

Delaware Food Research Network Mtg
6-5-20

1. Attendees

- a. Alberta Aryee, Delaware State University
- b. Allison Karpyn, UD Center for Research in Education and Social Policy
- c. Anna McDermott, Food Bank of Delaware
- d. Crystal Li
- e. Fred Gatto, Delaware Department of Health and Social Services
- f. Gina Crist, University of Delaware Cooperative Extension
- g. Jennifer Lindsay, Christiana Care Health System Value Institute
- h. Lindsay Lancaster, Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids
- i. Marcia Scott, University of Delaware Institute of Public Administration
- j. Michelle Axe, Christiana Care Health System Value Institute
- k. Michelle Rodgers, University of Delaware Cooperative Extension
- l. Nicole Kennedy, UD Center for Research in Education and Social Policy
- m. Nikko Brady, Delaware Department of Agriculture
- n. Ray Fitzgerald, Delaware Division of Social Services
- o. Samuel Besong, Delaware State University
- p. Tara Tracy, UD Center for Research in Education and Social Policy
- q. Thianada Manzara, Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids
- r. Veronica Mulgrave, Delaware State University

2. Recap: HER grant opportunity

- a. Allison Karpyn contacted the following individuals. No response from folks yet, the next step will be to reach out with specific questions.
 - i. Aimee Beam – School Nutrition Programs, Delaware Department of Education
 - ii. Jonathan Kirsch – American Heart Association
 - iii. Melissa Kenny – ShopRite
 - iv. Helen Arthur - re: WIC data
- b. DEFRN previously discussed studying the hot meals waiver
 - i. Concern that this will not lend itself towards healthy eating research since the food bought with this waiver is often unhealthy. This research may not result in a compelling finding for policy change.

3. Discussion: HER grant opportunity

- a. Gina Crist said that she is not sure that we have an idea that is fully flushed out yet. We would need to identify the outcomes that we are studying and characterize the systems.
- b. Allison Karpyn noted that states may have more WIC data than they realize.
 - i. This thought is based on work being done in MA. Federal reporting requires streamlined data, but states have more information underlying that, especially because of the transition to electronic cards.
 - 1. Allison sent out an inquiry.
 - ii. This data may open windows into what happening in the field and could help with characterization needed for research development.
- c. Anna McDermott brought up structural barriers that limit WIC participation.
 - i. Noted 100% + SNAP participation in Delaware; 40% WIC participation due to barriers such as different enrollment systems & a lack of outreach. Anna pointed out increased enrollment & food package use during COVID, which is encouraging.
 - 1. Two enrollment systems, ASSIST and WIC on the Web (WOW) that do not talk to each other.
 - a. ASSIST = DSS uses for SNAP, Medicare, etc.
 - b. WOW = DPH uses only for WIC
 - 2. No referral mechanism – if someone qualifies for SNAP, they are automatically eligible for WIC, but there is no outreach to the client from WIC.
 - ii. Suggests studying the changes that occurred as a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic (ex. remote appointments) that may have contributed to an increased enrollment & food package use.
- d. Anna McDermott also mentioned the impact of award of additional federal unemployment benefits, which in some cases have resulted in recipients losing their SNAP or WIC benefits.
 - i. I.e. the additional \$600 a week is counted towards income eligibility.
- e. Ray Fitzgerald made a point about the duration of the study. The federal programs impacted by COVID-19 may return to “normal” in a few months.
 - i. If short term effects are being studied, then window of time remaining is small. However, if long term effects are being studied, then that window is bigger.
 - ii. Even post COVID-19, leaders will still try to create socially distant opportunities to provide services. (Virtual, drive through, etc.)
- f. Nikko Brady, re: waivers

- i. Would like to hear more from Aimee Beam – waivers of school feeding have eased access & flow of food.
 - ii. Ray noted the number of waivers received that are temporary. There is a lot of data, but it is a small window. Many waivers end on 6/30, with the exception of school feeding waivers. Additionally, in the fall there may still be waivers in place for school meals, which may be served in classrooms instead of cafeterias.
 - 1. Allison noted that a sophisticated model would be needed to account for what would have been expected in the past and COVID considerations.
- g. The uses of data
 - i. Cost benefit – greater enrollment, outreach, lesser staff
 - 1. Ray Fitzgerald noted a huge uptick in enrollment, as well as the opportunity to access information related to client satisfaction.
 - 2. Anna McDermott noted the same uptick in enrollment. The Food Bank of Delaware’s need dropped after unemployed and SNAP benefits were awarded. However, the organization may have greater need again in fall. This could create an opportunity for additional research.
 - 3. Retention data would become available later.
- h. Marcia Scott, re: map resources
 - i. Would need for public facing data re: food avail/distribution continue? From a public policy perspective people have a hard time negotiating different websites. If there is one go to site that would help people.
 - 1. Map-based resources are effective (ex. City of Austin and City of Santa Clara). One go-to site could make it easier for folks to access information about distribution sites and qualification requirements.
 - 2. Asked if this could be included as part of a grant application.
 - ii. Anna mentioned 211 services; Nicole Minni noted that Austin’s map is an extension of their 211 system.
 - 1. Smaller Food Bank of Delaware partners would have trouble servicing a large number of customers. 211 acts as a gatekeeper for these partners and is able to control the number of referrals.
 - iii. Marcia noted that Nicole Minni’s work to extend her mapping beyond Lewes is labor-intensive
 - iv. Allison said that it would be good to continue this discussion, but mapping may not of interest to HER

