

Internship Report

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Utah Health Policy Project



Oral Health Policy Fellow

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Learning Objectives/Internship Objectives

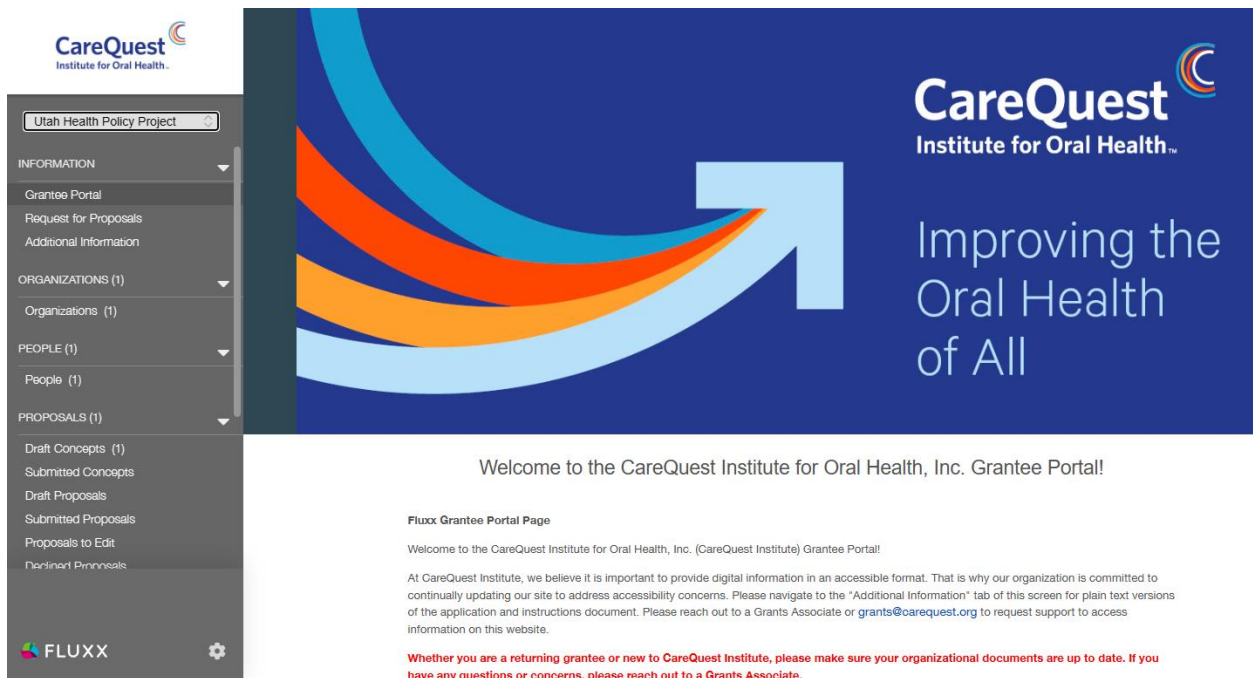
- Oral Health Policy Research, Analysis, and Advocacy
- Qualitative and quantitative research on the health policies through data collection, analysis, and interpretation reports
- Literature reviews to analyze existing literature on policy design and considerations to formulate favorable solutions for oral health equity
- Understanding the data, analyzing the causes and constraints to advocate policy changes at state and federal levels
- Data analysis to understand the influences of education, age, government health coverage, hospital visits, dental professional shortage from public databases
- Coalition building, writing statements for improving equitable access to oral health in Utah
- Leadership, effective communication, adaptability, problem solving and relationship building by working in a nonprofit organization

