DIVISION/OFFICE:	Health Promotion
SECTION:	Community Health Section
MEMBERS:	Karen Banda, Emma Cook, Michael Isaacson, Marielle Kopasz, Alyse Plattos, Terry Roman, Alexis Slivka, Daisy Viyuoh
PROJECT TITLE:	Increasing Community Engagement in Health Initiatives
DATES OF PROJECT:	July 2015 through November 2015

PLAN
Identify an opportunity and Plan for Improvement

1. Getting Started

The Community Health (CH) Section of the Kane County Health Department works with the community to achieve jointly agreed upon health outcomes. To be successful, it is imperative that the community be fully engaged and participate. This process is a reflection of the CH section's commitment to conduct a systematic review of participation in collaboratives utilizing historical data. Efforts were then made to develop interventions to increase participation in collaboratives and implement formal monthly review.

2. Assemble the Team

The CH section convenes many collaboratives to address a variety of health issues including: behavioral health, early childhood health & wellness, infant mortality and school health. The whole CH team participated in this process to improve engagement.

3. Examine the Current Approach

Staff reviewed historical participation data for collaboratives that the CH section convened and reviewed the current process for communicating with the community to engage them. Baseline data and the process were documented to provide something to measure improvement against. The members of the section explored possible root causes using the "5 Whys" activity and identified some actionable items.

4. Identify Potential Solutions

The CH section created an Affinity Diagram to identify potential solutions.

Potential solutions focused on getting effective communication to the right people to engage them in the efforts and following up with them to support that engagement.

5. Develop an Improvement Theory

The CH section opted to implement a more formal system of reviewing participation in community work. The process included an adaptation of Paul Born's "Top 100 Partners" exercise. The team identified who they

wanted to have participate in each session and then were very intentional about outreach to those key stakeholders. Participation was closely tracked in a database for each initiative. The theory was that this process would both increase the number of people participating and the numbers of those who the conveners felt would make the biggest contributions.

The process would include tailored invitations to potential participants based on their participation to date. All contact lists would be re-examined to assure that the most current information for each individual was included and that key organizations were involved, especially when a former participant switched roles.

6. Test the Theory

The test period was September 2015 through November of 2015 and included all of the initiatives for which the CH section served as the convener for regular meetings. The meetings occur monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly. The participation was to be monitored against the same number of community gatherings in the same time period from 2014. Each

member of the CH team played a role in crafting invitations, participating in the planning and/or tracking participation.

All participation was tracked in Microsoft Excel for each individual community member. All contact lists were updated in both Excel and as dated distribution lists in Microsoft Office. Participation was shown visually through graphs that updated automatically as new participation data was added. This created something visual for staff to review at a glance.

7. Check the Results

The AIM statement for this project was to increase participation by 25% during the test period. The actual results yield over a 30% increase in participation.

These results exceeded expectations as the goal was considered a stretch goal when the project began.

The improvement was not universal and some initiatives showed larger increases than others. This creates additional opportunity to continue testing the new process.

8. Standardize the Improvement or Develop New Theory

The CH section considered the new process to be a success and will continue to implement it and test it over a longer time period. To assure success, time will be dedicated at monthly meetings to review the attendance and contact lists.

9. Establish Future Plans

The CH section will celebrate this successful project by sharing the results with others in the Kane County Health Department. This will be done through this storyboard and sharing at larger meetings within the agency.

This process has led to an improvement in the participation of key community stakeholders from the community in the important work of the Kane County Health Department.