- i. Anna, re: WIC. Noted that she would like to focus on removing constraints and barriers.
 - i. Ray Fitzgerald noted that such constraints may be federally mandated, so advocacy would be helpful. Suggested a pilot project.
 - ii. Allison described the WIC vendor project – partners include HER, NWICA, FNS.
 - iii. Anna noted that FRAC has addressed WIC in a recent report. She was also on panel at a conference in March.
 - 1. Zoom Chat: Report from FAC <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/Making-WIC-Work-Better-Full-Report.pdf>
4. Other topics
- a. Nikko & Gina discussed what can be learned about the localized response to supplement the food supply chain and how food can be made more available. Further, a policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) approach can be used to identify what is working now and support extending certain methods to be long-term.
 - i. Working on a Healthy Neighborhood Retail project proposal through the Food Policy Council. It would involve partnering with SNAP-Ed. Leveraging funding to get it started, and again for next federal fiscal year starting 10/1.
 - b. Michelle Axe as the Research Coordinator at Christiana Care’s Department of Community Health oversees the evaluation of various programs.
 - i. Two new team members: an INBRE student for summer, working on pilot program, and Jennifer Lindsay, also helping for the summer.
 - ii. Working with community partners.
 - iii. Produce Rx
 - 1. Targeted zip codes and focused on women with poorly controlled diabetes & hypertension.
 - 2. Conducting qualitative interviews to understand why there was not a high use of prescriptions.
 - 3. Shifted to produce delivery program during COVID-19.
 - a. Approximately 138 enrollees and have figured out all logistics.
 - b. Surveys:
 - i. Satisfaction after 1 week of produce
 - ii. COVID-19 social determinants of health (SDOH) survey

1. Value Institute – leading the development & administration of a statewide COVID survey that is going through IRB approval now.

4. UNITE US

- a. Free platform for all community organizations
 - i. 59 (?) organizations, will be pushing down south
- iv. Discussion related to the sharing of the survey.
 1. Alicia Salvatore [from Christiana Care](#) & Allison to connect re: survey & CDC.

5. Next steps

- a. Next meeting 6/19/20: WIC conversations to continue
- b. Allison will invite Alicia Salvatore to discuss surveys at a future meeting

Information from Zoom Chat:

Thianada Manzara - Maybe you have all seen this list of approved DE covid responses. I am wondering how long the Pandemic EBT for children who receive free/reduced lunch will last. Does anyone know? Looks like just through June.

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/covid-19/delaware#snap>

Allison Karpyn - Sharing an email that may be of interest:

The COVID-19 food security and obesity prevention resources and updates are provided below. Please send any relevant resources for this digest to me and I will include them in future weekly digests. Time-sensitive items can be sent directly to the listserv (nutritionresponsetaskforce@duke.edu).

You are receiving this email because you're a member of any of the following NOPREN/HER Work Group listservs: COVID-19 Food Access Work Group, Early Childhood Work Group, and the WIC Retail Research Learning Collaborative.

Thank you!

Lindsey Miller

Federal Updates

- Negotiations between Senate and House underway on the Heroes Act
- USDA Press Releases

Advocacy Updates

- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND) and National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAFEO) – Sign-On Letter Request

Funding Opportunities

- Healthy Eating Research – Special Call for COVID-19 Related Projects Focused on the Federal Nutrition Assistance Programs
- National WIC Association – Evalua

While the Zoom chat cut off the remaining content of the NOPREN/HER COVID-19 digest email, interested folks can learn more about NOPREN/HER COVID-19 here: <https://nopren.org/covid19/>. Lindsey Miller, who manages the NOPREN/HER COVID-19 digest emails, can be reached here: lindsey.miller102@duke.edu.