Achieving Health Equity through Community-University Partnerships

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Community-Campus Partnerships for Health
AUCEA National Conference
July 2010 ~ Launceston, Tasmania
Mission

To promote health (broadly defined) through partnerships between communities and higher educational institutions
Nonprofit membership organization launched in January ’97
15-member board of directors that follows a policy governance model
1,800 members from communities and campuses across Canada, the US & other countries
Private & public funding
Staff, students & senior consultants
Board Members

Atum Azzahir, Cultural Wellness Center, Twin Cities, MN
Renee Bayer, University of Michigan School of Public Health, Ann Arbor, MI
Cynthia Barnes-Boyd, Neighborhoods Initiative, University of Illinois-Chicago Great Cities Institute, Chicago, IL
Chuck Conner, West Virginia Rural Health Education Partnership, Spencer, WV
Diane Downing, Arlington County Dept. of Human Services, VA and George Washington University, DC
Stephanie Farquhar, Portland State University, Portland, OR
Barbara Gottlieb, Brookside Community Health Center, Jamaica Plain, MA and Harvard Schools of Medicine and Public Health, Boston, MA
Ella Greene-Moton, Community-Academic Consultant, Flint, MI and University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI
Susan Gust, Community Activist, Minneapolis, MN
Dennis Magill, Wellesley Institute and University of Toronto, ON, Canada
Daniel E. Korin, Lutheran Medical Center, Brooklyn, NY
Creshelle Nash, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences and Arkansas Minority Health Commission, Little Rock, AR
Richard W. Redman, University of Michigan School of Nursing
Douglas Simmons, University of Texas, Houston Health Science Center Dental Branch
Sacoby Wilson, Institute for Families and Society, University of South Carolina
Australia
Connections

- 27 members in Australia, from 12 organizations:
  - Charles Darwin University
  - Curtin University of Technology
  - Flinders University
  - James Cook University
  - La Trobe University
  - Monash University
  - University of Melbourne
  - University of Sydney
  - University of Technology, Sydney
  - University of Western Australia
  - University of Western Sydney
  - University of Wollongong

- CCPH hosted Rae Walker, La Trobe University, in 2006
- CCPH hosted Michael Cuthill, University of Queensland, in 2006
- CCPH Board Member invited speaker at Australian Health Promotion Association Conference in May 2010
- CCPH Executive Director & Board Chair-Elect invited speakers at Australian Universities Community Engagement Alliance Conference in July 2010

- CCPH Executive Director was Visiting Scholar at University of Sydney in 2002
Defining Community
CCPH board of directors, 2005

There is no “one” definition of community

- Geography
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Disability, illness or health condition
- Common interest or cause
- Shared values or norms
Defining "community" is more about the process of asking questions than about a strict definition of who "is" community or "represents" community:

- Are those most affected by the problem at the table?
- Are those who have a stake in the issue being addressed at the table?
- Do they play decision making roles?
Campus Assets
CCPH 1997 Conference

Human resources: knowledgeable faculty, staff, students

Services: health care, day care, transportation, legal aid

Materials: food donations, recycling

Facilities: meeting space, sports facilities, libraries

Economic support: employment, loans, purchasing coop

Emotional support: caring faculty, staff, students

Equipment and technology: AV, computer, internet

Policy and advocacy: credibility, relationships, political skills

Cultural activities: festivals, museums, music, theater
Principles of Partnership

CCPH board of directors, 1998 & 2006

- Partnerships form to serve a specific purpose and may take on new goals over time.
- Partners have agreed upon mission, values, goals, measurable outcomes and accountability for the partnership.
- The relationship between partners is characterized by mutual trust, respect, genuineness, and commitment.
- The partnership builds upon identified strengths and assets, but also works to address needs and increase capacity of all partners.
- The partnership balances power among partners and enables resources among partners to be shared.
Principles of Partnership

CCPH board of directors, 1998 & 2006

- Partners make clear and open communication an ongoing priority by striving to understand each other's needs and self-interests, and developing a common language.
- Principles and processes for the partnership are established with the input and agreement of all partners, especially for decision-making and conflict resolution.
- There is feedback among all stakeholders in the partnership, with the goal of continuously improving the partnership and its outcomes.
- Partners share the benefits of the partnership's accomplishments.
- Partnerships can dissolve and need to plan a process for closure.
1. Quality processes

“We are not just talking about a process that involves partners. There needs to be a process of shared decision making.”

