The Rural Community Health Equity Model

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CDC-CTG Site Visit Meeting

Center for Rural Health

- 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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Rural Communities Have Complex Issues

- Healthy People 2010 recognized “rural localities” as a distinct focus under Goal 2: Eliminate Health Disparities
- Rural issues are compounded by demographic and economic factors (population growth/decline; less dynamic economies, higher levels of poverty, special populations with unique challenges)
- Limited resources and access to resources
- Nature of and acceptance of change in the rural environment
- Overall rural “culture” can be a factor (how we think about issues, make decisions, inclusion of groups)

Rural Community Health Equity Model

Environmental Conditions
- Demographics
- Economics
- Policy
- Health Status
- Workforce
- Finance
- Technology
- Health System Change
- Rural Community Culture & Dynamics

Impact on Community or Health Organization
- Threat to survival
- Growth/Decline
- Identity
- Perception toward change
- Perception toward opportunity
- How we respond

Community Action
- What do people think, want, or need?
  - Assessments
  - Forums-Discussions
  - Interviews
- Community Ownership (not health system ownership)
  - Collaboration
  - Inclusion
  - Participation
  - Interdependence
- Community Capacity
  - Skills and knowledge
  - Leadership development
  - Planning and advocacy
  - Manage change – non-reactive
**Rural Community Health Equity Model**

- Essentially Equity Model is open system theory (open vs. closed systems)
- Rural Conditions are environmental factors – endemic throughout rural
- Cause an Impact on the rural community/rural health organization
  - Positive and/or negative effect
  - Community perceptions play a role
  - Facilitates change or can produce or augment barriers or resistance to change
- Rural Community can then engage in community action
  - Community Input
  - Community Ownership
  - Community Capacity

**KEY:** An Engaged Community through Action can Influence Environmental Factors

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**Contact us for more information!**

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