

APPENDIX B. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT INVENTORY

Useful definitions^{qq}

- **Community:** Community is a group of people who have common characteristics or shared identity; communities can be defined by location, race, ethnicity, age, occupation, interest in particular problems or outcomes, or other similar common bonds. Ideally, there would be available assets and resources, as well as collective discussion, decision-making, and action..
- **Community engagement:** 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-being.

Background and purpose

During March and April 2023, Healthy Minnesota Partnership staff conducted an initial inventory of community engagement efforts presented in various health assessments to explore how community engagement is incorporated into health assessments. This also happened in response to receiving feedback that communities are feeling engagement fatigue from numerous, concurrent engagement efforts. Staff used findings from this inventory to inform this statewide health assessment's community engagement activities.

Methods

Assessments reviewed for this inventory included community health needs assessments, community health assessments, and other assessments conducted by the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and other state agencies in the past five years. To learn from other states, Partnership staff also reviewed a few recent health assessments from states other than Minnesota. As of June 30, 2023, the inventory includes a total of 24 assessments. This appendix contains a list of assessments inventoried and questions asked.

Staff used the following methods to identify assessments for inclusion in the inventory:

- Assessments provided by MDH public health system consultants that were identified to have particularly strong community engagement methods.
- Suggestions from the healthy Minnesota Partnership.
- Community health needs assessments provided by the Partnership.^{rr}
- Other assessments identified by the Partnership and subcommittees.

qq These definitions come from the Minnesota Department of Health Community Engagement Plan, 2016-2019.

rr In fall 2022, Partnership staff conducted an inventory of community health needs assessments completed by nonprofit hospitals to identify health indicator priorities. However, the Partnership also reviewed community engagement efforts. Partnership staff reviewed these community health needs assessments for this community engagement inventory.

Preliminary findings

- Many organizations developed assessments and reports with some form of community input.
- Common community engagement efforts from the assessments examined include focus groups, listening sessions, online surveys, and key informant interviews. Despite these similarities, there are still vast differences in assessment design and community engagement methods and questions across these assessments. Due to these differences, it is difficult to compare this information.
- Many assessments include an emerging focus on systems and policies that create health rather than on individual behaviors.
- Through community input, assessments commonly identified social connectedness and access to resources and education as factors that create health.
- Across the assessments, there was a general lack of input collected around community assets and strengths, particularly with communities experiencing health inequities. Organizations framed most assessments with a deficit perspective.
- There was also a lack of discussion across assessments around how communities prefer to be informed of and use health assessment reports.

Notable assessments

Some assessments included particularly strong community engagement efforts. These may be useful in informing community engagement and messaging for the 2023 Minnesota statewide health assessment. They include:

- **2022 Horizon Community Health Assessment** includes a strong focus on strengths and assets of communities rather than deficits.
- **We Plan 2025 Community Themes and Strengths Assessment from Cook County, Chicago** includes a list of questions focused on community strengths and what creates health.
- **Reducing the Impact of Cancer: Listening to American Indians in Minnesota** provides an example of engaging a community experiencing health inequities on community strengths.

Future directions

The current inventory is not meant to be a final version nor to include an exhaustive list of assessments.

This document reflects findings as of April 28, 2023. Partnership staff can continually update this inventory throughout and beyond the 2023 assessment process.

Some questions and future directions that arose from the preliminary inventory include:

- What can be learned for future community engagement efforts? What new questions does this inventory raise?
- What are potential ways the healthy Minnesota Partnership could explore collaboration around community engagement processes?
- What does shared learning of community engagement processes look like?
- How can one assess who was reached and who was not in community engagement efforts? Are there specific strategies that would be beneficial?

Assessments reviewed

Partnership staff included the following assessments in the inventory, as of April 28, 2023. This is not a final list of assessments, as the inventory is meant to be continually updated throughout and beyond the 2023 assessment.

Community health assessments

- Cook County Minnesota 2019 Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan
- Horizon 2022 Community Health Assessment
- Kandiyohi-Renville 2019 Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Plan

Community health needs assessments

- Aitkin County 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment
- Cambridge Medical Center 2020 Community Health Needs Assessment
- Central Minnesota Alliance 2019 CH Community Health Needs Assessment NR
- Lakes Medical Center 2021 Community Health Needs Assessment
- Lake Region and Prairie Ridge Healthcare 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment
- Olmsted County 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment

Statewide health assessments

- Colorado 2018 Statewide Health Assessment
- New York 2018 Statewide Health Assessment
- Washington 2018 Statewide Health Assessment

Other assessments/plans

- Advancing Health Equity in Minnesota: Report to the Legislature February 2014
- Cancer Plan Minnesota 2022: A framework for action
- Minnesota Go Statewide Multimodal Transportation Plan
- Minnesota 2020 Title V Maternal and Child Health Needs Assessment
- We Plan 2025 Cook County Chicago Community Themes and Strengths Assessment
- We Plan 2025 Cook County Chicago Forces of Change Assessment
- Minnesota State Oral Health Plan 2020-2030
- Minnesota Climate Action Framework
- Reducing the Impact of Cancer: Listening to American Indians in Minnesota
- Working Toward Health Equity: Critical Conversations with American Indians in Minnesota
- Assets and Unmet Needs of Diverse Older Adults: Perspectives of community-based service providers in Minnesota
- Minnesota 2022 LGBTQ+ Needs Assessment Report

Community engagement questions

The following questions aim to assess two main aspects of community engagement: 1) community engagement methods and 2) community input on strengths and assets. Community members and groups are experiencing growing community engagement fatigue, which makes looking at methods of engagement particularly important. Finding novel methods for engagement in these assessments could inform future assessment engagement, with the hope of not further burdening communities. Additionally, this inventory has built a base understanding of the utility of an assets-based approach.

Partnership staff asked of each assessment:

- Who was engaged?
- When did community engagement activities take place?
- How were groups engaged?
- What supports health in different communities?
- Was any input collected regarding strengths of state?
- How do communities prefer to be informed or use reports such as a statewide health assessment?
- Is there anything that may point to how to make the statewide health assessment useful (formatting, messaging, etc.)?
- Was input collected on community strengths/assets that promote health?
- If yes, for communities experiencing health inequities—what are the strengths/assets?