How Can Technology Support Collective Impact and Improve Outcomes?

SUMMARY

- Health departments, hospitals, health systems, and nonprofits are using emerging technologies to enact successful collective impact approaches to address long-term, large-scale problems.

- Technology can establish a centralized and dynamic measurement system and communication tool for communities to align efforts to achieve common goals through transparent and accountable means.

Healthy Communities Institute, a Xerox company

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act laid the groundwork for substantial improvements in population health by broadening the focus of health systems and hospitals beyond care delivery. To address factors like social determinants of health, providers must align efforts with local health departments and community groups, gather feedback from communities and experts, complete requisite needs assessments, and implement programs to promote community health. This ebook illustrates the growing importance of technology in a collective impact approach focused on population health improvement. It draws best practices and lessons learned from Orange County, California.

FIVE CONDITIONS FOR COLLECTIVE IMPACT:

ℵ A Backbone Organization

◎ A Common Agenda

⌣ Shared Measurement

ᐱ Mutually Reinforcing Activities

🗏 Continuous Communication

Arriving at Collective Impact: Lasting Solutions to Large-Scale Health Problems

"Collective Impact is the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem, using a structured form of collaboration."
— *Kania, J. and Kramer, M. (2011). Collective Impact.* Stanford Social Innovation Review.

Improving population health today means looking at complex and interdependent systems that impact health, including social and economic factors, health behaviors, and the physical environment. In 2011, John Kania and Mark Kramer formally introduced *collective impact* in the Stanford Social Innovation Review, which unlike *isolated impact,* breaks down silos between organizations to address a complex challenge. A collective impact approach is used by over 1.5 million nonprofits in the United States to combine resources and make meaningful progress.[1]

Kania and Kramer present five conditions for collective impact: a backbone organization, a common agenda, shared measurement, continuous communication, and mutually reinforcing activities. By working towards alignment, accountability, a plan of action, trust, and coordination, a multi-sector team has the opportunity to effectively take on complex issues. Today, practitioners are leveraging emerging technologies to enact this approach.

1 National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS), 2016

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Technology as the Backbone to Backbone Organizations
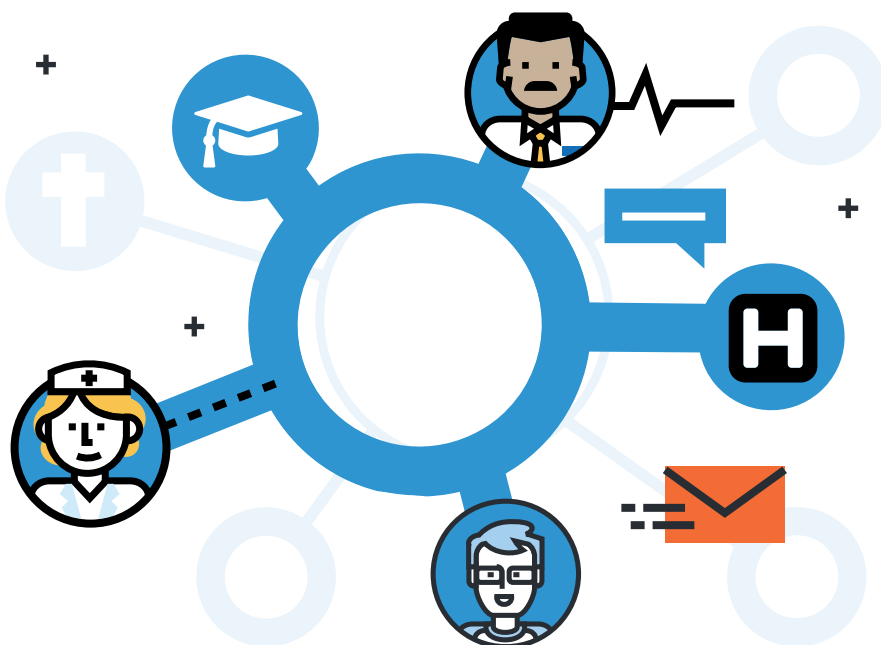
The backbone organization...

- Acts as the convener, bringing together the team and helping them access resources, infrastructure, and leverage policies

- Accelerates adoption and implementation of a governance plan, mobilizes funding, and builds public will

- Supports logistic administration, community and stakeholder management, and sources or provides funding

- Includes individuals that join as advisors and advocates

ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology offers tools for project- and time-management, operations, organization, and communications, upon which the backbone can rely.

