Essential Integrative Activities within Cross-Sector Population Health Networks: An Organizing Framework

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This document was produced as an appendix to a white paper entitled *The Engine of Population Health Networks: Understanding & Using Integrative Activities*. The framework below is an update of the organizing framework presented in a Nemours' 2012 paper entitled "*Integrator Role and Functions in Population Health Improvement Initiatives.*" It includes five broad categories, each with an aspirational descriptor and a detailed list of integrative activities. Descriptors are intended to present the big idea of each category- the ideal state. Specific integrative activities associated with each category are intended to operationalize the big ideas, providing a roadmap or checklist that partners can use to assess the network and plan for strategic use of integrative activities.

This framework is a living document that is likely to evolve as work continues and Nemours continues to learn with and from others in the field.

2020 Organizing Framework of Essential Integrative Activities*

*Governance, oversight, and administrative functions that enable population health networks to carry out tasks and strategies related to the network's shared population health goals.

1. Governance and Leadership. To achieve systems-change goals, network partners come together under a well-designed structure that facilitates cooperation between partners with diverse missions and resources. Network structure is intentionally designed to include substantive input and participation from people with first-hand experience of the challenges the network seeks to address, and to involve such people in leadership and decision-making roles within the network). Those at the network's leadership table work collaboratively with the other network partners so that all involved understand how strategies and decisions connect to the larger goal of the network.

Network Governance & Approach

1.1. Facilitate consensus process establishing the network's vision, mission, goals, governance structure, administration and oversight structure, strategic plan, and communications approach

1.2. Ensure that the network's decision-making structures and processes include the perspectives and input of people with lived experience ("Nothing about us without us")

1.3. Ensure that network strategies address health at the individual, group, and population level; that the network's efforts include policy, systems, and environmental strategies aimed at improving social conditions and addressing root causes of health disparities; and that network strategies are developed with a health equity lens

1.4. Design and facilitate structures for accountability to the community and among network members

Network Leadership

1.5. Serve as a champion of the value, efficiency, and effectiveness of networks for moving the needle on measures of health equity and population health

1.6. Continually scan for opportunities to strengthen the network and its impact (increasing strategic use of integrative functions and increasing alignment between partners and sectors to address gaps, needs, and inefficiencies)

2. Continuous Use of a Health Equity Lens.
As networks work to address health disparities, strategies include a deliberate focus on inequities (health, racial, other) linked to the disparities. All network strategies are informed by substantive input and participation from people with first-hand experience of the challenges the network seeks to address.

2.1. Ensure that decision-making occurs through the lens of health equity

2.2. Ensure that all network structures and processes are designed to include and amplify the voices and perspectives of people the network seeks to serve- those who have needs, or experience conditions, that the network seeks to address

2.3. Ensure that equity-related training and capacity building opportunities are in place such that network members have a shared understanding of related concepts and strategies

3. Innovation & Oversight.
Networks develop and test programs and approaches that may not have been tried and tested before in their particular location or context, seeking small and large innovations that become game-changers. Mechanisms are in place to monitor implementation, report progress to network members and the community-at-large, and capture lessons learned and best practices.

Innovation

3.1. Create conditions and spaces within the network to nurture innovation, including but not limited to building capacity among network partners to generate and test innovations, and providing seed capital

3.2. Facilitate the setting of audacious goals for the network; goals that require innovation and new ways of working over small changes to current tactics

Oversight

3.3. Provide oversight of strategy implementation flowing from network strategic plan; ensure accountability and effectiveness

3.4. Direct and/or manage projects, including supporting work groups or alignment of activities

3.5. Monitor the field for relevant research and best practices that can be applied within the network

4. Continuous Learning & Improvement.
Networks recognize that changing complex systems within continually shifting social and political contexts requires them to be nimble and responsive. Networks regularly collect qualitative and quantitative data on agreed-upon metrics related to process and impact, and use these data to determine when course-corrections are necessary.

Creating Capacity Building & Improvement Opportunities

4.1. Ensure that the network deliberately and strategically includes continuous learning and improvement into its ways of working, making data-driven changes as needed

4.2. Create opportunities for learning and training among members of the network, including opportunities to build capacity for network partners to carry out integrative activities and to implement promising/proven policy and practice strategies

Cross-Sector Data

4.3. Gather, analyze, monitor, integrate, and learn from systems-level and community-level data, ensuring that (in addition to aggregate data) the network is utilizing disaggregated data to monitor measures of health and wellness among sub-groups of the population

4.4. Ensure that data are accessible to the community via data dashboards, health information exchanges, etc. and that the data are available for community use

4.5. Ensure that the data are translated into customized content for various audiences in ways that provide context, meaning, and value

4.6. Use data to inform network strategic planning- including selection of strategies, measures, and benchmarks

4.7. Work creatively and strategically to maximize cross-sector data sharing, including considerations related to selecting and utilizing data sharing platforms

5. Spread, Scale, and Sustainability.
Networks routinely spread and scale promising/proven strategies within the network and via local, regional, and/or national partnerships. This includes policy, systems, and environmental change strategies as well as program and practice strategies. Networks have a diverse portfolio of funding types and sources.

Scale and Spread

5.1. Continually scan for opportunities to scale up promising/proven policy and practice changes within and among sectors in order to achieve sufficient scale to move the needle on measures of health equity and population health

5.2. Ensure that training, technical assistance, infrastructure, and other resources are in place to allow network partners to rapidly adopt or leverage policy and practices changes made at the systems-level

Advocacy and Policy Change

5.3. Build public will for the importance and urgency of transformative policy changes that change community conditions (as opposed to incremental changes)

5.4. Facilitate the setting of policy priorities for the network, including identifying opportunities for network organizations to take part in collective advocacy

5.5. Advocate for policy & practice change at the systems-level, within the public and private sectors

Sustainability- Financial & Other

5.6. Establish sustainability-related goals and strategies, ensuring that the network's sustainability plan is not limited to direct financial support, but that it also includes capacity building for leadership of integrative activities and strategic allocation of resources (financial and in-kind)

5.7. Continually scan for funding and other sustainability-related resources available to partners by sector- for example community development, workforce development, education, and healthcare payment reforms

5.8. Continually scan for opportunities to blend, braid, and strategically re-allocate existing supports to maximize efficiency and impact

5.9. Mobilize and monitor/manage funding to implement priorities and activities, which may include serving as fiduciary for grants, wellness trusts, etc.

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