Recommendations from the Nonprofit Sector

June, 2018

About the Community Roundtable Series

As a sector, nonprofits have an opportunity to proactively set the path forward and design how we can interact with local government, businesses, and each other in a manner that establishes nonprofits as highly impactful partners of choice.

Through a series of Community Roundtable conversations, nonprofit and community leaders have engaged in conversations about building capacity for a proactive, collaborative, and outcomes oriented nonprofit community in Montgomery County. On June 13, 2018, the Community Roundtable on Leveraging Data was convened as a follow up to the Community Roundtable for Collaboration held on May 7, 2018 where leveraging data to demonstrate progress toward achieving common goals was identified as a top priority. At the June event, participants worked in sub-sector groups to identify key opportunities and challenges to capturing the requisite data to demonstrate the impact of the sector.

Community Roundtable on Leveraging Data: Key Findings

1) **Self-sufficiency, self-determination, and self-efficacy are common goals** shared by most nonprofit service providers. All organizations represented at the meeting were working toward the same goals of elevating and empowering the individuals and families served to have choice, voice, and dignity. The mechanisms by which organizations support their clients vary based on the specific scope of the organization and the services they provide e.g. nutrition assistance, health care, affordable housing, workforce development, and so on.

2) **The impact of nonprofits' work is often measured in another sector.** There was broad consensus around the strategic importance of identifying common outcomes and collecting/reporting on comparable measures for each sub-sector within the nonprofit community. There was also broad recognition that the impact of our work is frequently measured in another sector. As one participant noted, "We all have a partial lens to look at the assets we have in the community; therefore, we can't work alone and expect to make long-term systemic change." This reality underscores the importance of collaboration among nonprofits and with other sectors, particularly public schools and the business community.

   Participants recommended:
   - Recognize the boundaries of our respective sectors and educate ourselves about what other organizations have to offer—become more effective at bridging services
   - Establish strategies and set up parameters for collaboration and cross-sector reporting partnerships

3) **Lack of consistent baseline data poses a challenge to reporting on common outcomes.** Within sub-sector groups, participants agreed on the value of developing consensus outcome measures for the sector. Currently, there is no consistency to the analysis of outcomes and impacts because the metrics collected vary among organizations. Furthermore, much of the data currently available is process and output oriented as that is the level of reporting required by many contracts. As a community, we cannot demonstrate our impact until we determine what outcomes we are trying to create, define the metrics, and collect the necessary baseline data against which to measure progress.

Participants recommended:

- Define outcome measures for each sub-sector and commit to capturing data and reporting on those measures
- Conduct a longitudinal study with all organizations in a sub-sector using the same pre- and post-assessment to track impact of services over time

4) Data infrastructure(s) need to be organized to support cross sector collaboration.
Participants observed that service delivery and program evaluation are hampered by a proliferation of multiple data and operational systems that do not interface. Participants pointed out the frustrations experienced by service recipients and nonprofit staff alike when the recommendations of multiple case managers (assigned by different organizations) serving an individual or family come into conflict and when referrals are made to outside organizations and there is no seamless way to follow up. The community need is not for more case managers and navigators, but for there to be an organizing mechanism that enables the staff working at different organizations to collaborate and work as a team in service to shared clients. Similarly, participants observed that there is no shortage of data and information systems but that these systems are not interoperable and are often not being leveraged to the fullest extent possible.

Participants recommended:

- Form a data systems collaborative among nonprofit organizations to
  - Share knowledge
  - Map existing data systems and the fields they capture
  - Determine feasibility of creating a data hub from existing data systems
- Capacity building among nonprofit organizations to maximize use of existing data systems
- Work as a sector to establish a central system to coordinate case management with a "no wrong door" approach
- Find ways to connect and track referrals made from one organization to another—most organizations know details of the referrals made but not whether the client was able to effectively connect and receive services
- Expand the pathways model used in Thriving Germantown and adapt it for other geographic areas

Conclusion

Community based nonprofit organizations serving Montgomery County are all trying to build a healthy community, but going about it separately. The technology exists to facilitate and streamline cross sector collaboration. We need to leverage that technology more effectively and work in concert with one another to define metrics, measure results, and report on our impact. This is no small undertaking. Success will require the investment of organizational resources to determine the details of what needs to happen, as well as the buy-in and will of Nonprofit Executive Directors and Boards to support the effort as it unfolds.

Appendix A: Sub-Sector Discussion Worksheets

Stable/Affordable Housing

When you envision better outcomes for the population your organization serves, what does that look like?

