

Assessing the Readiness of Rural Public Health Agencies for Facilitating a School-based Intervention

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What Is the Purpose of this Study?

- The purpose of the study was to better understand the role of a readiness assessment in a partnership between local public health agencies (LPHA) and a university.

What Is the Problem?

- Partnerships are often initiated without an intentional approach to assessing the readiness of those involved for executing partnership. Failure to discuss and attend to an organization's readiness for partnership may endanger the success of a partnership and initiative.

What Are the Findings?

- A readiness assessment revealed initial perspectives of LPHA directors on the following categories of readiness: mission, community climate, leadership, communication, personnel, change efficacy, and change commitment.
- These dimensions of readiness operationalized in different ways and informed the actions of both LPHA and University personnel to facilitate the success of the partnership.
- A retrospective interview of LPHA readiness for partnership supports the importance of a readiness assessment to promote successful partnerships.

Who Should Care Most?

- Those interested in engaging in partnerships stand to benefit from the perspectives raised in this study. Those working in LPHA–university partnerships may find other lessons particularly applicable.

Recommendations for Action

- A more nuanced approach to readiness for partnership may be an emerging area of research and interest in partnership communities.
- Those interested in facilitating partnerships should consider assessing the readiness for partnership of all who may be engaged and use the results of those assessments to inform the rollout of the partnership.