↪ **Orange County Health Care Agency (OCHCA)** acts as the backbone to support a network of more than 80 private and public organizations, including UC Irvine, Hoag, and Kaiser-Permanente, among others. These multi-sector groups convened and established the Orange County Health Improvement Partnership. To this day, the agency coordinates at a high-level through various assessments, planning processes, and a centralized data and community resource platform that they help fund: http://www.OCHealthierTogether.org. Beyond optimizing internal coordination, the site provides justification of collective impact maturity to help all partners win competitive grants to further the common agenda. A coalition within the partnership won a CDC Partnerships to Improve Community Health grant of over $1.3 million dollars to further their work with Latinos, Asians, and Pacific Islanders who suffer from high rates of death due to diabetes and other chronic diseases.

A Common Understanding of the Problems Lead to a Common Agenda

To arrive at a common agenda, a multi-sector team...

- Convenes and defines goals through mutual discussion

- Assesses progress, sets priorities, prepares for challenges, and clarifies roles, responsibilities, and a framework for action

- Sets broad and high-level priorities so each group can contribute within their area of expertise

- Lays out a framework for action for priority areas with goals, objectives, and process and outcome measures

ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology's role is as a contextualizer, centralizing goals, objectives, and initiatives alongside resources, data, and analytics to provide insight. Technology also is the connector, conferencing in experts not limited by geography or time-zone.

➲ **Orange County's Health Improvement Partnership** unites behind the mission to align public and private resources to advance health for all communities in the county. Using the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) strategic planning tool, the group prioritized four areas, which each have their own goals, strategy, data, and activities on OCHealthierTogether.org: Infant and Child Health, Older Adult Health, Obesity and Diabetes, and Behavioral Health. Within each area, planning groups convene to develop goals and strategies and execute initiatives.

Shared Measurement:
A Single Source of Truth

The shared measurement system...

- Monitors progress around the common agenda through measurements and ongoing reporting

- Acts as the central tracker for partners to agree on key objectives and goals for specific health, quality of life, and process indicators

ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

Today, technology allows coalitions to use a centralized online system that provides all appropriate users access to the most current data (including trend charts), definitions of measurement, and comparison and target values. Partners can access all the data and upload their own custom indicators to maximize transparency and benefit from feedback. As the number of relevant data sources continues to grow, collaboratives increasingly rely on data scientists, epidemiologists, and/or a user-friendly platform to parse data and provide access to presentation-ready indicators.

In developing OCHealthierTogether.org alongside Healthy Communities Institute, the county determined 300+ health and quality of life indicators from 40+ national and local sources to serve as outcome measures. For each priority area, the site contextualizes progress on outcomes by including goals, initiatives, and community events. Demographic data is available for download. New indicators and comparisons are added as needed. Partners use the charts and dashboards on their own websites, reports, and presentations.

"Up until we launched OCHealthierTogether.org, we didn't have one central place focused on community health in Orange County because the information was distributed to lots of different websites," said Jane Chai, MPH, at the Orange County Health Care Agency. "Now, all our community partners look at the same indicators with the same definition, over the same time frame, so we can all be aligned in our efforts."

Mutually Reinforcing Activities
## Engage a Diverse Set of Stakeholders

Mutually reinforcing activities...

- Are evidence-based interventions, chosen to align strategically with the common agenda

- Are best supported by diverse partners, e.g. city planners, researchers, teachers, students, hospitals, clinics, etc., sharing progress and findings on an ongoing basis

ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology can improve the efficacy of these programs by augmenting participant recruitment; for example, by leveraging social media and mobile devices, or by improving the accountability of partner organizations. A centralized community website encourages coordination, transparency, and ongoing assessment.

