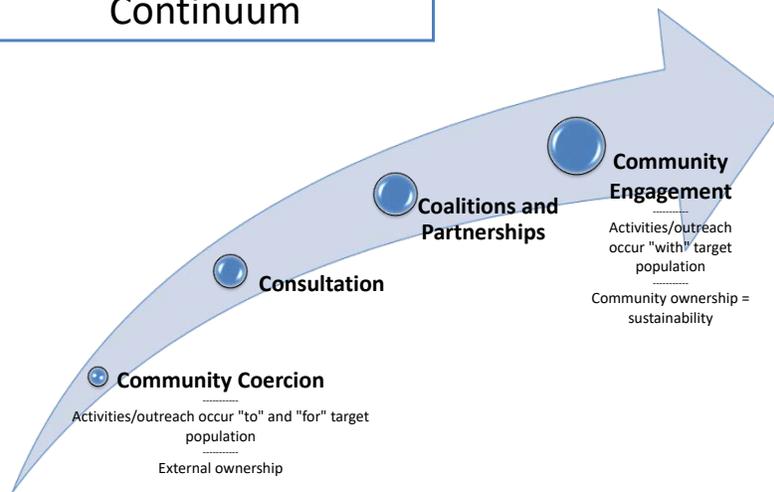


## Community Engagement Toolkit!

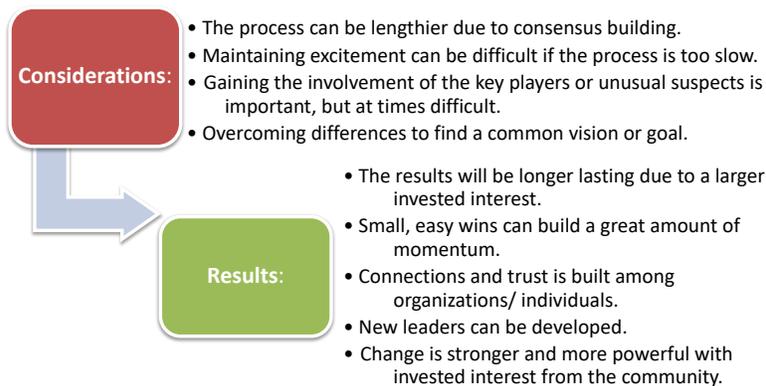
- Original concept out of the Community Transformation Grant (end 9/2014)
- UND – Center for Rural Health believed in the potential, so it has been finished and “branded”.
- It’s set up in 5 Modules, and meant for the user to go from the beginning to the end.
  - Module 1: Finding a Common Mission
  - Module 2: Assessment (Defining the Problem)
  - Module 3: Planning
  - Module 4: Implementation & Evaluation
  - Module 5: Sustainability
- Includes a variety of tools, tips, and tricks, to help any community or group through the process.



## Community Engagement Continuum



## Things to think about when considering a Community Engagement process ...



Source: Brad Gibbens, Deputy Director, Center for Rural Health, UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences

## Module 1: Finding a Common Mission The Foundation

Step 1: Organize your Community Engagement Process

Step 2: Assess and Develop your Partnership Network

Step 3: First full group meeting

Step 4: Setting Goals and Creating Vision

Step 5: Assess Resource Needs

Step 6: Going public!



