

NORTHEAST REGION HEALTH PROMOTION TEAM NEWSLETTER

Summer 2022



SUMMER

Interacting

THE BEAUTY OF INTERACTING WITH HEALTH PROMOTION

by Amy Sandoval

I often get the question, “What is Health Promotion?” from different interactions I have on a weekly basis. When most hear the term ‘health promotion’, their mind immediately thinks of promotions (plural), painting an image of posters, flyers, marketing, publicity campaigns, etc. Although our Health Promotion program may interface with those different elements of health promotion, our focus is centered on health at the population level instead of at the individual level. Our program within NMDOH is focused on improving health outcomes impacting groups of people in the communities we serve.

Where we do our work first depends on the issue or topic at hand that communities are faced with. Sometimes the issue may not be as visible, until we bring data to the conversation to assist with prioritizing different health issues, alongside having community conversations to discuss the impact certain indicators are having on a community. When having these community conversations, we begin to learn that the data, which at times only focuses on the medical aspect, only captures a fragment of a community’s health. Health Promotion staff understand that the health of community is impacted by both medical and social factors, known as the social determinants of health.

Many of the activities and projects we undertake within our program take a significant amount of time. That’s why we are often called to many meetings to assess and plan before implementation is underway. In the midst of influencing systems to support needed changes, we are always connecting our partners to resources to support our existing systems. That in part, is how we mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health issues, resulting in the outcomes desired. The power of creating a better outcome is always contained in the moment of what we do today. That is the beauty of interacting with Health Promotion.

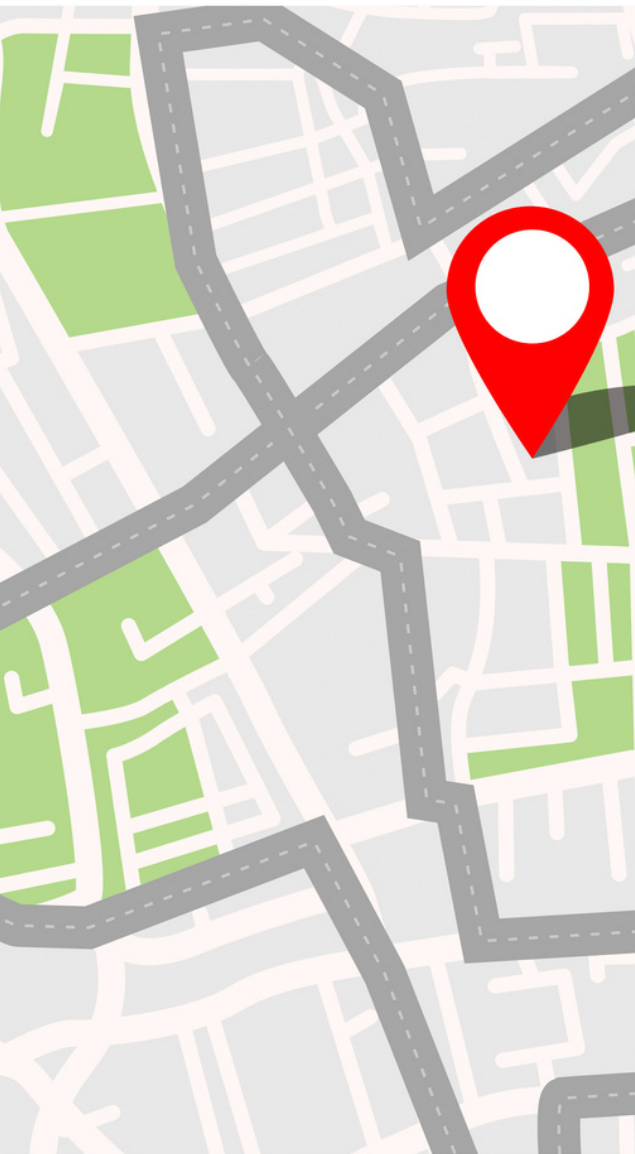




ASSET MAPPING SKILLS TRAINING

by Audie Nadler

In June, Health Promotion Coordinator Audie Nadler and Health Equity Specialist Jessica Sandoval attended the Native Health Initiative's Community Asset Mapping training. The trainers led them through an experiential exercise in asset mapping, which is defined as finding existing resources within a community or organization to support a community health project.



As you walk or drive around your community, what do you notice? When you look at an empty park, do you see a potential gathering place for cultural traditions and ceremonies, or a location where crimes are committed? When you see a group of youth hanging out in front of a local business, do you see critical voices who should shape the future of your community? When you drive by a retirement community, can you imagine the collective wisdom that resides in that place?

It can be easy to focus on negative aspects when people interact with the individuals and places in their community. This is called a deficit map. However, every community is filled with potential allies, partners, ideas for improvement, and spaces for growth as well. Evaluating a community from this perspective is called creating an asset map. Both perspectives are necessary. A deficit map reveals the issues that need to be addressed and an asset map tells us who can solve these issues, and how health can be built in communities.

