

Health Equity Showcase, August 2019

What's the project?

Title V Maternal and Child Health Block Grant Needs Assessment. This is a statewide needs assessment that is required to be completed every 5-years. We are approaching this project in a way its never been done before. The needs assessment is currently in progress and will wrap up in September 2019.

Why is it important?

The primary goal of the Title V needs assessment is to identify our top maternal and child health priorities so the work of our division and our partners can improve the health of women, families and children, including children and youth with special health needs. We are working to better engage the community and strengthen our partnerships to ensure effective implementation of strategies that address the needs of the Minnesota's women, children and families.

How did you accomplish it? Who were your partners?

Last summer and fall we sent out a discovery survey asking people living in Minnesota two simple questions about what women, children and families need to thrive and what their unmet needs are. We received over 2,700 responses from across the state. Information collected in our discovery survey helped select 40 candidate priorities.

On top of data collected through the discovery survey our team has worked with **248 individuals over the last 18 months** who are either subject matter experts in the topics we have been researching or experts in methodology, engagement, and analysis. We also conducted focus groups with parents of children and youth with special health needs.

Lessons Learned

Research and community work are humbling endeavors and one must be open to critiquing their work and examining the biases they bring to the project. Doing a formal bias check at the beginning would have been very helpful.

We've also learned that you will take some heat for doing things more equitably and more inclusively and are happy to share our experiences.

Perhaps the most important lesson we have learned is the critical need to be creative and flexible. To be willing to invest in risk when 'the old way' isn't working, and then to share your successes **and** failures so that we all learn together.

Results and Next Steps

Our division will choose 10 new priorities for maternal and child health that will guide the strategic direction of the work being done by the Child and Family health (CFH) division for the next 5 years. Additionally, we have and are building invaluable community partnerships that will continue to grow and allow us to do better, more informed work. We are also providing technical assistance to other states (including doing a skills training at the AMCHP conference in Texas in March on conducting a trauma-informed, intersectional needs assessment) and are sharing all of our materials and tools we use. All our work emphasizes equity, including action items and trauma-informed approaches and strategies.

In the summer of 2019 we are completing multiple prioritization exercises including eight Community Forums (4 in-person in the twin cities and 4 all remote forums).

In October 2019 we will announce the new Title V maternal and child health priorities.

Team Members

Molly Meyer, Blair Harrison, and a Team of Fabulous Interns



Caption: Title V Maternal and Child Health Needs Assessment Logo