



The Central Southern Tier Health Alliance Year One Report

Title: Improving Population Health and Well-Being in the Central Southern Tier

Duration: Phase 1: September 2016 – December 2017

Executive Summary:

The Central Southern Tier Health Alliance is a multi-stakeholder planning group that formed to address the complex issues affecting the health and well-being of residents in the Southern Tier of the Finger Lakes region (Steuben, Schuyler and Chemung counties). Building on lessons learned from previous health improvement efforts and with facilitation and analytic support from Common Ground Health, the Alliance utilized a systems dynamic approach to coalesce around a value proposition of improving overall health and well-being in the region. Using dynamic modeling, the Alliance found that top two priorities for improving health and well-being are jobs and wealth, and pathways to success for children.

The systems dynamics modeling revealed that while the region has been successful securing dollars that align with overall well-being in some of the priority areas, the diversity of efforts and uncoordinated approach is unlikely to produce sustainable improvements in community health and well-being. In addition, urgent issues, such as the opioid crisis, must be addressed and will continue to challenge resources to address long-term strategies. The history of collaboration among leaders in the three counties across the business, health, social service, and government sectors is a unique advantage and leverage point for the region.

The Alliance is proposing to focus efforts in 2018 on leveraging immediate opportunities to coordinate and collaborate for short term impact, while developing a longer range health and well-being roadmap that includes a plan for sustainable funding of efforts. The recommended areas of focus for immediate opportunities are:

1. Leveraging opportunities to change patterns in the areas of Jobs and Wealth with a focus on **addressing the health issues specific to the non-employed**, and

2. Leveraging opportunities for funding and dovetailing with several efforts underway in other communities in the areas of **early childhood/education** to improve student pathways to success.

The Alliance is proposing to continue as a strategic planning group, utilizing subject matter experts and targeted working groups to address the immediate opportunities, and with continuing support from Common Ground Health for backbone functions. While Common Ground Health has provided a chair for the Alliance for year 1, in year 2 the plan is to transition to a local leader to chair the Alliance.

Project Background:

The impetus for this work came after the July 2015 release of Common Ground Health's Regional Commission on Community Health Improvement Blueprint. The report called to action the need to better serve local communities and achieve breakthrough improvement in overall health and well-being; requiring strategies that integrate and address the complex medical, behavioral and social needs of vulnerable community residents. The report highlighted local sustained and coordinated efforts of many stakeholders – spanning diverse sectors and geographies throughout the region – to implement and evolve its recommendations.

Corning, Inc., the major employer in the region, provided funding to support a one- year planning process to extend and expand upon the work of the Regional Commission on Community Health Improvement into a customized plan focusing on the unique issues of the Southern Tier. Leaders worked with Common Ground Health to identify key community champions and partners from a group of diverse community leaders, including hospital administrators, public health (directors, health planners, nurses and educators), business, education, behavioral health, community-based organizations and consumer representatives.

Of note, the three counties encompassing the Alliance are largely rural with significant challenges related to rural poverty, high unemployment and varied high school graduation rates throughout the region. Major employers include Corning, Inc., two prison systems, agriculture, area health systems, and county government. The region experiences health disparities related to socio-economic status, including unique issues related to families of inmates at the two area prisons. Top health concerns in the region include substance abuse/opioid addiction, obesity, mental health, diabetes, and heart disease. Top social concerns include employment, education, housing and transportation

Process:

Common Ground Health has been honored to plan and partner with leaders of the Alliance, chair meetings and provide backbone functions. This includes engaging community leaders, assuring multi-stakeholder representation, meeting preparation and facilitation, conducting detailed research and data analytics to support the planning process, applying planning tools and techniques to the process, engaging subject matter experts and writing the final report and recommendations on behalf of the Alliance.

The full Alliance met 5 times between February and December 2017. As a starting point, they reviewed regional health data, trends and priorities identified by their community service plans and community health improvement plans. Using system dynamic tools, the Alliance rated priorities to further analyze and suggest areas of focus.

Alliance members participated in a values exercise and identified improving the health and well-being of community residents as their number one priority, followed by access to health care and quality of care. When asked to prioritize what they “ought” to be focused on, five (5) areas emerged: Preventive Services and Policies, Education and Training, Transportation, Jobs and Wealth, Addiction and Recovery Services.

Common Ground Health conducted an inventory of initiatives and resources to assess the current effort and potential impact. The initiative inventory was assessed using the ReThink Health Systems Dynamic Modeling tool to identify both current and longer term impact if current work is sustained, if current effort could be expanded, and if current work were more focused. Further refinement from a larger ecosystem perspective clearly pointed members to prioritize jobs, training and wealth as paramount to improving the health and well-being of residents. Education followed as the second priority. Emerging behavioral health issues, housing and transportation were collectively grouped as the final priorities.

Throughout the process, Common Ground Health facilitated and organized all Alliance meetings and conducted key stakeholder interviews and incorporated their feedback and guidance to inform the key findings.

