National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics
Population Health Subcommittee Workshop

Using Sub-county Data to Promote Multi-sector Approaches for Community Health and Well-being: Identifying Gaps and Opportunities

Courtyard Marriott, DC/US Capitol—September 27, 2016

The movement to support community-level improvements in health and well-being has generated numerous metric sets, measurement frameworks, toolkits, and initiatives. Yet communities still face persistent challenges in identifying, accessing, and using sub-county data. Most needed are data that put health and well-being in the context of other related determinants such as housing, transportation, local economic conditions, and education. The National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics (NCVHS) is charged with advising HHS on national health information policy. Following this workshop, NCVHS will produce a report and make recommendations to the Secretary of HHS identifying innovations to enhance public/private partnership opportunities, refine HHS data generation capabilities, and promote federal agency coordination and alignment of sub-county[1] data generation initiatives.

The purpose of this meeting is to help the NCVHS advance recommendations to HHS in three areas:

- Enhance public/private collaboration to increase availability of sub-county data
- Improve HHS data collection to focus on sub-county data
- Better align federal small area data estimation[2] and sub-county data generation initiatives.

Specifically, the objectives of this meeting are to:

1) Put forth a multi-sector measurement framework reflective of the numerous initiatives under way, to serve as the basis for a public/private collaboration.
2) Identify opportunities and gaps in sub-county data metrics and the potential Federal role in expanding the development of small area data estimation.
3) Explore opportunities to align, leverage, and build multi-sectoral sub-county metric-centric efforts to improve health and well-being.
4) Catalyze collaborative efforts to continue this work.

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[1] Our focus is on collection and generation of data at the smallest possible unit that permits meaningful and effective planning and project development at that unique level. Depending on local characteristics and other factors, the meaningful unit may be the neighborhood, or a small town, or a group of contiguous communities or even counties. For purposes of parsimony of discussion, we will refer to this small, actionable geographic unit, which varies with the context, as 'sub-county.'

[2] Small area estimation is the use of statistical techniques to provide an estimate for a small sub-population (the "small area") where few or no persons have been directly surveyed. Estimation is accomplished by employing data collected outside of the small area, data collected on the same outcome, and related administrative data. All relevant data are then processed using a statistical model that, in turn, is used to make each small area estimate.

Workshop participants will include:

- Innovative thinkers and leaders of multi-sectoral partnerships focused on sub-county health and well-being improvement projects. These include non-health collaborators, foundations, and local, state and national organizations committed to data accessibility and use in community health improvement efforts; and representatives of state, county, and local government agencies who have engaged in efforts to advance community health and well-being initiatives by improving metrics and developing innovative approaches.
- Key staff of federal agencies with community health/wellbeing initiatives, and staff of federal statistical agencies.
- Scholars, data scientists, and those with special interest in data-centered approaches to improving community health and well-being.

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