➔ **Orange County organizes a constant stream of community activities,** led by the coalition's co-sponsors, Orange County United Way, Children and Families Commission of Orange County, OCHCA, and more than 80 partner organizations. One subcommittee developed the 2016 Orange County Older Adult Profile on OCHealthierTogether.org, highlighting key health, social, and economic indicators in this population. Another group, the Obesity Work Group analyzed geographic disparities for childhood and adult obesity rates, hospitalization rates, park access, food access, and childhood poverty rates and found four cities with highest need: Santa Ana, Anaheim, La Habra, and Buena Park. With funding from Kaiser Permanente, OCHCA awarded grants to Buena Park, La Habra, and Santa Ana to implement place-based strategies that address childhood obesity and provided trainings on community engagement and collective impact.
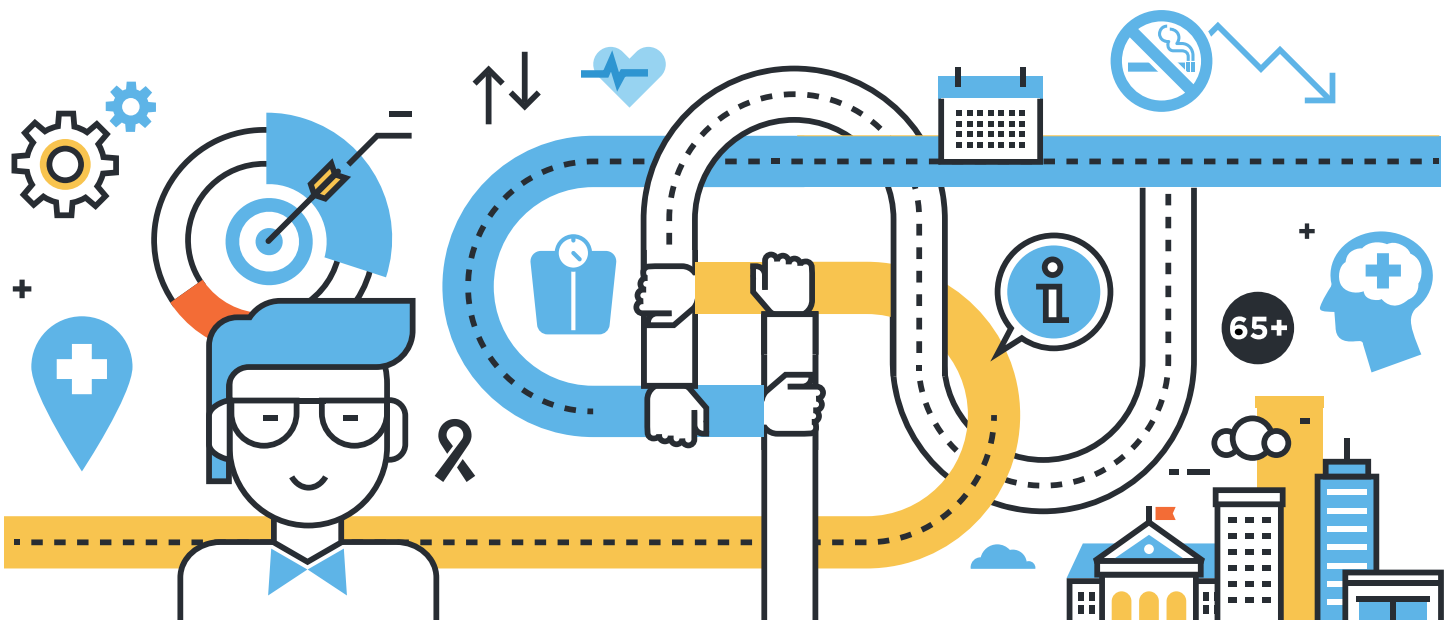
Continuous Communication: Building Trust and Informing Ongoing Learning

Continuous communication....

- Builds transparency, accountability, and trust and maintains a common vocabulary

- Is most successful when groups opt to meet monthly or even weekly

- Relies on publicly sharing meeting logistics and content to keep everyone accountable and in the loop, as well as to garner community feedback

ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY

Technology has tools for each step: recruitment, tracking and sharing progress, planning and cementing partnerships, and building excitement. Diverse stakeholders find that a shared system helps make their work transparent to other stakeholders and strengthens ongoing communications and programs.

➔ **Within OCHealthierTogether.org's Infant and Child Health, Older Adult Health, Obesity and Diabetes, and Behavioral Health sections,** subject-specific planning groups post progress on initiatives, meeting agendas and minutes, communicate vision and priorities, and invite public participation. The coalition's backbone organization collects progress and updates from the partner organizations and develops and shares newsletters regularly. The site communicates local resources available to patients and local activities to drive change. Sessions devoted to learning to use the data platform and public comment provide ongoing touch-points.

