

The Delaware Public Health Association and the American Planning Association Delaware Applies for a Plan4Health Grant

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The Delaware Chapter of the American Planning Association, the Delaware Public Health Association, and the Delaware Coalition for Healthy Eating and Active Living worked with a broad group of partner organizations to apply for the Plan4Health grant available through the American Planning Association (APA).

A similar grant proposal was submitted last year, but was not funded. APA provided valuable constructive feedback on that application, and encouraged Delaware to apply again this year for Cohort 2. Based on that feedback, the grant partners refined the project and chose to focus on Kent County and the City of Dover. The proposal that emerged has four distinct phases that will be implemented if the grant is awarded.

Phase 1 – Collection and Analysis of Health Data for Kent County

There is a wide variety of public health data available. However, it is from different sources and provides data at different scales and levels of geography. The first phase of the project will be to identify, retrieve, analyze and map all relevant health data for Kent County to develop a composite picture of the health of the population. The analysis will focus on and identify health issues and disparities in health in the smallest geographic areas possible (probably Census Tracts or zip codes). As a part of this data analysis, we will be acquiring new data from the Delaware Public Health Institute for our analysis. This data will come from a comprehensive telephone survey to be conducted this summer for the first time in Delaware.

Phase 2 – Planning Charrettes¹ Conducted in Selected Communities

Based on the outcome of the data analysis and mapping, two representative communities will be selected for detailed planning. One community will be in the City of Dover, and the other will be in Kent County. The communities will be selected based on a variety of factors, including the presence of health disparities or other health challenges evident in the data. Planning Charrettes will be conducted in the two selected communities. These multi-day, collaborative planning exercises will engage citizens, local governments, stakeholders and other partners to focus on improving health outcomes in these communities. These exercises will evaluate interventions to address both inactivity and unhealthy diet. The outcomes will be some specific recommendations and feasible projects that can be implemented in each community. It is expected that the results will also represent best practices that could be applicable elsewhere in Dover and Kent County as well.

Phase 3 – Guidance for Dover and Kent County Comprehensive Plan Updates

The City of Dover and Kent County have adopted and certified comprehensive plans. These plans are in full compliance with State requirements, but at this time, neither plan has a specific focus on health. The plans are due for an updates in 2018 (Kent) and 2019 (Dover). The health

data analysis and mapping and the lessons learned from the charrettes in the representative communities will be synthesized into a document and presentation.

This document and presentation will be focused on providing the City of Dover and Kent County guidance and recommendations on how each jurisdiction can more fully integrate health into their next comprehensive plan update. It is also expected that the various partners participating in Plan4Health will remain active in Dover and Kent County and participate in the plan update processes in 2018 / 2019. While this sounds far in the future, it will actually coincide well with the conclusion of the Plan4Health grant period, which is July 2017.

Phase 4 – Communications and Information Dissemination Plan

The RFP requires a “communications” strategy to ensure information is disseminated to various stakeholders and the general public. This strategy will involve a plan that includes website development, sharing progress and success stories, and publications (white papers, policy briefs, etc.).

What’s Next?

The grant was submitted on July 31, 2015. The APA expects to award the grants to successful applicants before the end of the calendar year. If awarded, the grant partners will form a committee and begin implementing the four phases of the grant proposal. If you have any questions, or if you would like to be a part of this exciting project, please contact one of the contact people listed below.

About the Plan4Health Grant

Through an overarching collaborative strategy that brings together members of the **American Planning Association (APA)** and the **American Public Health Association (APHA)**, the Plan4Health project aims to build local capacity to address population health goals and promote the inclusion of health in non-traditional sectors. Plan4Health is supported through the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as part of the National Dissemination and Implementation program within the Division of Community Health, Funding Opportunity Announcement #DP14-1418.

¹ A charrette is a multi-day, collaborative planning event that harnesses the talents and energies of all affected parties to create and support a feasible plan that represents transformative community change (from the National Charrette Institute)

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