

NOPREN Hunger Safety Net Work Group Meeting Minutes– September 28, 2015

Partner perspective from Jane Duffield, SNAP-ed, USDA

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- No internal research going on right now.
- Recent grants given to 4 universities to serve as regional centers of excellence,
 - Grants given to UNC, Colorado State, Washington State, Cornell University, and Univ. of Kentucky at Lexington (coordinating center) ◦
- Universities conducting research to build the evidence of SNAP-Ed interventions and other nutrition educational program run through FNS, USDA.
- Health and Hunger Free Kids Act mandates that nutrition education be evidence based—looking at existing interventions and their effectiveness.
- Very interested in PSE approaches to SNAP-Ed, rather than just individual + social marketing approaches which have been traditionally covered under the SNAP-Ed umbrella.
- Historically it was indirect education and social marketing but over time and since passage of HHFK Act they have expanded to policy systems and environmental approaches
- Asking states to have a more balanced approach to nut education

What are some of these public health approaches?

- 1) *YPAR* - Youth receiving SNAP-Ed, encouraging and mentoring youth to change their environment to make it healthier—empowerment and implementation of change. Research/evaluation of effectiveness of this intervention.
- Karen Barelli—with Public Health Institute – evaluating intervention in Hawaii and LA, to assess effectiveness of intervention. Practice-based intervention in the SNAP-Ed toolkit.
- 2) *Food pantries* – looking at a process to develop a food pantry assessment tool and strategy document to be used at pantries across the Western region. To be completed in the next year. Started to put together a strategy document of 5 areas (capacity, education, and 3 other focus areas)

Identified research gaps?

- PSE approaches is the big focus, use of policy interventions and how they could be used to improve dietary outcomes

Food Pantry Assessment Tools

- Michelle Berger-Marshall (Feeding America): there are a number of assessment tools out there. Feeding America has a tool, the CSAT, which is a self-assessment tool for pantries
- Karen Webb (Nutrition Policy Institute): NPI is running an evaluation component of SNAP-ed to help local health depts. reorient toward PSE approaches.
- Some of them work with food pantries and would like to work with food banks.
- Hope to do qualitative work in the role food pantries and food banks would like to play in SNAP-Ed. Some SNAP-Ed nutrition education classes are being done at food banks/food pantries.

- Darcy Freedman (Case Western University): doing collaborative work with states on SNAP-ed around Creating Healthy Communities Program to assess community and practitioner readiness and PSE capacity (farmers market, healthy food retail, farm to school, and child care)
- Have conducted qualitative interviews first with practitioners and coalition members in 9 areas to understand pre-intervention work that needs to happen before you can implement a successful program
- Now working with partners to develop diagnostic tools to determine where community is at in terms of readiness for PSE implementation, excellent partnership with state and city.

Group Discussion: Subgroups

Food Policy Councils: Chair - Larissa Calancie (UNC)

- Focusing specifically on organizations that are taking on food system issues.
- Food policy councils bring together stakeholders from across systems to coordinate action.
- They tend to work on variety of goals and issues but one thing is they seek to address hunger by addressing food system approaches and promoting local agriculture.
- Looking to work with other councils and collaborative approaches.
- Goals of subgroup:
 - Connect researchers and practitioners that work with councils to share knowledge and resources and host content and bring on technical experts as speakers to share expertise
 - Identify opportunities to work together to address hunger alleviation.
 - Streamline data collection from councils across the country.
 - Provide technical assistance, data and evaluation needs to support these councils.

Clinical Linkages: Chairs - Steve Cook (Univ. of Rochester) and Ellen Barnidge (St. Louis University)

- Want to start by making connections with existing practice-based networks. They serve a lot of high need families and addressing the underlying social determinants of health are going to be important for these populations.
- We want to get an idea of what relevant clinical questions are out there.
- Looking at broader systems level approach on how we can access healthier food.
- It will be important to see what other tools are out there?
- Looking at how population health is getting addressed in pockets or regions of the country with healthcare reform.
- Interest in developing a paper or EHR-based algorithm to assist providers in knowing what to do with a positive screen
- God's Love We Deliver: has an assessment tool (used with Medicaid patients) that leads the care coordinator through a pathway and if they get a green check mark they would be appropriate to refer to food services. It is a state based model but it is a good assessment designed to target highest risk people.
- Carol Caplan (Food Network)- presented at grand rounds and did a discussion on the topic of doctors identifying those in need and what to do. Surprised to find they wanted resources to be able to offer to clients but there was a different between short and long term solutions for families.
- Our speaker next month from Health Leads is very relevant to this topic.

Food Systems: Chair - Alex Lewin-Zwerdling (AARP)

- A huge topic that could take many different directions and could be overly broad if not focused.
- Piggybacking on work being done at AARP, an approach that looks at root causes of food insecurity and moves away from a charity model.

- Moving towards addressing systemic issues that are underlying food insecurity and creating a system with the end goal of sustained food access to people who might not have access to nutritious foods.
- Perspective of shared values. How do you create a base of low income consumers where you're operating with the goal of public health and market opportunities? With that comes a food system approach.
- Ex: we've worked with empty trucks that move across the US and how to get produce on those trucks if they are already moving? Or looking at food prescriptions? Lots of different ways to build value into the system and leverage existing infrastructure. Where in the system can we leverage?
- Output: a series of case studies or academic publication and some visuals that bring together moving pieces that show shared values around reducing food insecurity.
- We don't foresee this being too time consuming for members. Maybe have monthly calls? And maybe divide work among members.
- Amy Yaroch: we've looked at food insecurity and obesity prevention in isolation and we need to take into account the food systems approach to advance both of these areas. They are siloed and we need to take a food systems approach. Measure them in tandem as well. We need a longitudinal study to look at these various things as opposed to how things are being done right now.

Developing a research agenda: Chair - Seth Berkowitz (Harvard-Mass General)

- There were 2 key things for vision:
- A space to talk about specific challenges that people face when trying to do research on these issues because they are not as clear cut and easy to study
- 1) Nail down a sense of what a research agenda would look like in this area. What are the cutting edge questions? What would be of interest to researchers?
- 2) Because we have so many diverse people involved, see if we can come up with some infrastructure building to leverage across sites and get an inventory of what is the capacity across sites. Increase coordination (capacity and infrastructure building) because these topics are hot with a lot of interest, people are doing fascinating work across country and we can link it all together.

Discuss any action items or announcements:

- Next Steps: Melissa will be sending out a surveymonkey to the group with information about each subgroup and to collect names of those interested in each group. We will also be asking you your thoughts on how often you would like this larger group to meet (monthly, bi-monthly, quarterly)
- Next month's call will feature a presentation from Mary Carl at Health Leads
- Visit the new NOPREN website at www.nopren.org. This is the beta version and we are still editing and revising. Please send us any resources you would like featured on the site and give us feedback on how to improve the site.

CDC updates:

- Everything sounds great and excited to see Food Policy Councils fold into this group and get subgroups started
- NCCOR meeting: USDA, CDC, NIH, RWJF have a steering committee that is meeting and Sonia is on a community clinical linkages subgroup that is creating a workshop to look at community clinical linkages around childhood obesity and how to spur evaluation in this area. She will report back to Steve and that group on findings.