

Public Health Outreach Project Description

Title: Healthy Iowans 2010: Integrating Information with Public Health Planning and Delivery

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Organization: Hardin Library for the Health Sciences, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

Date: 1999

Objectives:

Identify and address the information needs of the Workgroup and Chapter Team members planning, writing, disseminating, and supporting Healthy Iowans 2010, the state of Iowa strategic health plan.

Target Audience:

State and local health planners comprising the Workgroup and Chapter Team members involved in the planning effort for the Healthy Iowans 2010 report.

Needs assessment (methodology and results):

In November of 1998, a baseline survey was conducted to determine the makeup of the HI2010 participants and in particular, their experience with electronic information gathering via the Internet and their computer expertise in general. The baseline survey was distributed and collected at the Healthy Iowans 2010 Kickoff meeting and was completed by 234 individuals. The results were used as a guide to determine the level of sophistication of the training sessions and for general interest

Intervention:

Training sessions were held at the following locations:

January 12, 1999 -- Healthy Iowans 2010 Workshop, "Information Resources to Support Health Planning." Iowa Capitol Complex, Des Moines, Iowa Hoover Building, B Level, ITS Labs 1 & 2; 50319; Fourth Congressional District

April 22, 1999 – Healthy Iowans 2010 Workshop, "Information Resources to Support Health Planning." Session run via the Iowa Communications Network to four sites, including the originating site.

June 4, 1999 - Healthy Iowans 2010 Workshop, "Information Resources to Support Health Planning." Drake University, Room 119, Harvey Ingham

Building, 2507 University Ave., Des Moines, IA 50311; Fourth
Congressional District

December 20, 1999 - Healthy Iowans 2010 Workshop, "Information Resources to
Support Health Planning." Training Room, 6th Floor, Lucas Building,
Capitol Complex, Des Moines, Iowa 50319; Fourth Congressional District

The target audience for all of the training sessions included all individuals on any of the planning teams for Healthy Iowans 2010 project. "Healthy Iowans 2010" is the state counterpart of the Healthy People 2010 report and as such constitutes the strategic health planning document for the state of Iowa. Professions included physicians, nurses, public health officials, county and city planners.

Each of the training sessions varied somewhat in length and the content was expanded or contracted to accommodate the time available. Each training session included instruction in the use of the project services, PubMed, searching the Internet for relevant public health planning sites and a close-up look at the sites most relevant to state and local health planning.

Training and other materials developed:

Numerous handouts were developed for the training sessions including lists of health related web sites, search engine summaries, and PubMed documentation. Most of the training material, however, resided on the project website to facilitate referral after the training sessions.

Website (developed as part of project and how maintained):

The project web site <<http://www.lib.uiowa.edu/hardin-www/hi2010/index.html>> was mounted on a University of Iowa server. Overall design of the website was accomplished by Ed Holtum in conjunction with Linda Roth (Hardin Library staff member) who also helped with the technical development of the site. The web site provided an access point for health planners and included links to national and state planning resources, training sites, PubMed, mediated search request forms, reference request forms, document delivery request forms, and information on the various Electronic Mail Discussion Lists.

The site web page, in addition to serving as the central service point for the project, also constituted an ongoing exhibit to which frequent referral was made by flyer, formal training, e-mail, and electronic mailing list activity.

Evaluation (methodology and results):

The project was evaluated two ways: Each training session (with the exception of the ICN session) included a formal session evaluation form which was completed and returned to the instructor(s) after each session. The evaluation reports were almost uniformly favorable with high marks being given in nearly every category, the only exception being that of room accommodations.

The second method of evaluation involved a specially created web-based that all Healthy Iowans 2010 planners were asked to complete. The evaluation form requested information on the use of the project services and the extent to which the planners

became better aware of the various resources that were presented to them through training and through the project web site.

Unlike the baseline survey, the evaluation survey was conducted online via a web-based form. To alert the users to the survey, an e-mail message was distributed to all HI2010 participants that directed them to the web page from which they could submit their responses. Eighty-eight responses were received in this manner. A summary of the results is included, below.

Did you attend any of the health information training sessions?

