

Recommendations



Ideas for a Healthy Nations II

RECOMMENDATIONS

This brief section targets, in bullet format, factors or components that the authors would suggest for a Healthy Nations II project. Such factors are not exclusive to the Foundation or just to working with substance-abuse problems. They arise from the analysis of the narratives, the formative nature of this evaluation, and the experiences of the directors. Application of such recommendations will require a strong logical model, plan, and visionary commitment. These recommendations assume that the target of any future Healthy Nations-like grant-funded intervention remains community-change focused, including utilizing cultural strengths and local ownership. Formatted as succinct bullets, the rationale for their inclusion is embedded in and has been presented in the narratives and interviews.

- Integrate an evaluation component into the project philosophy and compliance requirements. Simple quantitative measures that demonstrate movement from a pre-program baseline, reflecting individual tribal site concerns, research questions, and internally stimulated data collection methods, analysis, and research collaboration structure with the granting agency, are essential for informing grantees and communities about the effectiveness of the ideas and activities. Qualitative analysis, particularly formative, that systematically records mobilization efforts and provide a contextual interpretation, should be outlined. Furthermore, simple outcome measures and social indicators, such as a brief community survey as

utilized in the quantitative retrospective chapters of this report could be employed. The expectation of participation in such a process should be initiated from the first contact.

- Utilize the National Advisory Committee differently and more extensively in a leadership support or mentoring role—informed, guided, and as an augmentation to the National Program Office. Instruction in leadership and administration as well as negotiating the intra-tribal or organization politics would possibly decrease the staff turnover. Assignment of one or two NAC mentors to a particular site over the life of the project would prove advantageous to all parties.
- Facilitate funding over a longer period, possibly using a graduated wash-out timeframe. Couple this with more explicit attention to sustainability efforts, including leveraging the granting agency's influence. This component would utilize the data from the continuous evaluation processes and collective expertise of the NAC and NPO. Community change and action demand generational approaches and support.
- Clarify the roles and responsibilities of tribal and/or organizational leadership in receiving and husbanding the grant. Help negotiate advantageous organization chart placement with efforts to secure governing board resolution to support the project.
- State clearly whether grant components are suggestions or requirements. Foster a documentation system that strongly encourages the grantee site to directly connect the logic of the activity to the intended grant

component. Such communication would facilitate more equitable attention and provide insight into the community mechanisms underscoring resource allocation. This would also decrease frustration and increase innovation.

- Institute a staged decrease in the reporting requirements to a semiannual written report and a quarterly survey. Many directors expressed concern over the amount of effort and time consumed by the reporting. The true value of the program emerged only after the essential changes unfolded over more extended periods of time (later in the project). Such insights would be adequately attended to through semiannual summary reports. The quarterly survey would be adequate to articulate innovation and early stage development of new directions and programming. Make efforts to train leadership in how to use the “reporting” to bolster internal support, political favor, and justification for sustaining the program.
- Continue to support Native communities in their effort to reduce substance-abuse-related problems and health issues through the privileging of and supporting of tradition and cultural-based solutions in living and re-creation.