Introduction

I am working as Oral Health Policy Fellow at Utah Health Policy Project (UHPP), an organization committed to strengthening Utah health care system for underserved communities. UHPP is a nonprofit organization working on provision of better access to high quality and affordable health care in terms of physical, oral, and mental health to Utahns with sustainable health care solutions since 2006. Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Health Insurance Marketplace Policy, Public outreach, education, and enrollment assistance are the focus areas of work at UHPP with a policy team, and Take Care Utah (TCU), a network of 40 plus Health Access Assisters (HAAs). I work for the Utah Health Policy Project Oral Health Equity Concept coverage, a grant from CareQuest Institute for Oral Health to advance equity through Oral Health by strengthening Community Voice and State Advocacy. As a part of policy team, I am associated with the implementation of CareQuest grant objectives and goals to train the HAAs, quantitative and qualitative data collection, outreach engagements and coalition building to advocate the implementation of necessary interventions in the state of Utah.

Description of Work

My work at UHPP started with familiarizing the resources shared to me on Utah specifics like: Medicaid legislation for dental expansion, dental coverage plans, dental care under Medicaid and University of Utah of School of Dentistry; details to create flux account in the grant's portal, grant tracking sheet. After initiation of access into CareQuest Grant Flex Portal as a Grantee, I was able to track the timelines of the grant implementation during each stage. This portal provides access to update, submit, and review the reports with additional information on grant proposal information.



The team introductory meeting made me aware of the diverse backgrounds of the UHPP team and their valuable contributions in accomplishing the motives to render value-based health care solutions to underserved communities in Utah. CareQuest grant implementation is classified by accomplishment of three goals: training HAAs, elevation of consumer stories, advocacy through

coalition. Grant tracking sheet with delivery outline, project details enlisting the goals with objectives under each section of grant description is the project management technique to draft essential steps in implementation through collaboration with the partners and policy advocates.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	
	Goal 1			Goal 2			Goal 3				
Goal 1	Train UHPP's Take Care Utah Health Access Assistors to help individuals and families better navigate oral health needs			Goal 2	Elevate consumer stories learned from these interactions to better understand gaps/inequities and issue spot opportunities for intervention			Goal 3	Cultivate, facilitate, and sustain a coalition of consumers, advocates, and other stakeholders to carry out advocacy campaigns on identified interventions		
By When	11/30/2023			By When	11/30/2023			By When	11/30/2023		
Objective 1a	Develop detailed trainings and presentations for HAAs to prepare them to help others navigate oral health needs			Objective 2a	Leverage existing media connections to elevate consumer stories through media			Objective 3a	Work with existing oral health community groups and coalitions. These will hopefully include Utah Oral Health Coalition, One Utah Health Collaborative, and community health centers such as Fourth Street Clinic, U of U, etc.		

To move forward with the grant goal and objectives, I scheduled meetings with TCU director and managers to prepare my plan of action considering the prime areas discussed with them on training HAAs, database management and data collection at the community level. These discussions helped in the exchange of opinions on the formats and strategies to proceed in future sessions with HAAs, TCU managers and stake holders. The TCU director shared the enrollment data from the TCU database that included the Protected Health Information (PHI) with HIPPA compliance, HITECH acts to improve my knowledge on the data gathered from the HAAs end during their enrollment engagements. Discussions on the data collection methods like questionnaire, survey-based, one- to -one interactions; addition of any specific data variables to test and improve the dependency on health coverage with focus on oral health access and consent during each meeting sessions with TCU team facilitates positive impact to the project details.

