Title

Promoting Health Equity: Achievements and lessons learned from six unique regions in Michigan.

Abstract

Background

The Promotion of Health Equity (PHE) Initiative aims to develop statewide infrastructure across six Michigan counties for collecting and analyzing Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) data to better identify disparities and improve health outcomes. By providing participating regions with resources and a collaborative platform with the state department and each other, PHE builds on each region's existing resources towards integrating health and social services.

Objective

PHE aims to increase screening and referral capacity for social needs, improve data sharing for social service referrals, enhance regional collaboration for best practices, and align health equity metrics across regions. Process evaluation addresses the following: How have regions integrated social care into healthcare delivery? Has technology improved information sharing and social service referrals? How has regional collaboration enhanced knowledge sharing? How has consistency in data collection advanced to better track health disparities?

Methods

PHE evaluation uses a mixed-methods approach based on site interviews and quarterly reports. Findings highlight major accomplishments, challenges/ barriers to implementation, and lessons learned for each of the initiatives' objectives three years into implementation.

Results

The PHE Initiative effectively helped regions expand screening and referral capacity, strengthen community partnerships, progress in regional CIE efforts, and improve data collection. Some of PHE's valuable contributions include aligning the regions on collecting standardized health equity metrics to track disparities, and its role in kickstarting a CIE Task Force to develop a statewide CIE blueprint. Common challenges reported were related to improving provider engagement, community engagement, bureaucratic/legal barriers, and specific areas of data collection.

Conclusion

By providing resources and a platform to collaborate with the state department, PHE effectively helped regions align their efforts on data collection, share best practices, and tackle common challenges together. Lessons learned emphasized incorporating community voices to identify needs, strengthening partnerships, and investing in funding and staff resources for data collection.