## Module 2: Assessment and Data Collection

Step 1: Gaps in Analysis and/or Knowledge

Step 2: Defining the Problem/Need



## Module 2: Tools and Samples

Overview of Assessment and Data Types

Population Level Data	
<b>Pros:</b> Can be compared to other communities in your county, state or nationally. Contains very little bias.	<b>Cons:</b> Small communities may not have enough data to have reported figures. Small counts may be interpreted incorrectly. Difficult to effect with community programs.
Stories/Narratives	
<b>Pros:</b> One-on-one accounts of personal experience. Quotes and snapshots can be used to gain support. Not as formal and not scripted.	<b>Cons:</b> May contain personal bias. May contain gossip, speculation, or hearsay. Results may be influenced by individual administering.
Public Meetings	
<b>Pros:</b> Large numbers of people can participate at once. Allows for full "community" input. Enables community to be involved in the process.	<b>Cons:</b> Attendance may be low if there is little/no interest or no incentives are offered. Strong personalities can influence and sway discussion, or stop discussion altogether. Attendees may not be representative of community.
Focus Groups	
<b>Pros:</b> Can be directed at specific target audiences (youth, underrepresented, leaders, etc.) Conflict and strong personalities are easier to handle. Follow-up questions are easily provided.	<b>Cons:</b> Attendees may not be representative of community. Facilitators are usually required. Strong personalities can influence and sway discussion, or stop discussion altogether.
Interviews	
<b>Pros:</b> Easy to identify and hear from target population. Attendance is consistent and reliable. Follow-up questions are easily provided. Participants are easily contacted for more information, or post-implementation feedback.	<b>Cons:</b> Does not offer any real sense of community engagement. May contain personal bias. Results may be influenced by individual administering. Can be a lengthy process.
Surveys	
<b>Pros:</b> Can cover a great deal of information. Can require very little time to gather feedback from many. Reduction in administration bias. Can fill gaps in population level data for small counts.	<b>Cons:</b> Can be a lengthy process, and lengthy to tabulate results. Responses may not represent a snapshot of reality. If not designed well (professionally), answers may not be useable. Do not offer any real sense of community engagement.

Change Concept: Increase Community Walkability		
Assessment Results	2 out of 10 intersections have a designated crosswalk.	All streets leading to schools/park lack a bike lane.
	40% of kids age 10-15 have a BMI at or above obese.	90% of students are bussed or driven to school, but live less than 1 mile from it.
ADD	3 highly travelled sidewalks are hazardous (have large cracks or extremely uneven).	Two intersections near the elementary school are missing curb cuts to sidewalks, for easy access.
	An informal path between the baseball field and school is not maintained.	
Areas of Opportunity:		
1. City is currently planning to redo Main Street, and they're accepting suggestions for improvements. Curb cuts and crosswalks are needed on Main Street.		
2. Schools are looking for a couple of volunteering opportunities for youth, as an alternative to detention, maybe those youth could help with the building of a trail between the baseball field and school.		

## Module 3: Community Planning

Step 1: Different Types of Plans

Step 2: Understanding the CHIP

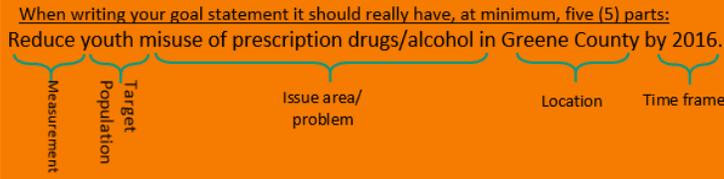
Step 3: How to Run a Planning Meeting

Step 4: Resources

Step 5: Budget, Timeline and Delegation



## Module 3: Tools and Samples



## Module 4: Implementation and Evaluation

Step 1: Who is Responsible?

Step 2: Where to begin?

Step 3: The START button!

Step 4: Tracking Evaluation



## Module 5: Sustainability

Step 1: What does Sustainability really mean?

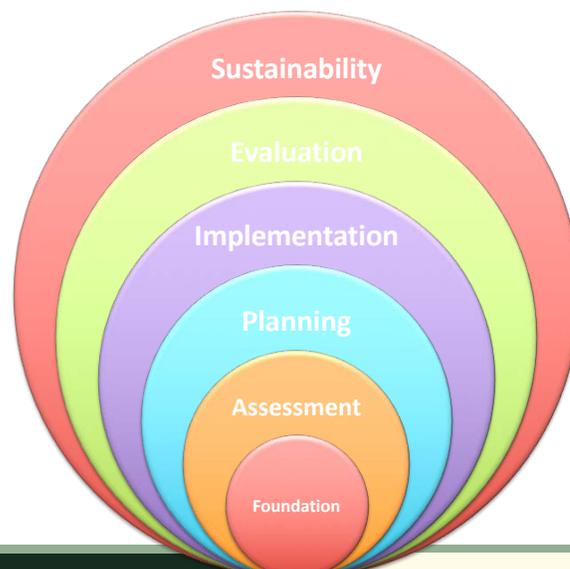
Step 2: Why does Sustainability matter?

Step 3: Who should be involved?

Step 4: Developing your Sustainability Plan



## Let's recap!





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