Consider this exercise to begin building asset mapping skills within your team: Next time you discuss a community issue that needs to be addressed, invite everyone to share what hand, heart, and head skills they can contribute. Hand skills are physical abilities like gardening, repairing cars, or painting. Head is knowledge in a particular area like child development, how to create walkable communities, or how to navigate Medicaid/Medicare systems. Finally, and most important, is the heart. What are the passions and driving forces that your group members hold? When you begin to shift toward focusing on assets, effective solutions come more easily.

For more innovative ideas about building and using asset maps, check out "Sharing knowledge and donuts – Community asset mapping" Ted Talk by Liz Hannum at <https://youtu.be/wYP0U9Tj1Y8>.

The Northeast Region Health Promotion Team is excited to share additional information on asset mapping to support health councils in fiscal year 2023.



OLDER ADULT WELLNESS IN OUR COMMUNITIES

by Nichole Romero

Health Promotion Specialist, Nichole Romero has been working to address older adult needs in her assigned counties, Colfax, Harding, and Union. Senior citizens in rural areas often face difficult situations such as lack of food, transportation, and medical services. Many times, seniors must travel out of town for medical appointments, access to food, and other essential needs because many seniors have no access to transportation or a support system. This is a crucial public health issue that has been recognized and needs to be addressed at the local and state level.

To assess senior's needs, Nichole has been working with the Raton Senior Center, Alternatives to Violence, The Senior Foster Grandparents Program, and the Northeast Network of New Mexico (NEN-NM) to conduct surveys with seniors. The survey questions were modeled after the AARP older adult survey. The results of surveys in Colfax County showed many seniors wanted assistance with gardening, home assistance, personal health care, etc. After sharing this senior survey initiative with Colfax, Nichole collaborated on a similar initiative in Union County. Nichole will now begin exploring the feasibility of conducting a similar senior survey in Harding County, which has one of the highest older adult populations in the state.

As a Health Promotion Specialist, Nichole continues to research and collaborate with county partners in her assigned communities to find opportunities for healthy senior living. Nichole has recently connected with Aging and Long-Term Services to explore resources, including funding to meet the needs identified within these surveys. Once resources are identified, Nichole will work to bring services and programs to seniors that are interested in them. Nichole will also work with groups and agencies such as Health Councils, Healthy Kids Colfax County, other agencies, and students to provide seniors with needed services.

The importance of conducting these types of senior surveys will help address and bring needed resources to local communities.





NE REGION HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAM COLLABORATES WITH NMDOH SENIOR FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

by Valentina White

For the past few years, the Northeast Region Health Promotion Program has collaborated with the NMDOH-Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) to promote and recruit seniors in northern New Mexico to apply and receive SFM benefits. With the 2022 Spring NE region wildlands fires and recovery, there became an increase and urgent need to get food to the residents, particularly in San Miguel and Mora counties. The San Miguel Public Health Office, WIC and Health Promotion programs worked together to promote SFM applications within these communities' food distributions sites and senior centers.

To be eligible for the SFMNP, the senior has to be a New Mexico resident, live at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty level; Non-Natives must be 60 years or older and Native American Indians must be 55 years or older. Applications are currently being accepted for the 2022 Farmer's Market Season which started at the beginning of July.

Eligible applicants will receive \$25 and up to \$50 if funds are available, to spend at participating farmers' markets in New Mexico, between July 1st and November 15th, to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables as well as honey.

For the 2021 Farmer's Market season, the NE Region Health Promotion Team collected 331 applications, totaling \$7,725 dollars to help seniors throughout the region apply and receive SFM benefits. The NE Region Health Promotion Program is hoping for another successful year in helping seniors apply for the 2022 SFNMP season.



6/10/2022, Las Vegas Food Depot Drive-thru Pantry

Left to right: Valentina White-HPS, Jean Roybal-WIC Staff, Veronica Griego-NM Farmers' Market Manager.



INTERACTING WITH COMPASSION

by Candice Wilhite-Quiroga

When most people think about the town or county of Los Alamos, they think of the Los Alamos National Laboratory. Some might also believe that in this town, everyone's needs are taken care of, and everyone prospers. Health Promotion Specialist Candice Wilhite-Quiroga had those thoughts at one time as well. However, while attending her first meeting with the Los Alamos Health Council, there was an ad hoc committee giving a report and requesting more participants. The committee was called "Basic Needs". Candice asked if she could be included in their meetings, and after attending for the first time, she quickly realized they were expressing the same needs that other counties have voiced, regardless of outward reputation and perception.

The Basic Needs committee was formed to bring community partners together, identify gaps in services, and gather information and resources that can be used collaboratively. Some of the non-profits represented in this hard-working sub-committee include: LA Cares- An organization run from the Bethlehem Lutheran Church that helps those in need get resources and referrals, and also provides a food distribution once a month to approximately 60 families; JJAB- An organization that helps youth and their families in the community feel connected, valued, and recognized by offering parenting classes, youth activities, and case management; Self-Help- An organization that offers resources, options and assistance with evictions, rent and utilities for those struggling; and several other (primarily volunteer) organizations that are invited to share when the need arises.