Yes: 41.67%	No: 58.33%
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To gauge the effect that training had on the respondents, we grouped the responses into three categories: all respondents, training non-participants, and training participants. The following tables represent the percentage of the three groups for each response. Each response choice is followed by three percentages separated by slashes. The first percentage represents the overall percentage from all respondents. The next percentage includes only respondents those who did not participate in any of the training programs. The last response includes only respondents who did participate in one of the training programs. For example, for the first category, "Project Home Page," 20% of the total respondents indicated they used the resource often, 6% of the non-training respondents indicated they used the service often, while 30% of the training respondents indicated they used the service often. It can be readily seen that the responses from the training participants indicate a higher level of activity and satisfaction with regard to program services. This is reflected most notably in the last question, "Do you think your knowledge and use of health and health planning Internet Resources has increased as a result of this project?" in which 68% of the training respondents indicated "significantly" or "very much," while only 24% of the non-trained respondents responded similarly.

How often did you refer to the following resources?

	Never	Seldom	Often	Routinely
Project Home Page	26/41/15	52/53/53	20/6/30	1/0/2
Iowa Department of Public Health Home Page	13/15/9	50/53/49	25/24/25	12/6/17
Univ of Iowa Hardin Library Page	43/56/34	40/29/47	14/15/13	3/0/6
Center For Disease Control Page	27/29/25	38/53/28	26/15/34	9/3/13
National Library of Medicine Site	52/62/45	35/35/21	12/3/19	0/0/0
PubMed	49/71/34	32/21/40	17/9/23	2/0/4

How useful did you find the following services offered by the "Healthy lowans 2010: Integrating Information with Public Health Planning and Delivery" Project?

	Never Used	Not Useful	Somewhat Useful	Very Useful
Electronic Discussion Lists	27/38/19	6/6/6	44/38/49	23/18/26
Document Delivery Service	70/74/68	1/0/2	15/18/11	14/6/19
Mediated Search Service	80/88/74	3/0/4	7/9/6	11/3/17
Reference Question Service	78/88/72	0/0/0	11/9/13	10/3/15
Project Web Page	43/52/36	2/0/4	32/36/28	23/9/32

Do you think your knowledge and use of health and health planning Internet Resources has increased as a result of this project?

No	Very Little	Significantly	Very Much
11/21/2	38/52/30	44/18/60	7/6/8

Poster Sessions/Exhibits/Presentations/Publications:

Publication regarding the outreach project was provided through a project display which was exhibited at the Healthy lowans 2010 "Kick-off" meeting held in Des Moines on November 4. Flyers publicizing the project were distributed to Healthy lowans 2010 planners at that time and a 15 minute summary of the project was given to the over 300 meeting attendees by Louise Lex.

A revised project display was exhibited during the two day "Barn Raising" in Des Moines on June 3 and 4th. The Barn raising provided a "kick-off" for community leaders who were beginning local health planning efforts and attracted approximately 700 participants

Publicity was also provided through the twenty Healthy lowans 2010 electronic discussion list (one of the services of this project) and through the project web page

Partnerships:

The strongest part of this project was the partnership with the Iowa Department of Public Health. As the sponsoring body for the Healthy lowans 2010 plan, they worked closely with us in making certain that we were meeting the real rather than the perceived needs

of the chapter members. In addition, Louise Lex, the leader for the Healthy Iowans 2010 project was instrumental in securing training space and training facilities as necessary. The major recommendation to emerge from our partnership with the IDPH is that health information trainers would do well to partner with existing bodies within the state and community. In our case, we also had the advantage of supporting a specific health planning project in which information gathering and information assessment were paramount to the success of the planning enterprise providing a built-in incentive on the part of the target audience.

Marketing:

Most of the marketing for the project (other than the aforementioned poster/display) was the result of communications that took place via one of the many electronic mail discussion lists that were established as part of the project

The creation of electronic mail discussion lists (EMDL) was an integral part of the project and functioned on two fronts: 1) the facilitation of interaction and communication among chapter team members and 2) the promotion and marketing of project services to Healthy Iowans 2010 planners. The development of the "large" EMDL was based on the information collected from the baseline survey completed by members in November. It was kept up to date by communications received from the Iowa Department of Public Health. The EMDL as a promotion and marketing tool was very effective.

Administrative issues:

Happily, the project staff members were able to work closely with the Iowa Department of Public Health who embraced the project as an integral part of the Healthy Iowans 2010 process. We also had good support and advice from Jean Sayre and the rest of the staff and the Greater Midwest Region were instrumental in providing needed advice, particularly in regard to contract revisions and reports.

We did face the difficulty of twice having staff members resign or take leave from the Hardin Library so it was necessary for us to reassign responsibilities and adjust work percentages accordingly.

