



A Checklist for Building Inclusive Public Health Programs

The Health Promotion for People with Disabilities program is an initiative grant-funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to address the inequities in health status between people with disabilities and people without. In Michigan, 20.6% of adult residents have a disabling condition. Of these, approximately 38% have reported their health status as fair or poor – compared to just over 7% of their non-disabled counterparts. People with disabilities are at increased risk for a variety of secondary conditions, including obesity, diabetes, poor oral health, and heart disease, and high-risk behaviors such as tobacco use.

People with disabilities are members of every public health population. For that reason, public programs should address people with disabilities in their efforts to reduce health disparities, and they should assure that people with disabilities are thoughtfully included in every health promotion program.

This brief checklist is designed to help you review your planning documents with regard to public health issues and the needs of people with disabilities. Feel free to apply it to your strategic plan, your work plans, whichever documents seem most appropriate. These are guidelines only; there is no perfect score, you do not submit your results to anyone, and only you can determine if a particular item is appropriate for and applicable to your program.

Some things you should know

For our purposes, 'disability' is defined broadly, using questions from Michigan's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). A person is considered to have a disability if he/she: is limited in any way in activities because of physical, mental or emotional problems,; or, has any health problem that requires the use of special equipment, such as a cane, a wheelchair, a special bed, or a special telephone. Be aware that the methods used by the BRFSS have limitations in terms of people with disabilities; because respondents must have a land line telephone, be able to respond to a phone interview and be the primary resident in the home, this excludes many people who are deaf, have intellectual disabilities, or live in any kind of congregate care setting.

Some of the main issues surrounding public health programs and disability include physical access to buildings and equipment (this includes hospitals, clinics, doctors' offices, local public health offices, etc.) attitudinal barriers within the healthcare community, and the accessibility and usefulness of health promotion programs and materials to people with disabilities.

Inclusion Checklist

Please look over the following questions as they apply to your planning documents and program materials. Again, only you can determine what is appropriate for your program – there is no ideal score.

Checklist Item	Yes	No	N/A
<p>Are images of people with disabilities incorporated into promotional or marketing materials where appropriate?</p> <p><i>Just as the images of people in your materials would include people of varying ethnic or racial backgrounds, including people with disabilities in these images contributes to an overall feeling of diversity</i></p>			
<p>Do you provide materials and communications in alternate formats as applicable?</p> <p><i>This does not mean that you need a stockpile of everything produced by your program in Braille. Rather, it means that you can provide your materials in alternate formats (large print, electronic, Braille) upon request. The Michigan Commission for the Blind can put you in touch with Braille providers at 1-800-292-4200.</i></p>			
<p>If you mention a program website, is it accessible to non-screenreading (blind, low-vision, etc.) users?</p> <p><i>A good resource for determining whether your website is accessible is the Web Accessibility Initiative, http://www.w3.org.</i></p>			
<p>When access issues are discussed (access to healthcare, etc.) is disability included as a concept?</p> <p><i>In public health, the concept of ‘access’ to healthcare normally centers around insurance coverage. If access is discussed, consider including disability access as well, since lack of physical and communication access to health care are significant issues for people with disabilities.</i></p>			
<p>If you provide direct service to the public, is your location physically accessible?</p> <p><i>This comprises not only your parking and entrance, but also restrooms, waiting room, and anywhere your clients customarily go. The link to planning accessible meetings in the ‘Resources’ section incorporates a full discussion of what physical access should include.</i></p>			

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Checklist Item	Yes	No	N/A
When disparity or health inequity issues are discussed, is disability included as a distinct group?			
Do you target people with disabilities as a disparate population?			
Do you have any initiatives or programs targeting people with disabilities? Based on what definition of disability?			
Do you have targeted strategies for identifying and reaching people with disabilities in your work?			
<p>If you distribute training materials to professionals, do you include professionals who may serve people with disabilities?</p> <p><i>Examples: Special Education schools and teachers, developmental pediatricians, dentists who provide sedation dentistry to people with developmental disabilities.</i></p>			
Does your list of resources include disability-specific materials and references?			
<p>Are you providing information about disability prevalence in your documents?</p> <p><i>Remember that you'll have 'overlap' among disparity groups – that people with disabilities will appear in all demographic groups. Also, if you use the BRFSS definition of disability, be aware of its limitations as described in the introduction to this document. If you have such targeted programs or initiatives, be sure to include your definition of disability in the document.</i></p>			
If you are gathering information, do you specifically include people with disabilities in your samples?			
Do your advisory bodies include someone with expertise on disability issues?			

Resources

ADA Accessibility Guidelines

<http://www.access-board.gov/ada-aba/index.htm>

Planning Accessible Meetings

Online guide to planning fully accessible meetings and events

<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~NCODH/pdfs/rbmeetingguide.pdf>

Sign Language Interpreters

Michigan Online Interpreter Directory

<http://www6.dleg.state.mi.us/interpreter>

Questions? Michigan Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DODHH)

http://www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-28077_28545_28559---,00.html

Braille Resources

National Federation of the Blind Braille transcription resource list

http://www.nfb.org/nfb/Braille_transcription.asp

Questions? Michigan Commission for the Blind

http://www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-28077_28313---,00.html

General Resources

Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns

http://www.michigan.gov/dleg/0,1607,7-154-28077_28545---,00.html

Health Promotion for People with Disabilities

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