This profile highlights one of these topic areas, the role of a trusted convener and its governance structure in effectively managing a collaborative community partnership focused on population health interventions, and addresses the barriers and lessons learned from the workshop.

Emerging Issues

Workshop participants discussed many issues that must be considered when identifying a trusted convener and establishing a governance structure. Two primary components were identified to understand the role of a trusted convener: organizational issues (e.g., identifying partners, decision-making approach) and structural issues (e.g., management structure, key functions). Health care sector and non-health care sector partners cited an interest in understanding best practices for establishing a trusted convener and governance structure that can ensure equitable and productive participation among partners across sectors. In particular, the central issues in this area raised by meeting participants included:

Organizational Issues

- How are all multi-sector community partners identified?
- How much time and energy should be spent on establishing governance?
- How are collective decisions made?
- How to come to agreement across partners that may have different expectations?
Structural Issues

- Who is the entity? How is that entity selected?
- What is the management structure?
- How are decisions made?

Key Barriers Identified

Failing to recognize and address these critical components could limit the effectiveness of the trusted convener and undermine the entire success of the partnership’s intervention:

- Understanding who/what is the “right” convener for the community;
- Reconciling tension between work on governance and work on interventions;
- Identifying sustainable financing for the convener and the interventions;
- Determining needs of the convener’s internal workforce capacity (e.g., staffing and analytic capabilities);
- Establishing accountability/transparency (i.e., decision-making approach, value proposition, etc.); and
- Knowing the community landscape and health care market.

Lessons Learned

- Build trust in each other and the convener.
- Recognize all partners’ diverse viewpoints/perspectives, regardless of respective power.
- Identify common interests.
- Find and foster a community voice/ownership of the efforts.
- Exhibit adaptive leadership qualities.
- Demonstrate effective communication practices.
- Utilize community organizing principles.
- Separate form (i.e., who is the convener) from function (i.e., what the convener does).

These five regions will use the information, along with additional briefs on other topics discussed, and work collaboratively within their communities to apply them to their individual situations.

To learn more about these projects, visit www.academyhealth.org/p4ph

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