The Community Health Improvement Matrix

Introduction

To better understand Social Determinants of Health efforts in Community Health Assessment and Community Health Improvement Planning, staff at the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) developed the Community Health Improvement Matrix (CHIM).

What are Social Determinants of Health? The social determinants of health are the conditions in which people born, live, work, play and age, as shown in the Healthy People framework.

What is the CHIM? The CHIM provides a way of categorizing the activities planned to reach a population health outcome goal.

How does it work? Activities developed to address a health goal, such as those identified in a community health improvement plan, are categorized by prevention level and target level and placed into a two-dimensional matrix. The four levels of prevention include (a) primordial/**primary** create environments for healthy living and reduce susceptibility or exposure to health threats (b) **secondary**: detect and treat disease in early stages and (c) **tertiary**: alleviate the effects of disease or injury. The five target levels are: (a) **individual** (b) **interpersonal** (c) **organizational** (d) **community** and (e) **public policy**.

What does the CHIM do? Local health departments, hospitals, and their partners have more capacity to:

- Describe efforts to address population health problems related to social determinants of health
- Conceptualize potential activities with partners according to a social determinants framework
- Assess the extent of local efforts and gaps in addressing social determinants

Where do prevention and target levels come in to the social determinants? Activities that fit under organizational, community or public policy targets at a primary prevention level are more likely to address social determinants than others on the matrix. All the activities may be important for the community's work in addressing a problem; the advantage of the CHIM framework is that it can give a sense of the balance of the community's endeavors.
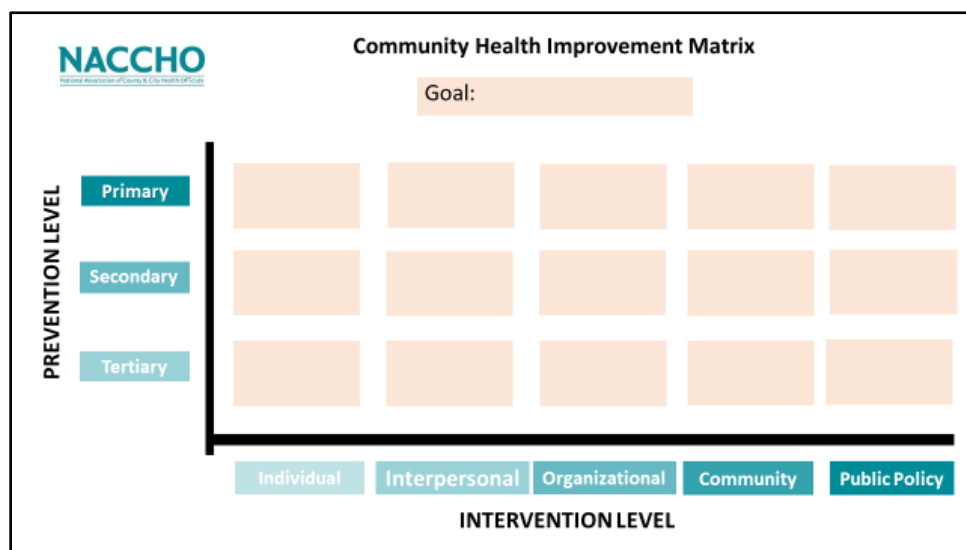
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