~ Ella Greene-Moton, Flint, MI

Relationship focused...open, honest and respectful...trust-building...acknowledging of history...committed to mutual learning...sharing credit
2. Meaningful outcomes that are tangible and relevant to communities

“OK, we can work together on community-based participatory research, but only if you support our kids in the pipeline. Bring them to campus for programs, teach them skills they use to be more marketable, give them academic credit.”

~ Vickie Ybarra, Toppenish, WA

Eliminating health disparities...affordable housing...education, economic development...
3. Transformation at multiple levels

“We build social capital when we’re doing this work. We don’t often talk about that.”

~ Douglas Taylor, Atlanta, GA

- Personal transformation, including self reflection and heightened political consciousness
- Institutional transformation, including changing policies and systems
- Community transformation, including community capacity building
- Transformation of science and knowledge, including how knowledge is generated, used and valued and what constitutes “evidence”
- Political transformation, including social justice
“Health policy is not an island . . . part of the landscape of many needs.”

Social Determinants of Health
Looking for **Causes** …

in all the **WRONG PLACES**

There’s an old joke about a man who late one night dropped his keys in the middle of a dark parking lot. He moves some distance over to the side of the lot and begins a fruitless search for them under a bright light. When asked why he was not looking where he actually dropped them, he replied, “because this is where the light is.”

*Network*, New England Research Institutes, Summer, 2002
Creating healthier communities requires collaborative solutions which bring COMMUNITIES & INSTITUTIONS together through authentic partnerships that build upon the assets, strengths, and capacities of each.
Community-Campus Partnerships
A Strategy for Social Change

Eliminating racial and ethnic health disparities
Increasing health workforce diversity
Closing the achievement gap in primary & secondary education
Increasing access to higher education, health care, information technology
Increasing youth civic engagement
Increasing relevant of research and translating it into practice and policy
Creating healthier campuses
Decreasing college student alcohol use
Improving college student mental health
Establishing quality affordable housing
Revitalizing cities
Developing rural economies
Preparing students in a wide range of disciplines & professions for practice
The engaged campus is not just located within a community, it is intimately connected to the public purposes and aspirations of community life itself...the engaged campus involves interdependent, reciprocal and sustained relationships between campus and community.”

Campus Compact
The Engaged Campus
An Evolutionary Process

Charity → project → social change
Community oriented → community based → community partnership
Service → community-engaged scholarship
Furthering 3 traditional missions → 4th mission as “institutional citizen”
Fragmented → coordinated → strategic
Goals

- **Combine knowledge, wisdom & experience** in communities and in academic institutions to solve major health, social and economic challenges
- **Build capacity** of communities & higher educational institutions to engage each other in authentic partnerships
- **Support communities** in their relationships & work with academic partners
- **Recognize & reward** faculty for community engagement & community-engaged scholarship
- **Develop partnerships** that balance power & share resources equitably among partners
- **Ensure community-driven social change** is central to service-learning & community-based participatory research
Community-Campus Partnerships
The Current Reality

- Community engagement “buzz” in higher ed and funders
- Benefit of partnering with higher ed is not readily apparent to many communities – yet there can be many benefits
- Relationship between community and campus partners is largely based on individuals and not institutionalized
- Community groups sometimes lose community ties and legitimacy over time when they partner with higher ed
- Assumption that community needs the academy to have legitimate conversations and that academic knowledge has greater value than community knowledge
“There is a lack of understanding within universities about what they’re doing and why. This one office in our university has changed its names 3 times since 1995. First it was community service, then service-learning, and now civic engagement. Civic engagement is a pretty word and concept, but there is a disconnect between the university view of what “engagement” means and how the community views it. The university thinks that anything outside the walls is engagement.”

~ Pearlie Toliver, Branch Banking and Trust Company, Macon, GA
Community-Campus Partnerships
The Current Reality

- Playing field between community & campus is not level
- Building community capacity through strong community-based organizations is not often an explicit goal
- Funders are investing in these partnerships - some are beginning to “get” what authentic partnerships involve
- Significant differences between mature & early partnerships
- Significant ongoing challenges, but communities keep at this work “because we know there can be benefits and because we want to protect our communities.”
Benefits perceived by community partners include...