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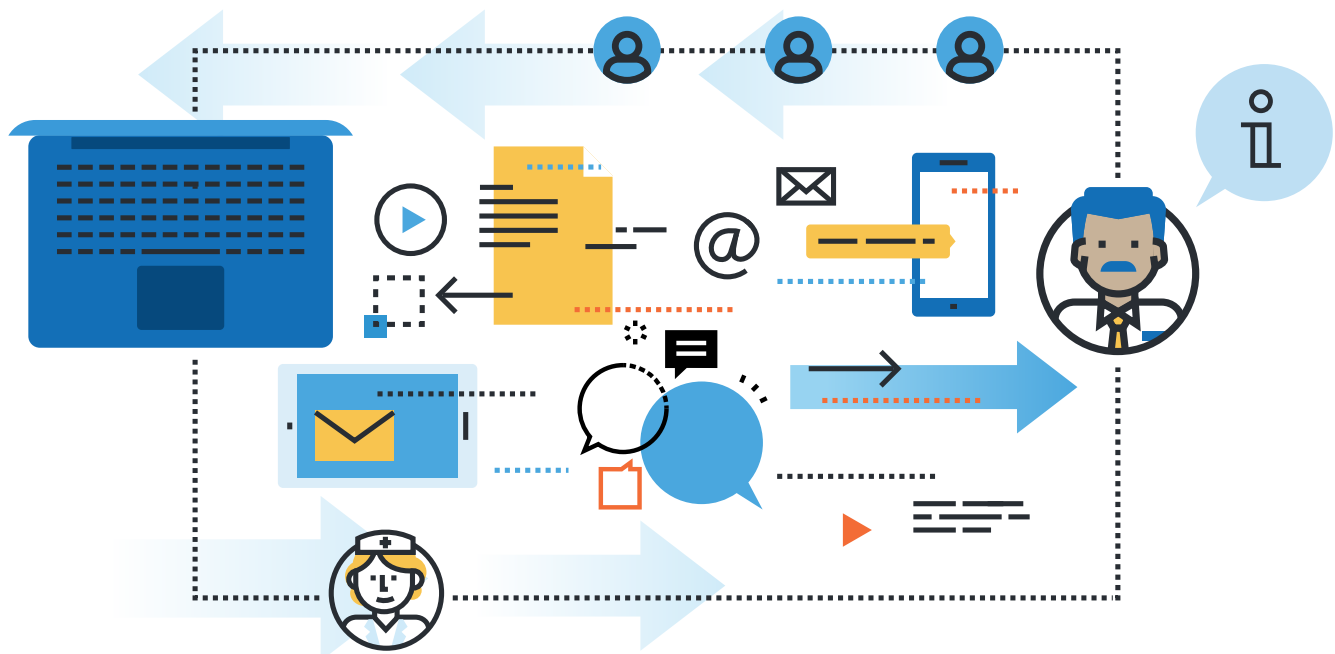
CONCLUSION

The combined efforts of people and organizations can create lasting change. Using technological innovations, we can connect and support one another at greater distances. Technology increases transparency, efficiency, drives accountability, and allows us to communicate impact, all of which are driving forces to build more support and resources.

Healthy Communities Institute, a leading community health analytics platform, has worked for over a decade to help public health departments, hospitals, community coalitions, and non-profits achieve collective impact. Learn about more communities using technology for their collective impact approach:

• San Francisco, CA: SFHIP.org

• DuPage County, IL: ImpactDuPage.org

• Washington, DC: DCHealthMatters.org

• Delaware and Blackford Counties, IN: HealthyCommunityAlliance.org

Collective Impact Checklist

Healthy Communities Institute has worked for over a decade with hundreds of public health departments, hospitals, community coalitions, and non-profits to bring their programs to the next level. Our solutions include the leading community health improvement platform and expert services to help you achieve collective impact.

5 CONDITIONS FOR COLLECTIVE IMPACT:

- A Backbone Organization
- A Common Agenda
- Shared Measurement
- Mutually Reinforcing Activities
- Continuous Communication

Healthy Communities Institute Solutions to Support Collective Impact

COLLABORATION FRAMEWORK

- ☐ **Structure:** Strategic planning for collective impact governance — mutual agreements on partnership structure, roles and responsibilities

- ☐ **Asset and Gap Analysis:** Contextual analysis of assets and resources within the community and partnership to prioritize needs and develop your strategy

- ☐ **Root Cause Analysis:** Interactive process for teams to discover the underlying factors that explain outcomes

- ☐ **Planning:** Identification of practical goals/objectives, evidence-based strategies, measures/targets based on root cause analysis

MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

- ☐ **Shared Measurement:** Dashboard visualization for health, quality of life, and unlimited custom indicators

- ☐ **Analysis and Insights:** Mapping and analytic tools identify top needs, disparities, and evidence-based intervention opportunities

- ☐ **Impact Evaluation:** Establishing a plan to track measures and impact with custom trackers and evaluation tools

- ☐ **Capacity Building:** Ongoing data collection, analysis of shared measures, data storytelling

SUSTAINABILITY

- ☐ **Consensus Building:** Alignment among stakeholders and sponsors on strategic direction and priorities on an ongoing basis

- ☐ **Collaboration:** Highly customized platform to share workgroup content between community partners, including meeting minutes, agendas, and calendars

- ☐ **Funding:** Library of funding and grant opportunities; tools to assist grant applications and report development

- ☐ **Network of Experts:** Regional client conferences; database of client success stories and model programs; Live and on-demand webinars with public health experts

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