

## **AMCHP 2007 ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

### **HEALTHY COMMUNITIES**

March 3rd to 7th, 2007

#### **Title V: Helping to Shape Healthy Communities**

HEIDI DEUTCH: --a proposal to fulfill that grant or even if they got the funding, they didn't necessarily have the staff to be able to administer it. So what really benefited them by going through the MAP process is they understood now what all the different organizations, agencies--and when I say organizations and agencies, I also mean, like, community-based organizations, as well. So don't just think governmental. Because they learned what all of their system partners were doing, they were better able to direct grant opportunities to those different system partners and said, "You know, we can't do this, but you would be great at this. And here's the data to support your proposal, as well."

And so the community had learned that this was really a win-win for both the health department as well as their own needs within the community, because they had better access to resources that they didn't even realize are out there.

And the pictures are actually some of the outcomes of their MAP process. The first one is 'Girls on the Run'. It's an after school program designed to teach fourth and fifth graders better nutrition and self-esteem. The second one is a prevention fair that they did, held in a poverty area of Longview a couple of years

ago. And various partners and agencies sponsored this event, including DARE and the fire department. And then, the last one is a picture of volunteers combining healthy smiles packets to be distributed in low-income families for oral health.

So one of the assets and resources that this community had was an elderly population that wanted to volunteer. So they were able to match sort of this population that wanted to help with some of the needs that they are doing. So that's how MAP kind of brings those two ideas together.

So I was asked to say, "Okay. Well, so how are you supposed to get involved in this MAP process?" First of all, we have a map on our Website. And the long complicated URL is at the bottom of the page to have access to this. It's a map of our MAP users. And basically what you do, is you just want to click on the state, and it will list out for you the communities in your state that are engaged in the MAP process. And if your community doesn't have any MAP communities, or if your state doesn't have any MAP activity, there's ways that you can start engaging your community into doing MAP, as well.

And basically what you would want to do is that first phase--the 'Organizing for Success' phase--read through that in the tool, and that will give you an idea about how to start getting this activity going. Also, you can give me a call. My

contact information is going to be on the last slide. And I can, sort of, brainstorm with you how to get something like this started.

Also, if there's a MAP process happening in your community, you can call the health department with the contact information that's listed in the MAP--on the map about MAP. I use the map word a lot. And you can suggest to them ways that you can be an asset to their MAP effort. And I'll give you some examples in just a minute, which would be now.

So there's several different ways you can be involved. And it just depends on what your interest is. But the idea is that you have unique ideas about your community and unique knowledge about your community. And adding that to the MAP process is very important. Participating in the visioning session so that your knowledge about what health means to you and to families like yours is important to add to that description, to that definition for your community.

Connecting the process with community groups that you know about, that the health department may not know about or the other partners within the existing MAP process; they might not know about them. And it's important throughout the MAP process to add additional partners in where you might have missed. So at any point in the process, giving those recommendations on who else should be at the table is very important.

In terms of the data, designing the assessment would be a really important role, as well. Because the assessment data that you get back is only as good as the questions that you're asking when you're doing the assessment. And so having the questions that are important to you added into the assessment and the data gathering is really important.

In addition, on the backend, it's not just gathering the data, but interpreting that data and figuring out what the different--you've got all this different kinds of data--bringing it together. And those themes emerging really depends on the perspectives that are at the table. So your perspective is equally as important to bring those and understand those themes and how they can connect together.

Also, ensuring that the strategic issues are building from all the different assessment data. And so it's not just really, really heavy on the statistical side, but there's also that community knowledge and community information that's being brought into what kind of issues are going to be the focus area for that community.

And also, then, supporting the goals and strategies by identifying ways to implement activities. A couple of health departments have told me that they went through the MAP process, and then, pretty much, they got to the action cycle, and it died. Because the strategic issues that they identified and the activities and strategies that they identified really weren't in the per view of what the health

department could do. And because they didn't have a process that the participants were really, really engaged, everybody just sort of looked at the health department and said, "Okay. Now, what are you going to do about this stuff?" And we can't really do anything, so it just flattened. But it's really important that once you get to that cycle, that the different partners that are around the table identify what they can contribute to moving it forward into implementation.

One thing--this is all very big picture. These aren't issues that are specific to a disease, that are specific to, you know, one aspect. So it might be kind of difficult to say, "Okay. Well, how are my issues, how are your concerns really going to feed into this bigger picture process?" And it can be frustrating when you sit down and see all this big picture stuff, and you feel like your concerns are kind of getting lost in the shuffle.

The thing to remember about MAP is that what it's trying to do is identify those cross-cutting issues that support a multitude of concerns. For example, if you're concerned with childhood diabetes, that's probably not going to be a strategic issue. It's not very cross-cutting. It's fairly focused. It's pretty disease-oriented. Nevertheless, the community might feel that land use planning is a very important issue for that community. And that's going to hit on mental health, stress, safety issues, and the walkability of the community. Because if you design a community properly, you get, you know, more natural physical activity--

walkability--walking around. And in turn, that will address obesity issues, which will support childhood obesity issues, as well.

So it's not necessarily your issue. But what you want to do is identify those issues that can support some of your concerns and some of your needs, as well. And also by addressing walkability, you're also addressing access to care issues and the ability for disabled children and adults to get around.

So that's all I have. That's my contact information. If you have any questions, sort of think of anything that you want to know about or learn how to engage your community in such a process, or how to get connected to a process that already exists in your community, by all means, give me a call, and I can help you sort of strategize and think that through.