Created On	Application App	Application Deni	Application Type	Grant Allocation	HAA	Renewal?	Status
5/7/20 0:00	6/30/20		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Sarah Leetham	No	Approved
9/4/19 0:00	5/26/20		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Allison Heffernan	Yes	Approved
11/12/19 0:00		1/18/20	Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Socorro Ornelas	No	Denied
1/31/20 0:00		2/27/20	Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Socorro Ornelas	No	Denied
3/25/20 0:00	4/29/20		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Socorro Ornelas	No	Approved
4/1/21 0:00	5/26/21		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Socorro Ornelas	Yes	Approved
2/10/20 0:00	2/28/20		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Socorro Ornelas	No	Approved
5/11/21 0:00	5/26/21		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Socorro Ornelas	Yes	Approved
2/10/21 0:00	2/25/21		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Maria Chu	Yes	Approved
3/12/20 0:00		4/20/20	Medicaid/CHIP Apj Intermountain cdc		Diximar Parades	No	Denied
8/17/21 0:00	9/16/21		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Maria Chu	No	Approved
6/8/20 0:00		8/21/20	Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Diximar Parades	No	Denied
8/4/21 0:00		9/7/21	Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Delia Prado	No	Denied
11/2/20 0:00	11/26/20		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Maria Chu	No	Approved
2/24/20 0:00	3/5/20		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Claudia Garcia	No	Approved
4/10/21 0:00		5/31/21	Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Claudia Garcia	No	Denied
8/11/21 0:00		11/4/21	Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Claudia Garcia	No	Denied
3/16/21 0:00	4/15/21		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Sarah Leetham	No	Approved
4/28/21 0:00	6/14/21		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Maria Chu	No	Approved
6/22/21 0:00	7/2/21		Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Socorro Ornelas	Yes	Approved
4/27/21 0:00		6/30/21	Medicaid/CHIP Apj CHIPRA		Diximar Parades	No	Denied

The data collection is articulated to update and track the status of the applications under different grants with the renewal of the medicaid coverage options. My introductions to partners of UHPP like Utah Oral Health Coalition, Community Catalyst aided in scheduling monthly discussions on our current standings with the grant and exchange of resources that could help with our work. After acknowledging all the previous work and understanding the current efforts in place by the UHPP team in aiding affordable health access, I worked towards goal one of the CareQuest grant.

Goal 1

Main objectives under this part of the grant were to provide trainings to HAAs, TCU management and new hires for better addressal of health care needs. I completed first training session during the first week of July through a presentation entailing the recent data trends of dental coverage in Utah, community dental resources offering treatment options with Medicaid, sliding pay scale and importance of outreach in improving oral health equity. I attended Utah Department of Health and Human Services discussions on adult dental waiver Medicaid, redetermination rates

with data from CDC.gov and potential interventions to be implemented to protect the health coverage of the people. Active participations in seminars, listening sessions, open discussions with community organizations working on primary care and rural health, Disabilities and Universal Inclusion, Oral Health2020 network improved my knowledge on the changes, constraints in the health care domain at Utah and necessity to advocate on policy changes for the community benefit.

Training sessions with HAAs on data collection for oral health stories repository implied to the qualitative data aspect of the grant. Research on the data denoting to dental insurance coverage reflected meniscal efforts_in data collection approaches from the diverse communities in Utah and highlighted the need of demographic data which can signify the necessity to bring policy changes at the legislative level. The project also aims to gather quantitative and qualitative data to educate the coalition on oral health equity. Quantitative data will be recorded from my end to track the people completed the training, needs training, which will aid to track the populations benefitted with the access to oral health care.

The screenshot shows the CareQuest Institute for Oral Health FLUXX dashboard. The sidebar on the left contains navigation options: Draft Concepts (1), Submitted Concepts, Draft Proposals, Submitted Proposals, Proposals to Edit, Declined Proposals, Pending Grantee Approval, GRANTS (1) with sub-items Closed and Active (1), GRANTEE REPORTS (2) with sub-items Reports Due (1) and Submitted Reports (1), and PAYMENTS (1) with sub-item Scheduled Payments (1). The main content area displays details for the 'Utah Health Policy Project', including a search bar, project title, grant amount (\$135,000.00), grant ID (G-2207-17511), and report type (Interim Report). A status bar shows 'Report Under Review'. Below this, there is an 'Overview' section with a paragraph of text and a numbered list of five evaluation categories: 1. Centering consumer and community voice; 2. Supporting oral health and health policy and systems change; 3. Strengthening a network of community-driven local, state and national organizations; 4. Fostering an environment of learning; and 5. Influencing the fields of oral health and health equity. The dashboard footer includes the FLUXX logo and a page indicator '1 - 1 of 1'.

