



Community Engagement at a Glance

About this strategy

Community engagement is a strong value and fundamental to public health practice, including the implementation of SHIP. Community engagement involves groups of people in problem-solving and decision-making processes. It is a multifaceted, ongoing process.

Community engagement is important for success and sustainability, because community members have valuable knowledge about assets that can be leveraged and built on, lived experience to inform what will work locally and can be relied on to contribute to good decisions. Together public health expertise and community collective intelligence will more accurately identify assets, lift up challenges and develop more effective solutions.

What does the evidence say?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines community engagement as “the process of working collaboratively with groups of people who are affiliated by geographic proximity, special interests or similar situations with respect to issues affecting their well-beingⁱ.”

The body of knowledge supporting community engagement in interventions to improve health is large. SHIP’s approach to community engagement is grounded in the second edition of CDC’s Principles of Community Engagement. This document references a range of evidence that lifts up the positive impact of community engagement on a range of health outcomes.

Activities

The SHIP statute requires that grantee activities be based on community input and address the health disparities that exist in grantees’ communities.

There are a number of points of engagement to involve community members in the creation of healthier communities. These include:

- Engaging the populations on which health improvement efforts are focused (e.g., engaging students in planning and implementing school-based strategies).
- Engaging populations experiencing health inequities (e.g., engaging low income populations that experience high diabetes rates in the development of community active living strategies).
- Building partnerships to advance SHIP strategy work (e.g., partnering with workplaces to advance wellness).
- Establishing and maintaining strong Community Leadership Teams.

Priority populations

Priority populations to engage will depend on the SHIP strategy, the context and the specific activities. Grantees should consider the following questions:

- Who are the intended beneficiaries and how are they involved?
- How are the populations most affected by health inequities involved?

Requirements

- SHIP Grantees must have an active CLT with an annually updated charter.
- Grantees work plans should indicate CLTs involvement in strategy implementation.
- Grantees must update CLT information in RedCap and support CLT participation in an annual questionnaire.
- *NEW* CLT membership must not include public health staff as members.
- *NEW* CLT membership should not include representatives that receive SHIP funding. If this is not possible, CLT members that receive SHIP funding must not participate in meetings where mini-grant or other funding decisions are made.
- See the SHIP HEDA guide for requirements around engaging populations experiencing health inequities.

Important dates

CLT practice calls are held every other month. These provide an opportunity for local SHIP partners to share best practices, problem solve around current challenges, and increase knowledge on convening and running groups. Please see basecamp for dates, times and WebEx information.

Resources

- [CDC Principles of Community Engagement \(PDF\)](https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/pdf/PCE_Report_508_FINAL.pdf)
(https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/pdf/PCE_Report_508_FINAL.pdf)
- [The Role of Community Culture in Efforts to Create Healthier, Safer, and More Equitable Places: A Community Health Practitioner Workbook \(PDF\)](https://www.preventioninstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Community%20Culture.Final.1.pdf)
(<https://www.preventioninstitute.org/sites/default/files/publications/Community%20Culture.Final.1.pdf>)
- [Community Engagement Toolkit](https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/resources/community-engagement-toolkit)
(<https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/resources/community-engagement-toolkit>)
- [Building the Field of Community Engagement: Assessment](https://www.nexuscp.org/resources/#engagement3)
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ⁱ (CTSA) Community Engagement Key Functions Committee. Principles of Community Engagement, 2011. Page 3.