Planning for Community Programs

Planning for Community Programs

Once you have determined the needs of your community, you can begin to plan a CRC prevention and screening program. Utilizing the results of the readiness assessment, consider where the program will take place and what issues should be addressed. You will need to refer back to the results throughout the planning process. Tool 5.1, Connecting Levels of Readiness to Program Mission and Context, can give you a sense of the context and example program platform that is appropriate for your community's level of readiness.

The first step to creating a CRC screening program is to develop a plan that outlines overall aims, objectives, strategies and specific actions. This chapter details the steps to program planning and how to develop a specific plan for your community. The success of any program is dependent on thorough planning. Although planning uses time and resources, it ultimately builds a strong foundation. The program will be more comprehensive, and subsequently, foster greater change in your community. It is crucial that program planning is completed prior to implementation.

Program planning uses your community readiness assessment to effectively build from what exists in your community. This chapter includes toolkit materials to engage potential stakeholders, create a detailed action plan, develop a basic program budget, and design an evaluation. While this chapter presents a combination of program planning models that will be useful in developing your program, there are many alternative, in-depth resources available.

"I think that the next time the decision makers...decide they are going to go to their doctor, I think we should put them all on a deferred or on a waiting list for 90 days and let them sit at home and worry about it. Let them feel that lump for 90 days....Maybe you want to go into town for a regular routine physical. Put yourself on a six month waiting list....The next time you want to go to the dentist, wait a year."

-Bob Brisbois

Spokane Tribe of Indians
Courtesy: 2002 President's Cancer Panel

Engaging Stakeholders and Creating a Planning Team

Your screening program is likely to be more successful if the community is involved and supports your effort. In chapter four, Readiness Assessment, you identified key stakeholders. These and other stakeholders should be engaged in the program planning process to increase capacity and efficacy of your program. Reaching out to potential stakeholders is a preliminary way to educate your community about CRC prevention and screening. Beyond engaging community members in the assessment, an inclusive planning process and community collaboration will improve the program overall. Tool 5.2 is a worksheet for determining and engaging stakeholders.

Engaged community members who are willing to be involved will be the core of the program and should participate in the entire planning process. Although more community members may have participated in the readiness assessment, a planning group should not exceed 15 members. The planning group should reflect the people who will be impacted by the CRC screening or prevention program. The group should also include some members who have a long-term commitment to the program. Lastly, the group should include representatives from multiple sectors, including advocacy groups, concerned residents, health care providers and potential program recipients.

Assigning Roles and Responsibilities

During the planning process the team must consider individual roles and responsibilities. Prior to further program planning, the team must honestly and realistically evaluate how much responsibility each person can take. This is especially important if members are volunteers.

Program Planning: Defining Program Aims, Objectives, Strategies and Actions Plans

Action planning is a guide to defining the overall goals of your CRC prevention and screening program. It will encourage the planning group to think of specific and achievable objectives and outcomes. Action planning also allows you to outline strategies and interim indicators to address program objectives. After program implementation, action plans will become a roadmap for program evaluation.

| Mission or Program Aid | Specified Program Objectives | Strategies to Address Objectives | Actions or Detailed Activities |
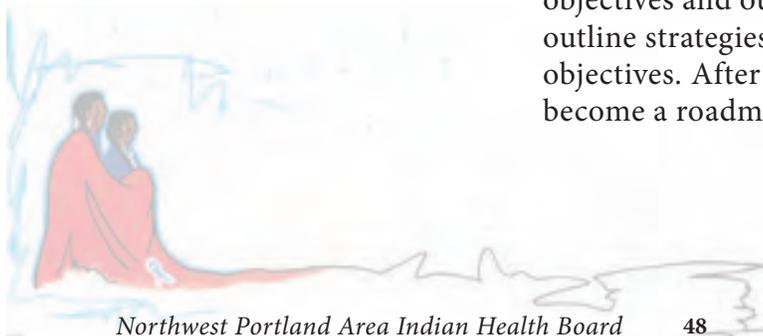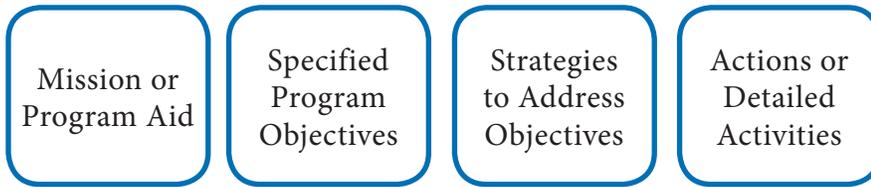
The figure above illustrates the steps to developing a community action plan. Moving through each step will help you create a detailed outline for program implementation.

