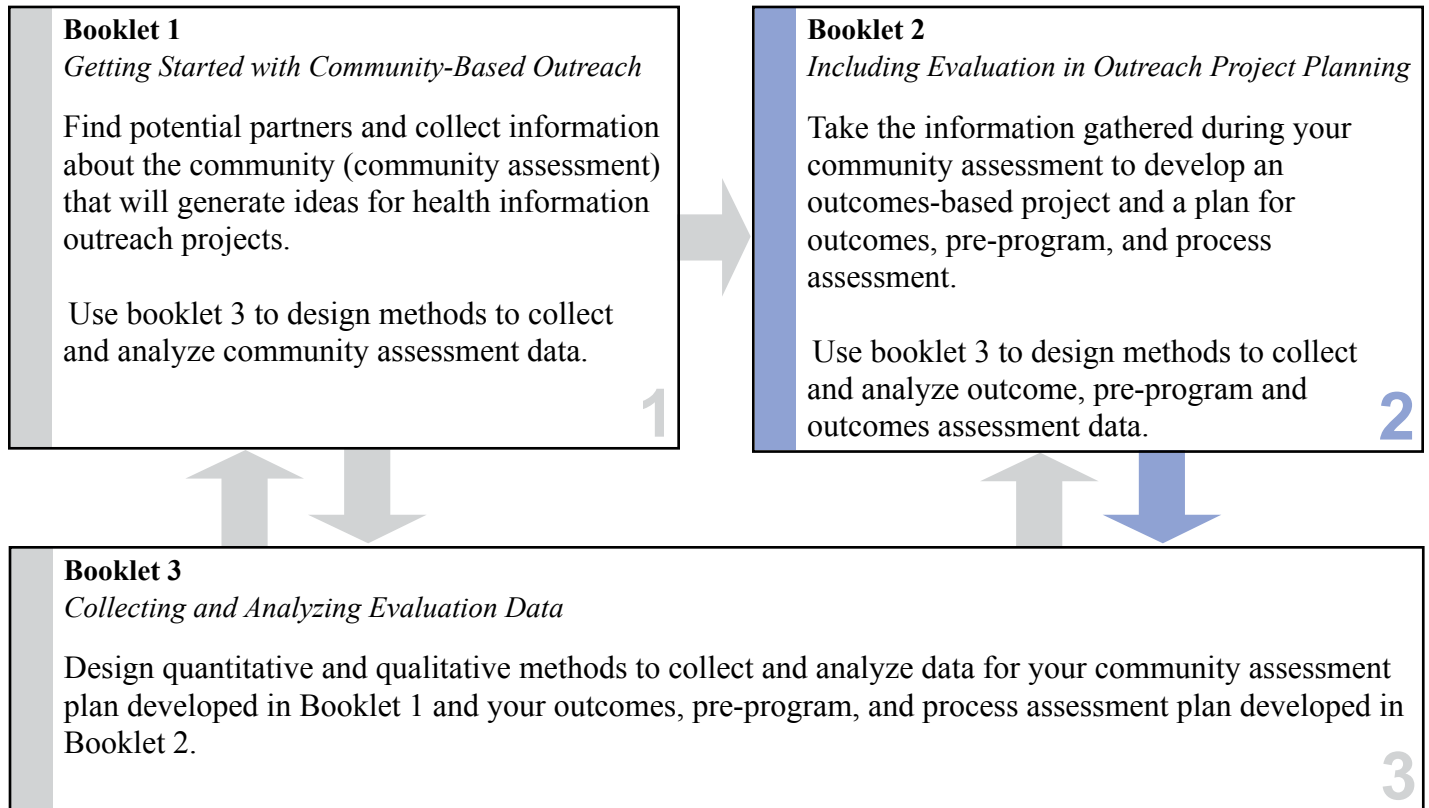


The Planning and Evaluating Health Information Outreach series



Including Evaluation in Outreach Project Planning

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Planning and Evaluating Health Information Outreach Projects
Booklet

2

2006

National Library of Medicine Cataloging in Publication

Olney, Cynthia A.

Including evaluation in outreach project planning / Cynthia A. Olney, Susan Barnes. - Seattle, Wash. : National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Pacific Northwest Region ; Bethesda, Md. : National Library of Medicine, [2006]

(Planning and evaluating health information outreach projects ; booklet 2)

Supplement to: Measuring the difference / Catherine M. Burroughs. [2000]

Includes bibliographical references.

1. Health Education—organization & administration. 2. Community-Institutional Relations. 3. Information Services—organization & administration. 4. Program Evaluation. 5. Planning Techniques. I. Barnes, Susan, MLS. II. Burroughs, Catherine M. (Catherine Mary). Measuring the difference. III. National Network of Libraries of Medicine (U.S.) Pacific Northwest Region. IV. National Library of Medicine (U.S.) V. Title. VI. Series.