In June, Ed Holtum was diagnosed with a serious illness that further curtailed some project activity. We were able to move ahead however, and the project went ahead on schedule. Much of the credit for this should go to Linda Roth, another Hardin Library staff member who upgraded and maintained the project web site throughout and who was instrumental in designing the web-based evaluation form.

Challenges Faced:

We were somewhat frustrated by the lack of requests by participants for both mediated literature searches and reference information. Although we emphasized these services during training, few took advantage of them. One explanation is that after the training sessions, many participants were content to use PubMed to locate the needed literature.

Had we been at a full and healthy staff level during the project, we would have, no doubt, planned at least one additional training session. It was also apparent that the training sessions run via the Iowa Communications Network were not as effective as the other three "hands-on" sessions though we did manage to reach many HI2010 participants who would otherwise not have been able to attend by using the ICN.

One of the most rewarding parts of the project was the positive manner that the participants viewed the multiple electronic mail discussion lists and the part they played in communication among the chapter members. The biggest difficulty here was transcribing the e-mail addresses from the handwritten baseline survey forms into the correct computer text. In hindsight, we should have used individual character boxes to record this information more accurately.

Were Project Objectives Met?

In general, the project goals and objectives were met and met well. Project staff members accomplished what they set out to do as outlined in the contract application. Moreover, the results of the evaluation were generally quite positive. It is important to realize that this project went well beyond training and included in addition, a project web page, document delivery, reference service, mediated searching and electronic mail discussion lists. In this regard, we feel we have broken new ground by not only providing training in the use of information resources but by raising the consciousness of the participants by offering a complete array of services to which they could easily avail themselves.

Sustainability:

We have already been asked to participate in follow-up activities and additional training sessions relating to the implementation of the state health plan. We continuing and expanding our involvement with the Electronic mail discussion lists created earlier to help planners move into the implementation phase of the project. We continue maintaining the project web page with appropriate modifications and this page will continue to serve as a "jumping off place" for Iowa health planners.

Our involvement has also made the rest of the Hardin Library staff more aware of the state planning efforts and we are better able to direct our users to state resources that have come about as a result of the Healthy Iowans 2010 effort.

We are hopeful that the major impact of the project will be a continued heightened awareness of the information resources and services available to health planners throughout the state. We hope this is true for both those who actually attended one or more of the training sessions and for those who utilized the services as presented on the project home page.

Anecdotes or Other Observations:

Below is a statement from Louise Lex, Iowa Department of Public Health, on the impact of the project on the Healthy Iowans 2010 effort:

In January 2000, Iowa became the first state to release its health improvement plan for the new decade. *Healthy Iowans 2010* was the product of more than 500 Iowans working on 23 chapter teams for a year. The Iowa Department of Public Health coordinated this unprecedented collaborative effort that included participants from 238 agencies and organizations. In commenting on Iowa's plan, Surgeon General David Satcher said, "*Healthy Iowans 2010* is an excellent example of a participatory process that has translated the national health goals to a local level. Iowa is commended for setting goals with action steps that can engage all stakeholders from government to consumers to work together on health promotion."

Through the grant, "Healthy Iowans 2010: Integrating Information with Public Health Planning and Delivery," essential communication and resource information were delivered to this large planning enterprise. Beginning with the Healthy Iowans 2010 Kick-Off Meeting on October 30, 1998, the Hardin Library partnered with the Iowa Department of Public Health to support plan development. At the kick-off, Edwin Holtum and Kara Logsden from the Hardin Library distributed a brief survey on competencies to assess the kind and level of training that fit the needs of chapter team members. The Hardin Library staff gathered information to be used in developing a listserv for each team so that members could communicate with other team members. This was especially important since membership was drawn from 47 of Iowa's 99 counties and so many agencies and organizations were participants.

Throughout the following year, there were a number of training programs offered to team members. As a result of this training, they could take advantage of the resources of the Hardin Library and make full use of what was available for their research via the Internet. Training also was offered at the June 1999 Barn Raising II Conference, a two-day conference that drew an audience of about 700 Iowans from across the state, thus reaching community coalition members. The Hardin Library prepared a display for the meeting. The Hardin Library provided electronic document delivery services to those requesting this type of assistance.

As coordinator of *Healthy Iowans 2010*, I valued the strong support provided by the Hardin Library through the grant program. This support was noted in the Healthy Iowans 2010 document as well as in the *Healthy People 2010 Toolkit: A Field Guide to Health Planning*. The toolkit was published by the Public Health Foundation under contract with the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office of Public Health and Science, US Department of Health and Human Services.

[Louise Lex, Iowa Department of Public Health]