

# **Building a community-based gay men's health program in five steps**

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# I. **Community Assessment**

- Understanding the local communities through research, both qualitative and quantitative.
- The importance of sharing community assessment with the communities themselves.

## Community Assessment (cont.)

- Find out what research is being conducted in your locality. Advocate that a question or questions be added to the survey/questionnaire regarding sexual behaviors, sexual identity, and/or gender identity.
- Find allies who can help you advocate for inclusion of your communities in the research.

## II. Strategic Planning & Evaluation of Programs (qualitative and quantitative)

- Working with volunteers, staff, boards of directors, community members, and other stakeholders to develop programs that reflect the needs and current practices that were identified in the community assessment
- Have in place a feedback loop so that the community can aid in improvement and further growth of programs. Insure that the evaluation is not so onerous that it discourages participation.

## II. Strategic Planning & Evaluation of Programs (qualitative and quantitative)

- The simpler the process, the more likely that you are to garner participation and to actually use the data that you collect. If you are not using the evaluation data to improve programs, why are you doing the evaluation?

### **III. Leadership Development**

- Discussion of guiding principles with key volunteers, staff, directors, etc.
- Grand Rounds: show the work of other agencies.

## IV. Program Development

- Assets-based, not deficit-based (celebrate resilience and effectiveness of gay men's survival strategies).
- Take advantage of existing social network to disseminate your ideas (e.g. San Francisco Gay Men's Community Initiative)

## IV. Program Development

- Create community rituals, social opportunities, and other structures to help individuals find their place within community.
- **The Round Up:** Monthly meeting of all volunteers to socialize, strategize, and organize.



## **V. Community Organizing model (not just a clinic)**

- Understand how the community is organized and operates. Use mapping technology and other strategies for visually depicting the operation of the communities.
- Beware of relying on a “professional” model of service provision at the expense of community wisdom and expertise.

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