02NLM: WA 590 O51i 2006

Additional copies can be ordered or downloaded from:

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This project has been funded in whole with federal funds from the National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services, under Contract No. 62-5321.

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This booklet is part of the *Planning and Evaluating Health Information Outreach Projects* series, designed to supplement *Measuring the Difference: Guide to Planning and Evaluating Health Information Outreach*.^[1] This series also supports evaluation workshops offered through the Outreach Evaluation Resource Center of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NN/LM). The goal of the series is to present step-by-step planning and evaluation methods. Along with providing information about evaluation, each booklet includes a case study and worksheets to help you with your outreach planning.

The series emphasizes the relationship between *planning* and *evaluation* — this is why both words are part of the series title. By including evaluation in the planning stage, you are committing to doing it and you are more likely to make it integral to the overall project. Conversely, in planning the evaluation you identify outcomes, which in turn help you to carefully assess project activities and resource needs.

These booklets are aimed at librarians — from the health sciences sphere, particularly — and representatives from community organizations who are interested in conducting health information outreach projects. We consider “health information outreach projects” to be educational or awareness activities designed to enhance community members’ abilities to find and use health information. A goal of these activities might be to equip group members to better address their — and their family members’ and peers’ — questions about health. Such outreach often focuses on online health information resources such as the websites produced by the National Library of Medicine. Projects may also include other sources and formats of health information.

The first booklet, *Getting Started with Community-Based Outreach* is designed for those who have an idea for working with their communities but do not know how to start. It describes these steps:

1. Find partners for health information outreach projects,
2. Learn more about the outreach community, and
3. Inventory resources and assets.

The second booklet, *Including Evaluation in Outreach Project Planning*, is intended for those who need guidance in designing a good evaluation plan. It discusses how to do the following:

1. Develop an outcomes-based project plan,
2. Develop an outcomes assessment plan,
3. Develop a pre-project assessment plan, and
4. Develop a process assessment plan.

The third booklet, *Collecting and Analyzing Evaluation Data*, will probably be more understandable to those with some experience in conducting health information outreach, but those just starting in health information outreach also may find it useful for planning their outreach projects. It presents these steps for quantitative methods (processes for collecting data and turning them into statistics) and qualitative methods (processes for collecting non-numeric descriptive information and summarizing it):

1. Design your data collection methods,
2. Collect your data,

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National Network of Libraries of Medicine, National Library of Medicine, 2006

3. Summarize and analyze your data, and
4. Assess the validity of your findings.

We strongly endorse partnerships among organizations from a variety of environments, including health science libraries, community-based organizations, and public libraries. We also encourage broad participation of members of target outreach populations in the design and implementation of the outreach project. We try to describe planning and evaluation methods that accommodate this approach to community-based outreach. Still, we may sound like we are talking to project leaders. In writing these booklets we have made the assumption that one person or a small group of people will be in charge of initiating an outreach project, writing a clear project plan and managing the evaluation processes.

We also encourage evaluation practices that adhere to the Program Evaluation Standards developed by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, which can be found at <http://www.eval.org/EvaluationDocuments/progeval.html> [2]. The *utility* standards require that evaluation findings will serve the information needs of the intended users, primarily those implementing a project or those with some vested interest in it. The *feasibility* standards direct evaluation to be cost-effective, credible to the different groups who will use evaluation information, and minimally disruptive to the project. The *propriety* standards uphold evaluation that is conducted ethically, legally, and with regard to the welfare of those involved in or affected by the evaluation. Finally, the *accuracy* standards indicate that evaluation should provide technically adequate information for evaluating a project.

We sincerely hope that you find these booklets useful. We welcome your comments, which you can email to nnlm@u.washington.edu.

Acknowledgements

We are grateful to our colleagues who have graciously provided feedback and input, especially:

Dana Abbey, Consumer Health Liaison, NN/LM MidContinental Region
Renée Bougard, Associate Director, NN/LM South Central Region
Kelli Ham, Consumer Health Coordinator, NN/LM Pacific Southwest Region
Claire Hamasu, Associate Director, NN/LM MidContinental Region
Betsy Kelly, Assessment and Evaluation Liaison, NN/LM MidContinental Region
Michelle Malizia, Outreach Coordinator, NN/LM South Central Region
Heidi Sandstrom, Associate Director, NN/LM Pacific Southwest Region
Debra Stark, Evaluation Specialist, University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio

We also deeply appreciate Cathy Burroughs' groundbreaking work, *Measuring the Difference: Guide to Planning and Evaluating Health Information Outreach* and thank her for her guidance in our creating the booklets in this update and supplement, the *Planning and Evaluating Health Information Outreach Projects* series.