- Further advancement of community organization’s mission
- New perspectives and insights
- Rewarding personal and professional relationships
- Access to knowledge and research on campus
- Expanded resources
- Grant opportunities
- Credibility for their own efforts
- Exposure and access to higher education
- Understanding of institutional assets & limitations
- Being viewed as teachers and experts
Community-Campus Partnerships
The Current Reality

- Predominant model: is it a partnership?
  - Initiated by campus, framed by academic mission and priorities
  - Driven by grant and program requirements
  - Disconnects and contradictions between different parts of campus, community, partnership strategies
  - Campus infrastructure: centers, offices
  - Community serves advisory role
Community-Campus Partnerships
What’s Not Working

- No community engagement as project/proposal is developed
- Inequitable distribution of power and resources
- Decisions made “behind closed doors”
- Grants require community, but funding goes to institution
- Lack of partner commitment to the community’s future
- Researchers not community or culturally competent
- No guidelines for funders and peer reviewers
- No planning for sustainability, no exit strategy
- Community lacks infrastructure to fully engage
- Presumption that communities speak with one voice
- Presumption that benefits of having students outweighs costs
Community-Campus Partnerships
Some Common Pitfalls

- Institution receives funding based on location in disadvantaged community without involving them, sharing resources or directly benefiting them
- Students consistently assigned to tour a neighborhood, conduct needs assessments
- Lack of preparation and understanding of context
- Faculty members structure community engagements without first assessing community’s interests and needs, fail to plan with community partners
- Episodic involvement based on grant funding, calendar

Gelmon G et. al., 1998.
Community-Campus Partnerships
What’s Working

- Strong relationships: trust, honesty, transparency, respect
- Mutual benefit of all partners
- Shared ownership of partnership, its projects and products
- Clear definitions, roles and expectations of all partners
- Support from funding agency that understands how authentic partnerships are developed and sustained
- Partners are valued/compensated for expertise
- Partners gain transferable skills
- Community peer networks for mentoring, learning and sharing of best practices
Characteristics of Success
Examining Community-Institutional Partnerships for Prevention Research Group, 2004

- Partnership has structures and processes that encourage sharing influence and control
  - Jointly developed principles & operating procedures
  - Common vision & mutually defined issues, goals, objectives
  - Democratic, participatory processes and consensus decision-making
  - Ongoing evaluation of partnership process
Leadership (core group or one visionary)
- Boundary-spanners that understand & appreciate other perspectives, are comfortable sharing ideas, resources & power
- Clear vision with flexible approaches
- Motivate members to participate and contribute
- Structure fair and productive interactions
- Negotiate among people & organizations with diverse agendas
- Maintain enthusiasm & celebrate successes
Characteristics of Success
Examining Community-Institutional Partnerships for Prevention Research Group, 2004

- Human resources
  - Partnership liaison who is comfortable in multiple “worlds”
  - Community competent and appropriately skilled staff, researchers
  - Mentoring & professional development
  - Recognition & rewards
Characteristics of Vibrant Community-University Partnerships
WK Kellogg Foundation

Engaged higher education institutions and communities:

- See their present and future well-being as inextricably linked
- Collaboratively plan and design mutually beneficial programs and outcomes
- Engage in reciprocal learning
- Respect the history, culture, knowledge, and wisdom of the other
Characteristics of Vibrant Community-University Partnerships
WK Kellogg Foundation

- Create structures that promote open communication and equity with one another
- Have high expectations for their performance and involvement with each other
- Value and promote diversity
- Regularly conduct a joint assessment of their partnership and report results
Applying what we're talking about

Where can framework and principles of partnership be applied in university structures, policies & procedures?

Governance
Mission, vision, values
Strategic planning
Student & faculty recruitment
Student & faculty orientation
Faculty roles & rewards
Faculty development
Curriculum

Research ethics review & practice
Sub-contracting procedures
Purchasing practices
Real estate/construction
Etc...
Upcoming Events
Community-University Partnerships: Bringing Global Perspectives to Local Action, May 10-14, 2011, Waterloo Region, Ontario, Canada – Proposals Due September 10, 2010!
www.cuexpo2011.ca

Online Reports & Toolkits
Developing & Sustaining CBPR Partnerships
Community-Engaged Scholarship
Community-Level Research Protections

Electronic Discussion Groups
CBPR, community partners, service-learning

www.ccph.info
Community-Campus Partnerships for Health

We invite you to join a growing network of communities & campuses that are collaborating to promote health

Email us at ccph.info@gmail.com or visit us online at www.ccph.info