

Reaching People with Disabilities through Healthy Communities

Phase six- Communication and Dissemination

Communication and Dissemination Activities

[Karma Harris] Allison, in terms of, before really diving in on the communication dissemination pieces, will you tell us a little bit about your specific role with NCHPAD? Just to give our listeners some background on this project because I've talked a lot about NCHPAD and their role with us and their role in the project, but this is the first time we've heard from someone at NCHPAD. So, I want to just give you a chance to talk a little bit about that and your role.

[Allison Tubbs] Absolutely. So, thank you so much, Karma, for having me on today. So, I'm really excited to share about this work with the listeners and the importance of inclusive communication.

So, I work as the senior Project Coordinator with NCHPAD, and we're a federally funded National Center on Disability. We're also a health promotion resource and practice center of the National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities, which is housed at CDC. So, our work as a national center is really focused on building inclusive healthy communities where all people have equal access and opportunities for healthy living. And we do this in a variety of different ways. But mostly focused on providing resources and information to individuals.

We look at promoting community and environmental changes. We also look at accelerating research to practice. And then lastly, focusing a national attention on the urgent need for disability inclusion. So, at NCHPAD, we've been doing this work for over 20 years now. We implement a comprehensive, inclusive, health promotion agenda that's really building capacity and accelerating impact, and what we call community health inclusion.

[Karma Harris] It might benefit our listeners just tell us a little bit more about your specific role to this project, and sort of hone down on kind of what your involvement was, and all the great stuff that you did for us.

[Allison Tubbs] Yes. So just want to say I've thoroughly enjoyed my time working with this project. It's really been a great group of state and community leaders who are really making changes an impact for people with disabilities in their community. But specifically, as a project partner, NCHPAD, we were pleased to host an initial training summit for the chosen states at our headquartered location of Lakeshore Foundation, which is in Birmingham, Alabama.

So, at this training, we were able to share with project teams who NCHPAD is, and what we offer, also that we are available for training and technical assistance, mainly focusing in the areas of healthy eating and physical activity and general disability accessibility. Also, throughout the project we provided different informational resources and training to the project teams, kind of on an as-needed basis. We utilized our team of expert inclusion specialists which is subject matter experts on disability

and inclusion, that are part of the NCHPAD team, and made sure that the project teams were aware of any new resources and trainings and information that NCHPAD had developed throughout the project period, that they could also utilize in their states and communities.

So, another specific example of our role in the project is we were able to utilize our in-house videographer team to go out and travel to each of the states to really capture project stories and interviews, and they created a video success story for each project team. We thought that was a really cool way to showcase successes and to visualize the projects that are happening on-the-ground in communities. So really, we provided just kind of general dissemination and communication support, whether that was through posting project related stories on our website through social media channels or newsletters; anything that we can do to help share and uplift the successes and inclusion wins that are a result of this project.

And then the last thing that I'll mention is myself. I was able to give a training webinar on effective communication and dissemination for inclusive health and we focused on how to use social marketing strategies for inclusive health messaging, as well as just general inclusive communication tips. So, I was really excited about that role in the project because those are definitely passion topics of mine. That was great to be able to provide that training and then engage in dialogue with the project team.

[Karma Harris] I'll kind of start by saying that during the last couple of years we've worked really hard with the state and community partners of the project and the CDC to implement a variety of communication dissemination activities, so that we can be intentional about really broadly sharing and disseminating the great work that the communities are doing, but also the great work at the state, and the benefit on the national level for NACDD and NCHPAD. I think we've done a really good job at getting some of these successes and project lessons learned out there.

So for example, some of the activities that we've done, Alison's already mentioned some of them, but we've done written and video success stories; we have done written testimonials; we've done...some of our grantees have done print and TV and radio, which is traditional media; all of them have done some type of social media and social marketing; there have been a number of large group and conference presentations that really spanned each the local, regional, state, and national level. So, we're doing as much as we can collectively, as a big project group, to really get this information and the good news about this project out.

One of the things that I'll talk a little bit about is a four-part communication webinar series. We felt, in order for the state and community project participants to do this work effectively, we needed to provide them with some training. And one of the avenues that we did with NCHPAD was we implemented a joint four-part communication webinar series about a year ago to prep them and teach them about these different activities and give them the skills to implement these activities.

And so that four-part webinar series really covered traditional and non-traditional media, how to work with them, what are some key tips, how to write effective success stories, and then how to use social media platforms and integrate proper inclusive social marketing techniques, and we were really excited to partner with NCHPAD and doing that. Maggie, can you talk to us and describe some of these

activities that you did to communicate and disseminate this project information at the state level, and also touch on some of the activities that you know your local communities implemented, and any tidbits you'd like to share about that?

[Maggie Ferguson] Probably one of the primary ways that we were able to get the messaging out was getting in front of large groups of people at statewide conferences, so providing presentations. I would be a part of the panel for a presentation and provide the statewide overview of various strategies that can be implemented. And then also tying it back to the state health department's strategic plan focusing on obesity, physical activity, and nutrition.

So, making that connection, and being able to piggyback the statewide message, and then also a part of that panel would be someone from the local community sharing information about how they are implementing strategies in their community around the policy, systems, and environmental changes as part of this project. And we also had a local organization provide information, as well as how the project impacted their individual clients. So, giving that multi-level perspective.

And then in terms of the local communities, both communities completed two written success stories, each highlighting a project success that they had experienced. They also submitted a couple of written testimonies of individuals or organizations in their communities that were positively influenced in some manner as a result of the project's efforts to create inclusive and healthy community changes.

Both communities have additionally used traditional media to share their project successes, such as print or video and radio events. And both communities have participated in social media messaging, which we can talk about a little further on in this podcast.

[Karma Harris] Great. Allison, what would you recommend, in terms of activities, that people who haven't been part of the project can do on their own, and how do we know if we're doing messages in the right way?

[Allison Tubbs] Absolutely. So, before you start utilizing communication dissemination, coming up with your messaging, you really need to base it off many factors of the project and really figure out what you're trying to communicate about. So, you want to look at what your message is and that you're trying to send, and who you're trying to send the message to. So, one of the reasons that we see, that there are many different social media platforms that are emerging, is that they all really have a specific and different purpose, and that they all resonate with different types of people.

So if you take a step back at your project and you really come up with a communication and social media plan that clearly defines and outlines what message you're trying to send, what the goal of your messages is, and who you're trying to reach with your messages, it will really help you find and utilize the right platforms to be able to disseminate those messages out.

So also, with social media, you have the ability to have a direct connection to people, and in order to ensure that you're really building and creating messages that are being utilized, you have to use social media and communication to promote the work that you're doing. So also with social media, like I mentioned, you have that opportunity to build relationships with people, but you want to make sure that your messaging, and what you're putting out is reflected in an authentic way, so that if you're doing it correctly, it will spread to others and people will build a relationship back with you and be able to understand your message and utilize it in their everyday practices and work.