Program Aims: The big picture

The first step is defining your overall program mission or program aim. Program aims are broad, overarching goals your program will be designed to accomplish.

- Why are you planning a CRC prevention and screening program?

- What kind of program will it be?

- The program aim should be brief and outcome-oriented.

- What do you want to achieve?

- The program aim should include what will be done to address the issue, but not be too limiting in what strategies will be considered.

Program aims for CRC prevention or screening will depend on your community's readiness level. Some example program aims include:

> "To increase community awareness of colorectal cancer and screening in my community through community events, media, community education, and advocacy"

> "To increase the screening rate of CRC through access to screening services, patient follow-up, and community education"

Please refer to tool 5.3 in the toolkit pocket of this chapter for a more detailed explanation and worksheet on creating program aims.

Resource:

For more in-depth planning descriptions, tools and checklists go to the University of Kansas' Community

Toolbox online:

http://ctb.ku.edu
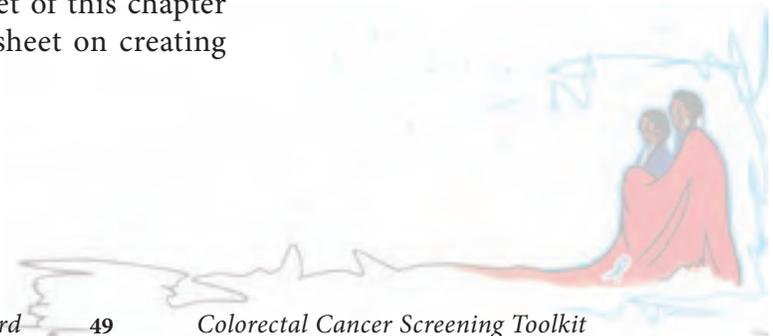
Consider this:

Objectives must be measureable. In order to measure the impact of your program, you will need to collect baseline measurements prior to implementation.

Objectives

Objectives are measurable results that address how program aims will be achieved. Creating objectives will allow you to break down program aims and examine measurable milestones. In addition, forming objectives will organize and prioritize feasible methods to reach overall program aims.

Objectives answer the question how much of what will be accomplished by when. Different objectives can be directed at particular groups within your community. Strong objectives clearly define what needs to be measured and when it should be accomplished.

Objectives are SMART:

- **S**pecific- What will be achieved?
- **M**easurable- How much change will be achieved and can you measure it?
- **A**chievable- Is it potentially achievable?
- **R**ealistic- Is it realistic considering available resources?
- **T**imed- When will this objective be achieved?

The format for developing objectives is:

By [date], increase/decrease by [quantified amount, % or number] of [who] will [what].

Example objectives include:

- "By January 2014, all community buildings will have CRC screening brochures available."

- "By the year 2014, all community members will agree with the statement, 'Colorectal Cancer screening is critical for adults over the age of 50 or with a family history of Colorectal Cancer.' "

- "By January 2016, increase by 50% the percentage of community members over 50 who have annual FOBT."

- "By the end of the year 2018, all clinics will have a CRC screening outreach protocol in place for patients over the age of 50. "

Please refer to tool 5.4 in the toolkit pocket of this chapter for a more detailed explanation and worksheet on creating program objectives.

Strategies

Objectives define what success looks like for a particular program whereas strategies specify how your program will realize those objectives. Strategies allow you to focus your efforts and consider how each objective will be accomplished. Strategies are the link between what the program is intended to accomplish and what actions will be taken to achieve program success. Strategies point out a path and are inclusive of multiple potential methods; they do not name specific people and their tasks.

