



Missouri Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant

State Epidemiology Work Group Final Report—Summary September 2009

Introduction

The five-year activities of the State Epidemiology Work Group (SEW) were outlined in a logic model addressing short, medium, and long-term desired outcomes. Project efforts adhered to this model with minor modifications.

Short-Term Outcomes

- **Project awareness:** Early activities focused on describing the project to those working in epidemiology-related areas. An early highlight was a site visit by then ONDCP Deputy Director for Demand Reduction, Dr. Bertha Madras, PhD, who reviewed Missouri's SEW activities under the SPF SIG grant.
- **State drug problem overview documentation:** An initial assessment was conducted in 2005-2006 to describe the alcohol, tobacco, and other drug problems in the state. This assessment identified key areas of concern as potential targets. Indicators of consumption and consequences of substance use were identified.
- **Key participants and ideas:** Persons from a variety of local, state, and federal organizations interested in drug abuse issues were identified and invited to participate in the SEW. Ideas and data relevant to the SPF SIG program were identified and shared among the participants.
- **Key statewide issues identified:** Participants reviewed the initial assessment and compared consumption rates at local, state and national levels. Missouri's drug problems were identified as: alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, stimulants, opiates, and substances of local interest, i.e., substances that are problems in specific communities. Data on the consequences of drug use were also identified and reviewed by the group. Six additional criteria were used in the examination and analysis of Missouri substance use data on the consequences associated with the substances noted above. These criteria were used as "guiding principles" for identifying a small number of consequences to address as state priorities following discussions with the SEW, other SPF SIG staff, CSAP staff and participants from other states.
- **Use-consequence links identified:** SEW staff investigated various consequences associated with consumption of substances as potential targets for community interventions.
- **Key indicators identified (targets):** SEW staff recommended to the GAC that the prevention of alcohol use be made a SPF SIG priority. They concurred and began discussing alcohol use-

related consequences. Technical assistance from PIRE and CSAP helped staff to choose the priority consumption issues of binge and underage drinking. Further work resulted in the following consequence indicators: (a) Alcohol Related Motor Vehicle Crashes/Boat Crashes, (b) DUI/MIP, and (c) Juvenile arrests/violence (alcohol-attributable). The two age groups that were selected based on the scoring process were ages 12-17 and 18-25.

- **Identify key state issues:** SEW staff continued ongoing monitoring of drug trends in the state. This included input on specific issues such as fentanyl abuse and general drug trends in Missouri.

Medium-Term Outcomes

- **Identify participants and supporters:** Staff continued to identify those persons who would be interested in the SEW's activities and who could contribute data or actively participate in the project.
- **Support project planning/allocations:** SEW staff worked with project staff at the state and coalition levels in development of the respective strategic plans. SEW staff also assisted in the review and editing of the state strategic plan. In summary, Missouri's SPF SIG priority consumption behavior was risky drinking, specifically, binge or underage drinking, among ages 12-25. Because there were no alcohol consumption survey data available for this age group in every county, proxy measures were chosen to represent risky drinking at the county level. These proxy measures were alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes; alcohol-related emergency room visits; and juvenile court referrals for alcohol offenses. These proxy measures were used as part of Missouri's allocation method to distribute SPF SIG funds to local communities. Subrecipient skill levels in data collection, analysis, reporting and the use of data to develop strategic plans varied between and within funded communities. Training was provided to funded coalitions on data-driven prevention and the role of data within the SPF SIG model, conduct of local needs assessment, and measuring change.
- **Project direction support:** The SEW reviewed functions, accomplishments and goals as they relate to the National Public Health Performance Standards and steps needed to move towards a public health model.
- **Resource allocation support:** Missouri selected proxy measures to substitute for the priority issue at the county level because county-level data on risky drinking among ages 12-25 were not available.
- **EBP interventions support:** Subrecipient skill levels in data collection, analysis, reporting and the use of data to develop strategic plans varied. Training in local logic-model development using specific examples was provided. This helped to focus the selection of EBPs by the community coalitions. Technical assistance in these areas was available throughout the contract period by phone, e-mail and site visits as needed.
- **Track key indicators (targeted & emerging):** Additional state, regional and local data sources were sought and accessed throughout the project. In October 2008, the Missouri SEW staff was asked to present at the national grantee meeting. Staff members presented on "Developing State Monitoring and Surveillance Systems and Prevention," which included information on organizational and theoretical issues, data system recommendations, and dissemination and sus-

tainability, with a focus on the Missouri SPF SIG website (www.mospfsig.org). In addition, three members of the SEW presented a poster presentation on the fentanyl overdose problem at the Consultation and Debriefing Meeting on the Response to Fentanyl-Related Overdoses and Deaths – Lessons for Dealing with Future Outbreaks in Washington, D.C. Work of the SEW also was presented at several meetings of NIDA’s Community Epidemiology Work Group (CEWG).

- **Adjust project direction:** Work of the SEW resulted in a shift in project direction. It identified the need for easier, timelier, and wider knowledge dissemination efforts among the target communities and others. This was accomplished through the development of an epidemiology-focused website accessible to all.

Long-Term Outcomes

- **Knowledgeable constituency:** The SEW participants have been exposed to a number of presentations related to drug abuse epidemiology. In addition, the targeted communities have also been introduced to this concept as a basis of prevention program planning. A desired outcome to educate a broader audience about epidemiology and its utility in prevention efforts remains an ongoing, long-term goal.
- **Baseline and ongoing assessment (targeted & emerging):** An update of the original needs assessment was developed in 2009 and focused on underage and binge drinking and related indicators. The document was distributed to SPF SIG staff and members of the GAC, SEW, Regional Prevention Specialists, Regional Support Centers and the project directors and evaluators of the funded communities.
- **Data-based prevention policy:** Integration of the SPF SIG model based on epidemiological assessment of problem issues is occurring at local, state and national levels. However, widespread adoption of the model will be ongoing.
- **Identification of key policy issues:** Several key policy issues have been identified over the five years of the grant. These include topics such as prescription drug abuse, use of evidence-based prevention programs, and the role of epidemiology in substance abuse prevention planning.
- **Facilitate self-learning:** While self-learning will be an ongoing, long-term goal stimulated by this grant effort, a concrete first step occurred with the development of the SPF SIG website and its epidemiology component.

Future Efforts and Sustainability

Future efforts should continue to emphasize the importance and use of epidemiology in prevention program planning and evaluation using the SPF SIG model. Initial discussions have been held to sustain the SEW efforts. In addition, knowledge dissemination of prevention information should be continued via the website.

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