

FEATS

Family Education Access To Services

Prepared by the following scholars:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public Health is static, an ever changing kaleidoscope of concerns. Public Health departments are at the center of this storm. We strive every day to “connect the dots” of what’s affecting our communities and what we can do to lessen the effect. Our public health workforce is diverse in their disciplines, from environmentalists to social workers to health educators to RN’s and to support staff we often are so engrossed in our own endeavors that we fail to notice what the other hand is doing. We often lack the time and foresight to think outside the box and find out what each of us is doing and work to enhance each others field of expertise.

Our change master project is a tool that can be used by health departments to educate their employees and make the community aware of services the health departments can offer. Our idea is to have a CD with a master template of all services offered throughout the state of Kentucky. The individual health departments can modify the master template to the services offered. Individual health departments can also modify to reflect what services are offered in the community as referrals.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

Public health employees from different locations met at KPHLI in the Spring of 2004. During the transition from strangers to team members, the members discovered some similar goals:

1. To get a better feel for what each of us does in our daily professional lives
2. To assemble useful information that will help each community to better understand the different functions of our public health departments.

The team also wanted to construct a guide of services to be utilized by employees. As the group observed the different disciplines, members realized they did not clearly understand what each actually “did”. Hence, Family Education Access to Services (FEATS) was born to enhance the level of understanding of public health services and relationships inherent in successful service delivery.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Like all good births, many dreams emerged and many changes occurred. The initial dream began with a holistic view that focused on the whole family approach to health. During the birthing process, the team started to narrow the focus as it realized how each member brought a different idea of the FEATS concept. Communication, trust and refinement of the FEATS concept developed as the team met, exchanged ideas and brainstormed the scope of the project. A general conclusion was that we were not unique in our lack of knowledge of all the services the health departments offer. The team began to focus on overall Public Health services offered throughout our state and from there to an individual health department focus.

After much discussion, it was determined that FEATS should provide health department employees a tool that will allow for better understanding of what the health departments can offer the whole family. Our project strives to make it easier for a professional working with the health department to link a family with services other than the one being provided at that moment. A brochure was felt to be the best strategy to use to complete the project. The brochure would serve as a tangible cost saving tool for public health staff to use to educate the community members and the health department employees.

OBJECTIVES

1. To heighten awareness of Public Health employees as to the many different health services their agency offers to their community
2. To increase employee’s knowledge of services offered throughout their own health department
3. To improve utilization of services at the local health departments.
4. To model a tool for the employee and community to use.

TARGETED ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

1. **Monitor health status to identify community health problems** – This project has the potential not to identify but to fill gaps; especially if they are filled out by utilizing an approach of meeting the whole community's needs not just particular age groups.
2. **Inform, educate and empower people about health issues** – The brochure will inform and educate the public and can be used as a training tool to empower employees to improve service delivery.
3. **Link people to needed personal health services and ensure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.** – If the local health department is willing, the tool has potential for development to foster greater understanding of needed community services offerings.
4. **Assure a competent public health care workforce** – As a tool, the brochure and program disk can be used to educate the workforce on all possible services offered at the local health department and in the community.

RESULTS

This project will help health departments assess whether they are better utilizing community and clinical services. The results of better utilization may be illustrated by:

- ✓ Identifying a decrease in no-show appointments
 - As illustrated in a CDP report on a quarterly, semi-annual or annual basis
- ✓ Increased use of both community and clinical services
 - Increase in revenue
 - Increase in number of clients served as illustrated in CDP report
 - Increase in calls by the community as indicated by services inquiries
- ✓ Increased collaboration on the part of health department employees
 - Observable interaction and utilization of employees' expertise.

CONCLUSION

Our year of work and collaboration through our Change Master project has heightened the team's awareness of the need for better utilization of our many different programs areas. Our model brochure and program disk has the potential to help health departments throughout the state better identify service needs and possibly modify their offerings to meet community requirements. This local health department specific brochure may be distributed to employees and clients. We hope this tool will make it easier for all of us to quickly access services to treat the whole family and perhaps to have a small part in making our Kentucky Public Health Department the most efficient in the nation.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Carolyn Richey, R.N

I am the first person from our county to participate in KPHLI, and as such I really did not know what to expect. I have had a unique opportunity to learn from leaders through lectures, literature and by forming new relationships. I feel I have been given skills that if I will use them I will be a better co-worker and a better team member. I am hoping that KPHLI will continue to be offered in Allen County.

Lisa Houchin, M.S.

During this past year there were times when I felt I could not muster any more energy or enthusiasm to complete a project but corresponding with or getting together with my FEATS group renewed my determination to make this project a reality. I have enjoyed the interaction with so many different people; that may be the greatest role that attending KPHLI fulfills, working with and forming friendships with other people in Public Health from around our state. We often see each other's names on emails or memos but never get a chance to meet, talk and share ideas. This year has been a challenge and a learning experience for me. I feel blessed to have been able to work with Carolyn, Mike, Bonnie and Don and will miss them but I hope this has opened doors for new friends and collaborators in Public Health. I appreciate the cooperation of my husband and children when I had to be away from home. I also have the privilege of working with a wonderful director, Dennis Chaney, who truly wants us to make a difference in public health. As this year comes to a close I feel more empowered, more enlightened and ready to take on bigger challenges and leadership responsibilities because of my involvement in Kentucky Public Health Leadership Institute!

Don Crask, M.S.

My KPHLI experience has been at times both exciting and frustrating. The depth and quality of the professional education opportunities has been outstanding and enlightening. It has offered new friendships and networking possibilities that I consider valuable accomplishments. The locales for the several summits have offered glimpses of Kentucky life that previously I had not seen or understood completely. Concerning the frustrations, I have to bemoan the fact that technology is sometimes a poor substitute for face-to-face contact and interchange. Completing the Change Master project has involved much teamwork and patience that I now see is a prerequisite for being a successful public health leader. The KPHLI experience has provided valuable professional and personal challenges and accomplishments that I feel have increased my effectiveness as a member of the Public Health community.

Michael Kathman, R.N.

It has been an honor to participate in this year's KPHLI Program. I remember being hesitant when first asked to apply, but any apprehension soon disappeared after our first summit. This Program has provided me with the unique opportunity of working with other Public Health Professionals from all over the State. All disciplines of Public Health seem to be represented. This allowed new insight as to how we can all work together for a common goal. The KPHLI Program itself provides an effective mix of structure and

independent learning. The Change Master Project has been the ultimate learning experience. It is the combination of all that we are and all that we have learned. We came together as a group, overcame obstacles, and worked together to develop a tool to be used to promote the efficient use of preventive health care services throughout Kentucky.

Yvonne T. Pfanenstiel, R.N.

My personal learning objective was to assess various types of leadership style, ascertain what type would work best with who I am and to work on elements of communication to explain what my mind sees to a group. Since I started with KPHLI the following lessons offered moments of enlightenment:

- ✓ Better understanding of what public health is
- ✓ Various directions and opportunities public health can go
- ✓ Knowledge acquisition through valued interaction with various professionals from around the state and the literature exposure
- ✓ Awareness of various leadership styles and grateful that not “one style fits all”

I personally would like to thank the Green River District Health Department for giving me this opportunity.