Candice is currently collaborating with the LA Cares food pantry to address the gap they are experiencing with obtaining fresh produce. She was able to connect them with another organization that she has been volunteering with for 3 years, MoGro (Mobile Grocery) to address food insecurity. They have developed three possible strategies to address the issue; supplementing their produce with other fruits and vegetables they already receive monthly, delivering bulk produce to the food pantry, or handling a second distribution during the month.

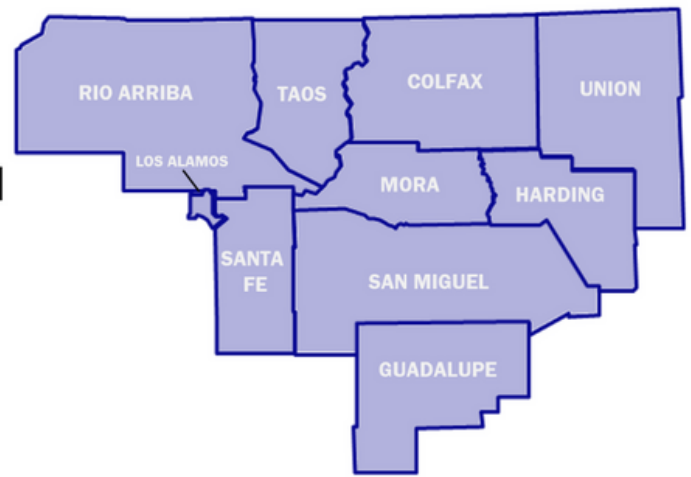
As time progresses, Candice looks forward to working with the rest of the organizations too, assessing gaps and bringing light to this issue in Los Alamos. No matter the perception, no matter the town, everyone deserves the chance to survive and thrive.



PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

NORTHEAST REGION HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAM

We serve our diverse communities by harnessing their power to create positive and lasting solutions to the public health issues they face, as well as locate resources and assist with health initiative development. We envision creating systems with engaged communities striving for a happy and healthy lifespan for all in New Mexico.



HOW WE SERVE COMMUNITIES

- Facilitate connection between community partners and NMDOH programs and resources
- Conduct community-based health promotion with community and tribal health councils, coalitions, and other partners
- Access resources and funding
- Link community partners to data, evidence-based interventions, and NMDOH programs.
- Provide technical assistance with community health assessment, health profiles, communications, and strategic planning
- Maintain open communication between community partners and NMDOH
- Engage in advocacy and policy development around local and state-wide health issues

WE CONNECT THE DOTS



“Health Promotion Teams strengthen collaborative efforts at the local level...to provide health councils and community partners with data, technical assistance and other resources at the request of local communities.”

- 2014 New Mexico State Health Improvement Plan



NORTHEAST REGION HEALTH PROMOTION PROGRAM TEAM



Amy Sandoval
Program Manager
505-476-2675
amy.sandoval
@state.nm.us

WHAT THE PROGRAM MANAGER DOES:
Leads the team to facilitate the Public Health Division mission and initiatives, coordinates and implements strategies to address health priorities and indicators, and supports community preventive and population-based services

Audie Nadler
Coordinator
Community Health
Councils
505-476-2650
audie.nadler
@state.nm.us

VACANT
Coordinator
Community Health
Partnerships
Contact
Amy Sandoval

Vacant
Community Health
Epidemiologist
Contact
Amy Sandoval

WHAT THE EPIDEMIOLOGIST DOES:
Provides leadership for assessment, evaluation, and public health planning, develops and builds capacity within the team to increase assessment skills in data interpretation, analysis, program evaluation, and other related skills

WHAT THE COORDINATORS DO:
Assure coordination of community health improvement activities with DOH by assessing community readiness, assist with provision and interpretation of data, identify local partners and include them in the planning and implementation of regional and state initiatives

WHAT THE SPECIALISTS DO:
Work within and support their local Public Health Offices, engage with their local communities to address health priorities through the development of policy, supporting health councils, and implementing special projects and grants

HEALTH PROMOTION SPECIALISTS

Nichole Romero

COLFAX, UNION, &
HARDING COUNTIES

575-445-3601 ext. 103
nichole.romero
@state.nm.us

Valentina White

SAN MIGUEL, MORA, &
GUADALUPE COUNTIES

505-425-9368 ext. 118
valentina.white
@state.nm.us

Candice Wilhite-Quiroga

RIO ARRIBA, LOS ALAMOS,
TAOS COUNTIES, &
SANTA CLARA PUEBLO

505-222-4863
candice.wilhitequiroy
@state.nm.us

Vacant

SANTA FE COUNTY,
SAN ILDEFONSO, &
TESUQUE PUEBLOS

Contact
Amy Sandoval