Key Findings:

The following key findings are based on the research on current initiatives reach and results, application of systems dynamics modeling tools to the current portfolio of initiatives, and feedback provided from interviews with key stakeholders:

1. The region has been successful securing dollars that align with overall well-being in some of the priority areas and there are initiatives already underway dedicated toward a portfolio of work in jobs and wealth, education and training, and addressing underlying issues with transportation and housing.
2. The diverse efforts combined with multiple, uncoordinated funding streams, goals, and timelines is unlikely to produce sustainable improvements in community health and well-being. Focused investments and alignment of goals to optimize current resources are required for sustainable, longer term progress.
3. Urgent issues, such as the opioid crisis, must be addressed and will continue to challenge resources to address longer term strategies.
4. There are opportunities to gain shorter term momentum and success, while pursuing focused coordination and alignment of longer term value.
5. The history of collaboration among leaders in the three counties across the business, health, social service, and government sectors is a unique advantage and leverage point for the region.

Recommendations:

At the December 14 Meeting, the Alliance proposed to focus efforts in 2018 as follows:

1. Addressing opportunities to change patterns in the areas of Jobs and Wealth with a focus on **addressing the health issues specific to the non-employed (unemployed and underemployed)**, and
2. Leveraging opportunities for funding and dovetailing with several efforts underway in other communities in the areas of **early childhood/education** to improve student pathways to success.

The approach in 2018 is to:

- leverage immediate opportunities to coordinate and collaborate for short term impact
- while developing a longer range health and well-being road map that includes a plan for sustainable funding of efforts.

Potential opportunities for review and/or action in 2018 may include:

Focused on non-employed:

- Building on efforts already underway with ESPRI, the I-86 Corridor
- Assessing options to ramp up community engagement in the High Blood Pressure Collaborative, dovetailing with physician engagement already underway with Common Ground Health
- Leveraging updates to CHP/CHA/CSP and DSRIP activities
- Assessing opportunities to build on neighboring county efforts to build health communities (eg. Be Well Livingston)
- Leveraging work products from the Food and Health Connection work underway in the region

Focused on early childhood and education

- Leveraging opportunities for funding and dovetailing with several efforts underway in the areas of early childhood/education to improve student pathways to success may include developing a cohesive strategy and funding plan to include efforts such as:
 - a. NYS First 1000 Days
 - b. United-Way efforts
 - c. CHP/CHA/CSP and DSRIP efforts
 - d. Assessing and adopting approaches that have worked in other regions, such as HealthiKids
 - e. Assessing opportunities to connect to emerging work in the region such as Whole Child Health and All Kids Thrive models.

Backbone and Alliance Structural Recommendations

Common Ground Health is proposing to continue serving as the backbone organization to organize, inform and facilitate the Alliance as it moves into the next phase of work. This includes:

- Planning and facilitating the Alliance meetings to further the goals of the Alliance. Common Ground Health will Co-Chair and facilitate the effort in a manner that enables a Southern Tier stakeholder to transition as chair beginning July 2018.
- Extending the network of stakeholders as needed to accomplish the goals of the Alliance.

- Providing specific subject matter expertise in the following areas:
 - Early childhood initiatives and healthy schools policies and programs
 - Community engagement in areas such as church based interventions for chronic illness such as high blood pressure
 - Insight and connection to other state and regional efforts that may support the goals of the Alliance.

We expect 2-3 Alliance meetings in 2018. The purpose of these meetings is to strategically set the course of action and focus on the longer range strategic health and wellbeing roadmap and sustainability plan.

Smaller working groups with subject matter experts will be developed to focus on distinct buckets of work to further the goal of the Alliance such as:

- Assessing other efforts in the region that may provide quick wins and fixes to problems in focused areas for the Alliance.
- Focusing on cross cutting issues impacting sustainability of the work
- Improving coordination among existing resources

Members of The Southern Tier Alliance

Name	Organization
Dr. Kate Douglas	Corning Community College
Dr. Kathy Lucke	Retired, Elmira College
James Schuppert, MD	Corning Incorporated
Jack Wheeler	Steuben County
Sharon Miller	Corning Incorporated
Tim O'Hearn	Schuyler County
Tom Santulli	Chemung County
Amy Castle	Schuyler Hospital
Brian Hart	Chemung County Dept. of Mental Hygiene
Carl Schiefen	Excellus
Daniel Porter	CSS Workforce
Darlene Smith	Steuben County Public Health
Derrick Chrisler	S2AY Rural Health Network
Don Keddell	GST BOCES
Garrett Hoover	Guthrie Corning Hospital
James Watson	Schuyler Hospital
Jeff Sobkowski	Excellus
Jeffrey Eaton	Arbor Housing and Development
Jessica Renner	Excellus
Judy McKinney Cherry, CEcD	Schuyler County Partnership for Economic Development
Kathryn Muller	Steuben County Social Services
Marcia Kasprzyk	Schuyler County Public Health
Michelle Logan	Corning Community College
Olga Clark	CSS Workforce
Rebekah Carroll	Watkins Glen Chamber of Commerce
Robert Lambert, MD	Arnot Health
Shawn Rosno	Schuyler County Community Services
Steve Manning	Southern Tier Network, Inc
Ryan Peterson	Steuben County Dept. of Social Services
Tom Tranter	Corning Enterprises
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