Webinar

Exploring strategies to strengthen civic participation for communities’ health

April 16, 2024

countyhealthrankings.org
Join the conversation

Welcome to Q&A
Questions you ask will show up here. Only host and panelists will be able to see all questions.

Where can I find strategies to address children in poverty?

Send anonymously | Cancel | Send

Who can see your questions?

Guidelines

1. Share successes and lessons learned
2. Offer resources
3. Build knowledge
4. Listen for multiple perspectives
People and places thrive when everyone can participate!

- Take part in public meetings
- Vote

Structural barriers

- Daytime meetings
- Inaccessible meeting locations
- Limited voter registration window
- Limited / reduced voting hours
Welcome

Benita Duran  
Senior director,  
Equity and civic engagement  
National Civic League

Dr. Stella Safo  
Co-founder  
Civic Health Alliance

Discussion group

When: Following the webinar
What: Share ideas, ask questions
How: Zoom
Why: Deepen learning
The Center for Democracy Innovation
at the National Civic League

We work to:

• **Sustain** democracy by inviting people to help redesign “civic infrastructure”

• **Scale** democracy through strategies for inclusive engagement to improve equity and governance

• **Measure** the quality of democracy and engagement, particularly in ways that lift up residents’ voices

------------------------------------

Founded in 1894 by a group led by Teddy Roosevelt and Louis Brandeis, the National Civic League is America’s oldest good governance organization.

The Center for Democracy Innovation mission is to illuminate and expand examples of meaningful exchange: efforts to rebuild civic infrastructure, recenter elections around voters and map the full ecosystem of democracy.

---

Better Public Meetings Research Communities

- **Boulder, Colorado**
  - City Council

- **Fayetteville, North Carolina**
  - Community-Police Advisory Board
  - Fayetteville Next commission

- **Mesa, Arizona**
  - Mesa Public Schools Governing Board
What are interviewees saying?

• “There's a difference between being heard and being listened to...not just conceding to the most prominent voices in the room.”

• “When you're elected, you're hearing from people at the wrong moment in a project.”

• “Meetings can be intimidating and uncomfortable if you don't know the right way (or the expected way) to communicate.”
We found: A genuine desire for change from elected officials, staff and community

- Elected officials AND staff AND community members want better ways to engage
- Confusion about when, not just where, issues are being discussed
- Security has become a big concern – and cost
- A common refrain: Life is too short and who wants this aggravation?

Approaches to Better Public Meetings?

- When they are face-to-face in a small-group setting
- When they can see the input displayed somehow it is clearer
- When they encounter different views and info
- When there is some sort of response from officials/institutions
- More front-end engagement dialogues
Our Origin: Patients Trust Us

“Hey Doc, I don’t feel safe voting...”

- Created by 4 physicians as a nonpartisan movement for safe voting during the 2020 elections, as VoteHealth 2020.

- Became Civic Health Alliance in 2021 to change the culture of medicine around civic engagement.

Mission: Civic Health Alliance is a non-partisan coalition of health and civic leaders advancing America’s health through civic engagement in care settings and communities.
What Holds Us Back?

Healthcare workers see the end results of poor policy on health, yet lack the **time, resources** or **know-how** to help change these policies.

We need a way to offer easy, accessible opportunities for civic engagement.

Barriers include:
- Lack of **time**
- Lack of **experience** and community
- Fear of **institutional pushback**
- Fear of **patient alienation**
- Fear of engaging with anything “political”

Civic activity is associated with:
- Improved mental health
- Higher income
- Higher education
- Better self-reported health in later years in life

States with more inclusive voting policies have better population level health outcomes

Civic engagement impacts SDOH

---

Modeling Civic Engagement in Health Settings

Power and privilege of health professionals can be leveraged to address health inequities at the policy level. High level of trust of patients in healthcare settings.

Figure 1. Schema and results of clinic-based voter registration.

Results of a Voter Registration Project at 2 Family Medicine Residency Clinics in the Bronx, New York


Civic engagement covers the variety of ways individuals and collectives of people or organizations participate in their communities and public life, in service of addressing issues of public concern or improving community conditions.
Promoting Civic Health In Health Settings

For health systems: We create the conditions for success

Representative Activity:
- Embed voter registration and education activities into relevant workflows (e.g., new employee orientation, SDOH screenings, patient discharge instructions, etc.)
- Develop institutional policies and practices that promote civic engagement
- Shift the balance of power to prioritize community agency
- Optimize health spaces for voting

Representative Activity:
- Facilitate meaningful community participation, including mechanisms for communities to explicitly prioritize how community benefit/investment funds are allocated
- Utilize advocacy levers to advance policies that promote health
- Advocate for policies and practices that make it easier to vote in local, state, and federal elections (e.g., election day as a national holiday, mail-in voting, etc.)

Civic Health Compact

Promoting Civic Health In Health Settings

For individuals:
We help make the work feasible
Promoting Civic Health In Health Settings

**For communities:** We meet you where you are

---

The Future

Thriving Through Civic Health Pledge

Campaign: [https://tally.so/r/3NXalb](https://tally.so/r/3NXalb)

**Goal:** Encourage individuals and institutions to pledge to vote and to help their colleagues vote in the 2024 election cycle.

**Offers**

- **What:** Toolkits, scripts, materials
- **How:** Trainings to prepare staff
- **Community:** Connection to other health systems
- **Measure:** via QR codes
Promoting Civic Health In Health Settings

Access Resources Located at www.civichealthalliance.org

Learn more at What Works for Health

- Public deliberations
- Voter registration initiatives
- Civic Health Curated Strategy List
Click on survey in the chat

Questions?
Upcoming webinar:
May 21, 2024
Identifying the forces behind persistent poverty

H. Luke Shaefer, Ph.D.
Professor
University of Michigan

You may choose to read in advance

Uncovering the Legacy of Poverty in America

“This book forces you to see American poverty in a whole new light.”
—Matthew Desmond, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of Evicted

THE INJUSTICE OF PLACE

Kathryn J. Edin,
H. Luke Shaefer, Timothy Nelson
Discussion group

When: Following the webinar
What: Share ideas, ask questions
How: Zoom
Why: Deepen learning

Stay connected

Sign up for our newsletter: CountyHealthRankings.org/subscribe
Follow @CHRankings
Facebook.com/CountyHealthRankings
Linkedin.com/company/county-health-rankings-roadmaps