Strategies will be developed for each objective. Multiple strategies can apply to one objective. They should include obstacles and resources and be diverse in how they apply to each objective. Strong strategies include the following characteristics:

- Highlight relevant approaches without limiting action to specific skills or tasks

- Consider and utilize resources and assets

- Address current obstacles

- Reach the target population and advance the overall program aims

There is no explicit format for writing strategies, but some sample strategies include:

- "Build a community partnership with all relevant organizations in order to promote colorectal cancer awareness and screening"

- "Use media advocacy to promote public awareness of colorectal cancer and screening."

- "Promote coordination between community health representatives and clinics or health practitioners."

- "Modify policies or local laws governing colorectal cancer screening outreach."

Please refer to tool 5.5 in the toolkit pocket of this chapter for a more detailed explanation and worksheet on determining strategies.

Resource:

For ideas on objectives consider the *Healthy People 2020 Cancer Objectives*. These can be found at:

http://healthypeople.gov
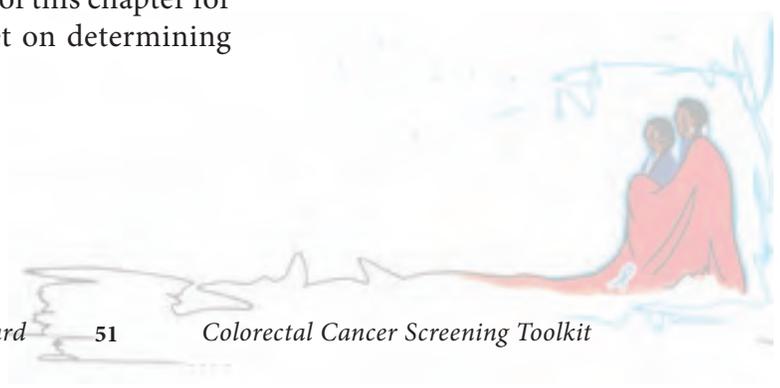
Action Planning

Action planning is the final element of the planning process. An action plan describes how strategies will be implemented by breaking down strategies into detailed tasks. This is the opportunity to describe in detail how strategies will be put into action to achieve the program's objectives. Developing an action plan will assist you to not overlook any details in creating your program and will help you increase overall efficiency. Action plans need to be revised and adapted regularly as the program grows and tasks are completed. A complete set of action plans are very thorough and increase efficiency. Action plans ensure multiple perspectives and methods are being considered to reach program aims.

Action plans are comprised of multiple elements to outline different tasks in detail. Each task should include the following:

- What needs to happen? Describe the task.
- Who is responsible for the task?
- When should this task be completed?
- What resources are needed to carry out the task?
- Who else needs to know about the planned task or change? Who needs to be involved?

Each task needs to be clear, complete and up to date.

When planning an event it's important to look at the calendar to check if other events are going to conflict. Tool 5.6 is a checklist of potential tribal and community events to consider when planning. Please refer to tool 5.7, Drafting an Action Plan, in the toolkit pocket of this chapter for an in-depth description of action plans. Tool 5.8 is a template for creating action plans.

Financial Considerations: Budgets and Grants

Depending on the size of your program, the planning team may need to develop a program budget. If nothing else, it is important to brainstorm and understand anticipated costs of the program. Costs include any resources, staff time, or associated fiscal expenses. Budget and expense records are useful in creating grant applications, evaluating the overall effectiveness of the program, and understanding the capacity of your program.
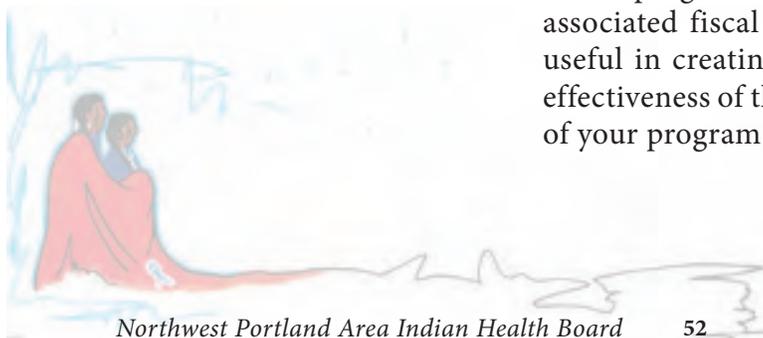
Tribes may also seek grant opportunities for funding. Several relevant grant opportunities exist, including grants specific to AI/AN communities. Below is a short list of initiatives and grant resources for cancer prevention efforts:

> *Spirit of EAGLES Initiative:* Each year the Spirit of EAGLES grant helps fund community-based projects to increase awareness and understanding of cancer. Further information on the Spirit of EAGLES initiative and a downloadable application:
>
> www.nativeamericanprograms.net/
>
> *NPAIHB Local Tribal Community Cancer Implementation Funding:* These funds support NPAIHB member tribes to implement tribal cancer control plans. Many different activities are funded every year. For more information visit: www.npaihb.org
>
> *Northwest Health Foundation:* The Northwest Health Foundation focuses on initiatives that support the health of people in Oregon and Southwest Washington. They fund many grants every year. For more information visit: nwhf.org

Evaluating your Program

Evaluation is critical to understanding the effectiveness of your program. Evaluations can determine whether the CRC program is achieving its goals. Evaluations can be conducted throughout the program implementation process. Programs are often evaluated at the conclusion of a program or the end of grant funding. However, process and midterm evaluations are highly useful and give insight to current program needs or processes that were not initially considered. Evaluations serve as opportunities to revise program plans and objectives and identify areas of improvement.

It is important that plans for evaluation are considered in the program planning phase so questions are not augmented altered because they may to misrepresent the true program impact. In order to truly measure program impact, your CRC program will need to collect baseline measurements for each objective that will be evaluated after implementation. An example objective might say:

-   "By January 2016, increase by 50% the percentage of community members over 50 who have annual FOBT."
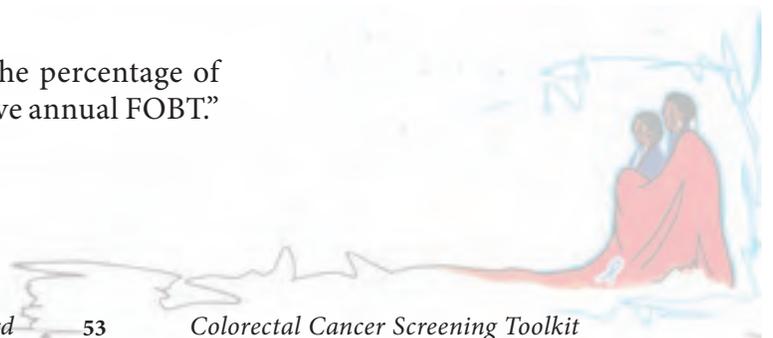
Consider this:

Consider including/ gathering baseline data on objectives while developing the action plan.

To determine if the CRC program has achieved a 50% increase, the CRC program must have already obtained the number of community members over 50 who have annual FOBT prior to CRC program implementation.

Evaluations can be informal or highly in-depth; consider how in-depth your evaluation can be with your given resources. Although comprehensive evaluations offer more detailed information, even informal evaluations can be useful. The program planning team can utilize the community readiness assessment and program objectives as evaluation tools. For a basic evaluation of program impact, you can ask community readiness assessment participants to re-take the assessment at a predetermined period of time after program implementation (e.g., after one year). For a more in-depth evaluation, you or another team member can measure program outcomes against all of your action planning objectives. It is important to be realistic about the level of evaluation your program can provide. If conducting a thorough evaluation is possible, consider doing further research on how to conduct program evaluations.

Obtaining Tribal Council and Community Approval

Tribal council and health board or health committee support is important to community acceptance of your CRC screening and prevention program. You can present your proposed program and share sample program materials. Presenting your program provides an opportunity to communicate with leaders in your community about the importance of CRC screening and prevention as well as gain support from the tribal council and health board for future projects. Consider obtaining tribal council's support with a presentation.

