



Building Cross-Sector Partnerships to Address SDOH: Design Sprints

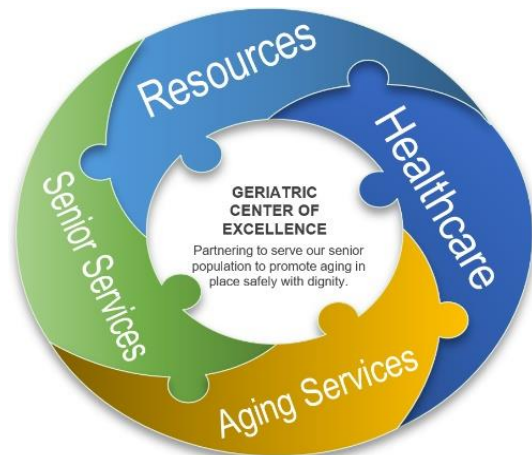
With support from a grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC) and the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organization (AAPCHO) launched “Building Cross-Sector Partnerships to Address SDOH: Design Sprints.” Using human-centered design concepts, NACHC and AAPCHO facilitated four design sprint cohorts of community health centers and their cross-sector partners to tackle social determinants of health challenges in their communities and advance health equity. Each cohort was focused on one aspect of the RWJF Theory of Change framework (purpose, data, governance, finance) to strengthen both emerging and established partnerships, and foster improved alignment between sectors.

Partnering to Create a *Regional Geriatric Center of Excellence*

About The Wright Center

The Wright Center for Community Health is a Federally Qualified Health Care Center Look-Alike, providing non-discriminatory primary health services in a Patient-Centered Medical Home model. TWCCH is also a founding member of a Teaching Health Center Graduate Medical Education Consortium, training the primary care workforce America needs while delivering comprehensive, compassionate health services to our patients, families and communities.

Overview



About Our Partners

Telespond Senior Services is an organization in northeast PA (NEPA) that provides life-enriching services to older adults and their families and caregivers as they navigate the aging process. Services include community-based adult day care, in-home personal care, and a senior companion program.

Lackawanna County Area Agency on Aging is the local branch of the Pennsylvania Department of Aging. Its mission is to serve and protect older adults, act as a resource for families and enhance opportunities for individuals to be empowered in areas of health, wellness, dignity, and independence.

United Way of Lackawanna and Wayne Counties is a regional non-profit organization focused on creating community-based and community-led solutions that strengthen the cornerstones for a good quality of life: education, financial stability and health.

Our focus for the Design Sprint was to create a **Regional Geriatric Center of Excellence** through an enriched resource network of community collaborators to provide whole person care to older adults while empowering their voices and connecting them with resources to allow them to age in place safely and with dignity. Building upon an existing Aging Cooperative developed by the Lackawanna County AAA and in furtherance of a grant from the AllOne Foundation to support the transformation of Telespond, the RWJF Theory of Change Alignment Framework helped to focus our collaborative efforts on strategic alignment around a shared vision that eliminated the historical siloes that have resulted in care gaps and duplicative services.

Addressing Our Community Challenge

Although a truly national problem, seniors in NEPA are at the mercy of disconnected and sometimes dysfunctional systems, a lack of health and social determinants of health information sharing, a hidden labyrinth of resources, complex pathways to resource eligibility, a lack of access to technological equipment and/or prowess, a lack of cultural sensitivity, limited access to transportation, and rising isolation and health literacy challenges. Compounding these challenges, our health and social service workforces need to develop geriatric care competencies. This population's voice has been disempowered for far too long. Together, the Design Sprint partners are strategically creating collaborative solutions and shared care plans for older adults, especially isolated seniors, to support them aging safely in place despite rising poverty and outdated, unsafe living environments. To be successful, the group humbly acknowledges that one organization cannot serve as a true comprehensive Regional Geriatric Center of Excellence – **it truly takes a village.**

Thanks to the RWJF Theory of Change Alignment Framework, the partnership now shares accountability for developing and deploying a comprehensive, regional collaborative to address the complex social problems facing seniors; clarifying and owning swim lanes to avoid duplicating services and identifying service gaps; optimizing scarce resources; and establishing and promoting closed-loop referrals to the ecosystem of service providers caring for seniors to ensure whole-person care. In doing so, it was critical that *we engaged the voice of the community.* In addition to surveying consumers of senior services, we engaged our Community Health Center Consumer Directors to join together with community-based Directors from Telespond on the Board of another affiliated 501(c)(3) organization, the Alliance, as the neutral platform where all stakeholders can have equal voice. The Alliance will host the continuing work of RWJF's Theory of Change Alignment Framework to bring the Regional Geriatric Center of Excellence to fruition.

Design Sprint Highlights

Successful collective impact initiatives require a relentless commitment to quality improvement and the humility to be open to constructive feedback. Fundamental trust among collaborators is a must for the Change Alignment Framework to be successful.

The Design Sprint provided a safe, neutral platform that allowed constructive and candid exploration of shared purpose through guided facilitation by an expert. As a result, the team was able to work through complex historical dynamics and develop trust and a presumption of goodwill among partners. *With the assistance and expertise of our coach, we were able to focus on our shared vision, breaking through barriers and dispelling misconceptions that truly moved our collaboration forward with shared vision and purpose.*

Moving Forward

Our workgroup has made substantial progress in formalizing the new governance structure of the Alliance organization and is poised to continue our work in the Theory of Change Alignment Framework in that space. We have made strides in the realm of data through consumer surveys and assessments, and have a task force convened to explore financial sustainability models for Telespond that do not rely on grants and aid.

■ Complete finalization of the "Alliance" governance model as the platform for Theory of Change Alignment Framework collaboration

■ Collectively contribute to group understanding of and commitment to the use of shared data and metrics

■ Collectively contribute to the enhancement of a sustainability plan for Telespond

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For more information about the partnership, please contact Shannon Osborne at osbomes@thewrightcenter.org

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For more information about the design sprint program, please visit www.prapare.org