



2019 Maine Opioid Summit: The Power of Community Coalitions

Key Ingredients for Creating or Activating a Community Coalition

Every Maine community has been impacted by the opioid epidemic, and each community has responded in its own way. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to sparking the power of community coalitions, but we can learn from each other. We believe there are some common key ingredients for creating a new community partnership or activating an existing coalition.

1. **Start with a community conversation:** Many coalitions have started with a galvanizing event and a community meeting; we recommend bringing people together to hear their concerns, questions, suggestions, and interest in working for change
2. **Forge relationships and cross-sector connections:** Build connections and relationships based on shared interests, no matter the topic; relationships forged over community gardens can be the foundation for law enforcement, health care, employers, and landlords to work together on opioids!
3. **Identify and develop leaders:** Leaders can be found in plain sight at well-known organizations, but also look for opinion leaders within key constituencies and online communications platforms
4. **Plan for focused action:** Develop a concrete plan that is achievable and measurable; be visionary, strategic, and deliberate; report regularly and broadly on progress and challenges
5. **Structure is strength:** Engage organizational partners who can provide backbone support; use work teams to move plans and outcomes efficiently; stay connected with consistent communications
6. **Keep your Recovery Community front and center:** The story of recovery is the heart of community action – identify and support individuals and their families in leadership and storytelling
7. **Confront stigma:** Change the culture by challenging misinformation and bias at every turn; educate decision-makers in government, law enforcement, health care, housing, schools, and business by sharing the science and the stories of friends, neighbors, and colleagues
8. **Build a story bank:** Capture the stories of recovery, stigma, culture change, community engagement, hard workers and entrepreneurs; train and support storytellers in sharing their stories with others
9. **Be flexible and adaptable:** Be open to new possibilities; regularly assess and refine your plan; know that while individuals and circumstances will come and go, with every change comes opportunity
10. **Share your success:** Keep track of your coalition's accomplishments and celebrate results with partners and the entire community!

We hope you've found this workshop valuable. Please don't hesitate to contact any one of us with comments or questions.

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