



COUNTRYSIDE PUBLIC HEALTH

MDH Infrastructure Grant

Communications Project

Develop and test a modernized communications and marketing infrastructure, in partnership with community leaders, in a rural and multi-county jurisdiction

The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the necessity for cohesive communications strategies within our five-county public health agency, the MDH Infrastructure Grant has provided Countryside Public Health with:

- *the capacity to assess communication strategies and needs*
- *the opportunity to work to streamline communications methods*
- *capacity and support to proactively plan communications strategies*
- *an enhanced ability to integrate communications infrastructure into our daily operations, ensuring its alignment with core public health foundational capabilities*

GRANT MILESTONES & TIMELINE

MILESTONE NO. 1

Create and hire Communications Specialist Position for Countryside Public Health

1

SPRING/
SUMMER
2022

MILESTONE NO. 2

Create Internal Communications Task Force and begin assessment of internal and external communications

2

SEPTEMBER
2022
(ONGOING)

MILESTONE NO. 3

Meetings with External Partners to assess and discuss communications needs and collaboration

3

OCTOBER
2022
(ONGOING)

MILESTONE NO. 4

Key Informant Interview project in conjunction with Americorp Project Coordinator

4

SPRING/
SUMMER
2023

**continued on reverse*

Key Project Highlights:

- *Creation of a Communications Specialist position dramatically increased internal capacity for communications projects.*
- *Internal Communications Task Force serves as an in-house advisory group for Communications and has increased by-in across agency programs and build accountability.*
- *Meetings between our Communications Specialist and External Partners have created new opportunities for collaboration and helped to build a network for our Communications Specialist.*
- *Completing Key Informant Interviews with our targeted community members is helping us to identify our communications needs and strategies for key audiences.*

Key Project Highlights:

- *Communications is now built into yearly program Workplan Meetings, integrating setting goals and strategies around Communications within our program areas.*
- *Draft of needed communications related policies, data collection, and strategies in process to finalize an on-going written Communications Plan for Countryside Public Health.*
- *Communications Specialist position being brought forward as a permanent position.*

JAN - DEC
2023
(ONGOING)

5

MILESTONE NO. 5
Develop and implement systems for enhancing and improving communications, both internally and externally

FALL 2023
TO SPRING
2024

6

MILESTONE NO. 6
Finalize written Communications Plan (to include policies and strategic data collection and analysis)

SPRING/
SUMMER
2024
(ONGOING)

7

MILESTONE NO. 7
Work towards sustainability of position and projects and ongoing improvements to Communications efforts

SECONDARY RESULTS OF OUR GRANT WORK:

- A new internal employee newsletter, The Pulse, has helped to improve internal communications efforts and staff morale.
- A new external quarterly newsletter (called "Community Health Connection") has been launched and is a new way for us to educate our communities and tell our story.
- Cost and time savings to project areas as we continue to modernize communications methods (written & digital), saving staff time and resources.
- The Key Informant Interview project helped us to make new connections in communities, have a renewed presence and gain trust with community members, and is helping us to further identify best platforms of communications across our communities.
- New connections with partners have increased opportunities for collaboration and enhanced communications within our communities.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR SHARING:

- *Key Informant Interview Project Summary and Data Summary*
- *Program Workplan Meeting Communications Worksheet*
- *Countryside Public Health Newsletters (internal employee newsletter, program area newsletters, external Quarterly Newsletter)*

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