

New Hampshire's Innovative Approach to Inclusive Health

Education is a Top Priority to Improve the Accessibility and Inclusion of Public Health in the Seacoast Region



In the Seacoast Region of New Hampshire, training is a tool that

many organizations are already using to improve inclusive public health for residents with disabilities:

- 53% are educating health care and service providers about accessible clinical health and public health interventions;
- 53% are educating staff about cultural competence with disability as a way to promote health equity; and
- 31% are educating public health network members about the collection of disability data to inform their Community Health Improvement Plans.

The Seacoast is one of the most highly populated regions in New Hampshire (NH), and nearly one in five adults reports a disability (New Hampshire Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2015-16). Recently, the Seacoast Public Health Advisory Council identified and prioritized a number of strategies to make public health more accessible and inclusive for all residents in the region.

Discussions with a project team from the University of New Hampshire Institute on Disability, Granite State Independent Living, and Southern NH Area Health Education Center led to the identification of several possible strategies. Responding to a survey, members of the Public Health Network commented on and prioritized the strategies. Three strategies were ranked as the most important, and all three focused on education and training for public health, health care, and service providers.

Strategy 1 - Educate health care and service providers about ways to be more accessible and inclusive of people with disabilities in clinical health and public health interventions.

58% rated this strategy as "very important."

Strategy 2 - Educate members of the public health network about cultural competence with disability as a way to promote health equity for people with disabilities.

50% rated this strategy as "very important."

Strategy 3 - Educate members of the public health network about ways to identify disability in data collection efforts in order to increase the availability of disability and health data for developing Community Health Improvement Plans.

44% rated this strategy as "very important."

Members of the Seacoast Public Health Advisory Council will rely on technical assistance from the NH Disability & Public Health Project to implement these strategies going forward.