Future Work

I will be working on the next two goals that emphasize the elevation of consumer stories and facilitation of advocacy through coalition. Objectives of second goal will be to focus on using the data to analyze the impact of demographics on oral health needs, and to educate the communities and legislative leaders for legislative changes during upcoming sessions. There will be interactions with media connections, and workshops, presentations, outreach events at this stage of the project.

Objectives of the third goal will be to form a strong coalition that could campaign oral health equity for identified interventions. The data collection strategies we are discussing in the current phase will aid in the second and third goals of the project, adding meaningful evidence to bring the necessary policy changes in the state.

Internship Discussion

This internship was a gateway to learn the advocacy aspect in addition to improving my research and analysis skills. Objectives of research, data collection, leadership and communication skills, report analysis were actively reflected through my work at UHPP. I understood the disparate factors that can impact health care access and the significance of policy making through the discussions with various committees working for community welfare. Engagement with HAAs made me realize that health coverage provision involves collection of sensitive data from the consumers and the necessary standard measures to protect their privacy and security. Meeting with the TCU team helped me to observe the real-world application of data collection, storage, and analysis that I had in my health informatics coursework. My knowledge of Integrity, ethics, and research writing through one of my core courses aided in writing statements and report submissions. I was able to accentuate application of HITECH ACT, HIPPA compliance with PHI from my clinical information systems classes during this internship. Discussions and presentations on the health care structure of Health Care Administration course assisted in quick adaptation to health policies, insurance coverage options and reflected my opinions during team meetings. The PSM coursework aided in crafting my skills during this internship on information management and visualization, a key component of various discussions, and webinars I took part in since joining UHPP. I could understand the graphs and visualizations represented during these meetings and explore them later for deliverables in future training sessions. I equipped the essential professional skills to survive in a team environment as well take the leadership opportunity from the PSM coursework. I provided a testimonial representing UHPP during adult dental waiver

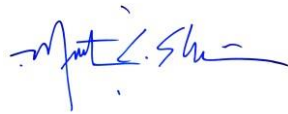
meeting with support of my team and supervisor through the soft skills acquired from PSM seminar coursework. I had trouble in connecting the pieces of information provided during each meeting with different organizations which I subdued through categorizing in accordance with the topics. I communicated with the policy team with my questions on gaps between age groups with no coverage options to highlight the continued care in chronic conditions. My initial interaction with the TCU director on data collection at community level raised discussion on data inclusion criteria for this project. Literature review and discussions on equity inclusion helped me perceive the inclusion of demographic specifics in the data. My team shared the relevant files and resources in addition to meeting agenda which helped in understanding the backgrounds of points during the discussion of an agenda. The structure of the PSM coursework prepared me to maintain confidence in articulating presentations to diversified audience in an engaging manner and devised me to be an active participant during meetings, communicating my thoughts with the team and as well in collaborating with the community organizations. Technical and soft skills incurred throughout the coursework at GVSU shaped me to a competent individual working for the better health of communities.

Acknowledgement

I am grateful to UHPP for providing me with an opportunity to take part in their vision to improve overall health outcomes of Utahns. My sincere thanks to [REDACTED], who has been incredibly supportive, considerate since my first day at UHPP and

trusting my skills for the position. I am thankful to my faculty and staff at GVSU for their support and encouragement throughout my coursework. My deep gratitude goes to Dr. Guenter Tusch, for sharing your immense knowledge and assistance during the course. I am sincerely thankful to Anirudh Chowdary for your support, guidance, and patience throughout the course and in securing this internship. I would also like to mention my reverence for GVSU on-campus resources like Career center, writing center and Speech lab that played a leading role in improving my skill set.

Supervisor Signature

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matthew C. Slonaker". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Matthew C. Slonaker Executive Director,

UHPP

