Definitions and Descriptions of Social Determinants of Health

Definition 1:
The social determinants of health are the circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, work and age, as well as the systems put in place to deal with illness. These circumstances are, in turn, shaped by a wider set of forces: economics, social policies and politics.

World Health Organization

Definition 2:
The social determinants of health are the conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship and age … [that] affect a wide range of health, functioning and quality-of-life outcomes and risks.

Healthy People 2020, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

Description 1:
Health starts – long before illness – in our homes, schools and jobs.

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Description 2:
All Americans should have the opportunity to make the choices that allow them to live a long, healthy life, regardless of their income, education or ethnic background.

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The 3 C’s

Components of successful team and external partner alignment

C

Contact
Frequency is the key.

Communication
Clear, consistent communication of the mission and vision is essential.

Connection
Develop trusted relationships with individuals and partners by opening up and being your authentic self.

Description 3:
The opportunity for health begins in our families, neighborhoods, schools and jobs.

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PDSA Cycle Example

Based on previous research, the stakeholders PLAN to host a local farmer to sell fresh fruits and vegetables at the women’s health free clinic.

They DO set up the farm stand in front of the building and keep track of what is sold.

They STUDY the results by reviewing the sales log and recording anecdotes from the women. They find that many women report that they would buy more produce if they could use their SNAP* benefits, and if they were more confident about how to cook fresh vegetables.

They ACT by procuring SNAP debit card readers for use at the farm stand, and – starting the next iteration of the PDSA cycle – they PLAN some cooking classes to be held at the clinic.

* SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly the food stamp program)
Tactics for Communicating

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The elevator speech: clear and brief
- A compelling vision that can be described in the amount of time you have during a typical elevator ride
- Use when meeting people at unrelated public events and even when you’re in line at the grocery store or getting your hair cut.

Tactics for Communicating

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Multiple channels of communication
- Use the newest communication technologies, but don’t forget the tangibles: coffee mugs, T-shirts, posters in storefront windows. Keep the message in circulation.

Tactics for Communicating

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Be memorable
- Create metaphors, figures of speech and slogans – and find creative ways to use them.
- Write a theme song or a memorable motto.

Tactics for Communicating

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Walk the talk
- If you’re talking it up, be sure to back it up with actions and behaviors. If people see one thing and hear another, your credibility is shot and your vision is dead.
Barriers

TEAM BARRIERS
Consider team dynamics, communication, personalities and accountability.

BARRIERS RELATED TO EXTERNAL FORCES
Consider barriers like lack of funding, relevant policies and community opposition.
Also consider the role of local/state laws and how they can be leveraged.

My Commitment

My Commitment

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