

Resource Navigators Bridge Families to Community & Clinical Services



The Healthy JumpStart Coalition | CCI Health & Wellness Services | Montgomery County, MD | Presented By: Ayan Ibrahim, M.S., CHES

Introduction

There are many factors that contribute to Montgomery County's high quality of life; however, pockets of poverty within the county are found to have poorer health outcomes. These areas tend to have a low per capita income, are predominately minority, have high rates of uninsured individuals and a large majority of individuals who receive SNAP or Medicaid benefits. Many families may receive referrals, but do not have the self-efficacy to follow through. Other families may not choose to access primary care services due to other competing priorities.

To address these issues the Healthy Jumpstart Coalition was formed to engage in community improvements.



Project Overview

The Healthy Jumpstart coalition enables WIC participants to access services within the organization and throughout the community. The resource navigator is the link that assists families in accessing preventative services. The resource navigator facilitates the "warm handoff" technique to assist families in creating appointments with primary care physicians and encouraging them to attend their appointments. Currently there are resource navigators available at 3 CCI-WIC centers.



Resource Navigator assisting WIC mother

Activities

- Design and implement seamless referral process
- Improve WIC enrollment in the county
- Increase referrals to medical home providers
- Provide cultural competency trainings
- Conduct outreach efforts on basic training on WIC services and benefits



Seamless referral process design

Outcomes

The Healthy Jumpstart Coalition developed a community action plan to address and implement policy, systems and environmental changes. As a result the coalition succeeded in:

- Establishing & sustaining community partners (providers, vendors, food banks, k-12 schools, government agencies, military facilities, faith based organizations, farmers' market) to facilitate trainings & WIC benefits education & providing healthy food options
- Linking WIC participants to resource navigators and interagency collaboration which has resulted in 441 participants linked to primary & preventative services in the month of February alone
- Creating a community resource database shared among resource navigators, community health workers, social work interns
- Providing cultural competency trainings for all 300 CCI employees across the county
- Disseminating communications efforts– TV appearances, Social Media, Newsletter, etc.



Healthy Babies Workshop



Community Resource Day hosted by CCI WIC Center- Wheaton



Next Steps

1. Sustain and expand interagency collaboration efforts by continuing trainings, volunteer/practicum opportunities for the resource navigator role, and hosting/participating in community events
2. Procure additional funding opportunities to continue to build on community-clinical linkages and access to healthy foods



Interagency collaboration

Lessons Learned

Reaching Montgomery County's diverse population of over 1 million seemed very challenging. However, when developing the community action plan it was important to ensure goals and objectives were specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time sensitive. These restrictions have helped our agency to stay on course and effectively execute objectives and ultimately ensure we reach our target population.

The resource navigator initiative, resource guide and interagency collaboration efforts are bound to better health outcomes for our population. Our health communication strategies have directly increased enrollment at our centers. Furthermore, basic training on WIC services throughout the community has boosted enrollment.

The WIC advocate is a vital part of our policy, system and environmental changes. This component adds the momentum to address the WIC communities concerns and assists in developing strategies with long-term impacts on health and wellness.



Della Cox & her children, WIC Advocate

Best Practices

1. Establish strong relationships with community partners to reach a wide swath of the population
2. Set realistic goals and objectives in community action plan
3. Utilize the voices from the community to design and implement an effective program