The presentation can demonstrate the benefits of CRC screening and the need for a prevention program (For talking points see, Oregon Health Authority Appendix B, pgs. 1-2). Present enough information so that the council can make an informed decision, but do not overwhelm them with documents. As with any presentation, avoid using medical jargon and technical terms that are not familiar to your audience. Be prepared to justify expenses and any requests for funding. Allow enough time for the council to ask questions.
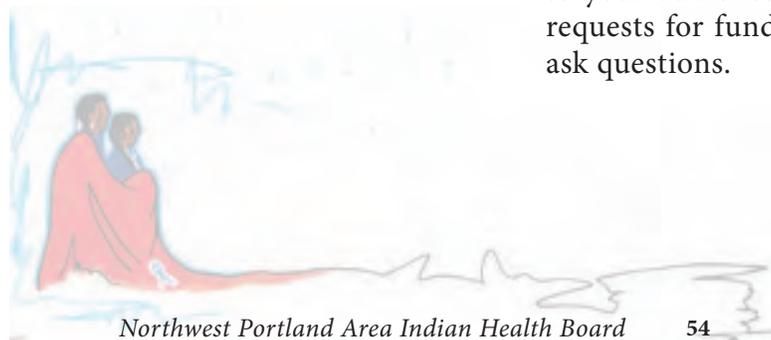
Chapter Summary

Community program planning is fundamental to the success of any health program. Program planning guides you to consider thoroughly outline and utilize resources, barriers, and objectives related to your program. Program planning is the opportunity to decide what you want to achieve (Program Aims/Mission) and the steps needed to achieve it (Objectives, Strategies, Action Plan). This chapter described how to plan and evaluate a new community-based program.

Tool Box Description

5.1 Connecting Levels of Readiness to Program Mission and Context

- Connecting levels of readiness helps you understand your community's level of readiness and how it can become a base for program planning.

5.2 Determining and Engaging Stakeholders

- Determining and Engaging Stakeholders guides you to think about who you can contact in your community to be involved.

- It also has some ideas on how to connect with the people you have identified as potential stakeholders.

5.3 Developing Program Aims

- This is a simple worksheet to help the planning team determine CRC program aims.

5.4 Creating Program Objectives

- This worksheet builds off the program aims worksheet and guides the planning team to create SMART objectives.

5.5 Creating Strategies

- The Creating Strategies tool builds off the previous two worksheets. It has suggestions on how to create strong strategies.

5.6 Considerations for Event Scheduling
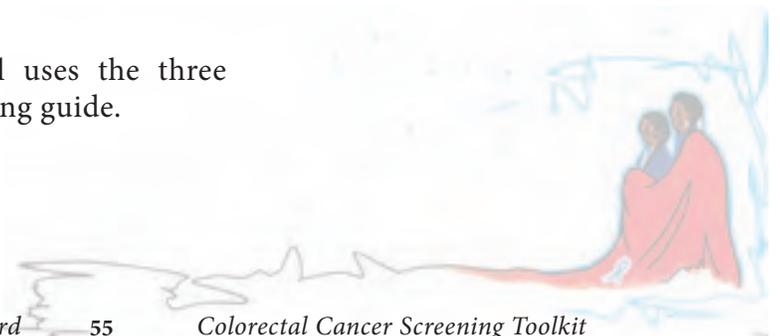
5.7 Drafting an Action Plan

- The Drafting an Action Plan tool uses the three previous tools and has a brainstorming guide.

Consider this:

Check out the Northwest Health Foundation's free evaluation Handbook for a more in-depth guide on conducting evaluations.

Find it at:

http://nwhf.org/ sources#handbook

5.8 Action Plan Template

- The Action Plan Template can be used to list specific tasks, assign people who are responsible, and estimate costs for each task.

Pgs. 1-2 CRC Talking Points (Oregon Health Authority, Native American Media Guide) (*available upon request)

- The CRC Talking Points from the Native American media Guide are useful for proposing or describing your new CRC program. They are also useful talking points for a community education- based CRC program.