- Safe, stable, and affordable housing for everyone that is located near or co-located with other amenities and needs.
- Housing stability reduces strain in other areas and allows other issues an individual or family may be facing to be addressed. Without stable, affordable housing health, educational opportunities, ability to age in place are all reduced.
- Conversely, other issues and pressure on family resources can put housing stability at risk.

What short and mid-range outcome metrics would you like in order to demonstrate the impact of your organization/sector?

- Reduced rates of homelessness
- Length of stability after receiving services
- Length of occupancy in any housing type (permanent supportive, affordable housing, etc.)
- Return rate to temporary housing
- Improvements in employment stability and income of residents
- Reduction in number of people on shallow subsidy list and housing wait list
- Reduction in draw on services and supports provided in other sectors
- Reason for leaving affordable housing
- Supply of affordable housing appropriate for demand
- Tenant centric measures of stability e.g. without housing pressure more able to afford food, maintain employment, attend school.

What other sectors do you need to partner with to achieve the long-range outcome (or desired change) for your population?

● Health care ● Education ● Workforce development ● Youth services ● Aging services ● Private businesses ● All Sectors

What do you want to know? What data do you wish you had access to when planning or evaluating services? *Note this data may be collected by another sector.*

- Breakdown of specific needs (housing and other) of those on the housing. Nuances of who remains on the waitlist can help more proactively tackle gaps in affordable housing services
- Visibility into residents using multiple other services/understanding of the team of organizations serving a resident

Workforce Development

When you envision better outcomes for the population your organization serves, what does that look like?

- Empowering people to find and keep stable and fulfilling work in order to achieve self-sufficiency and economic stability.
- Out of self-sufficiency flow additional important outcomes:
    - Reduction in homelessness
    - Greater family stability
    - Improved health and wellbeing

What short and mid-range outcome metrics would you like in order to demonstrate the impact of your organization/sector?

- Employment metrics include:
    - Increased wages
    - Balanced number of hours worked
    - Number of service recipients with direct hire positions and promotions
    - Longevity/tenure in jobs
    - Entrepreneurial success i.e. shift from sole-proprietorship to small business
- Self-sufficiency and stability metrics include:
    - Food security status
    - Housing stability
    - School attendance
    - Insurance coverage and access to health services

What other sectors do you need to partner with to achieve the long-range outcome (or desired change) for your population?

● Food Security ● Affordable Housing ● MCPS ● Health Care ● Employers ● Unions ● Chambers of Commerce ● All sectors

What do you want to know? What data do you wish you had access to when planning or evaluating services? *Note this data may be collected by another sector.*

- Partnerships with employers to track long-term wages and job stability
- County strategies in terms of priorities for future employment sectors – to plan for future training programs
- Rates of overall use of public benefits

Food Security

When you envision better outcomes for the population your organization serves, what does that look like?

- Building self-sufficiency among clients served and empowering people to better advocate for their needs, and the needs of their families and communities.
- Creating community

What short and mid-range outcome metrics would you like in order to demonstrate the impact of your organization/sector?

- Reduction in chronic disease
- Improved quality of life
- Reduced isolation in seniors
- Pounds of food provided *with* associated nutrition standards
- Impact of food security on people served
    - Ability to use income on other vital needs: medications, housing, transportation, etc.
    - Ability to be more effective at work or school

What other sectors do you need to partner with to achieve the long-range outcome (or desired change) for your population?

● Health care ● Education ● Housing ● All sectors

What do you want to know? What data do you wish you had access to when planning or evaluating services? *Note this data may be collected by another sector.*

- Trends in educational outcomes among children being served
- Improved disease management and reduction in occurrence of chronic disease

Aging Services

When you envision better outcomes for the population your organization serves, what does that look like?

- Services maximize quality of life for older adults and caregivers so that individuals and families are able to live each day with meaning
- Individuals and their families have choice, voice, and dignity—representing a shift from delivering services to meeting needs
- Older adults who wish to age in place have the necessary support and resources to do so
- Our approach is person and family centered recognizing the significant role of family caregivers

What short and mid-range outcome metrics would you like in order to demonstrate the impact of your organization/sector?

- Reduce social isolation by increasing the number of friendly visitor hours
- Improve access to community services with improved transportation services (not limited only to medical transports)
- Improve chronic disease management among older adults
- Increase access to high quality case management services
- Improve financial security for individuals and families so the cost of caring for elders does not affect the financial potential of future generations
- [Long-term] overall reduction in the number of long-term residents in skilled nursing and an overall increase in the number of people accessing home health and community based services

What other sectors do you need to partner with to achieve the long-range outcome (or desired change) for your population?

● Transportation ● Health care ● Recreation ● Affordable Housing ● Nutrition Assistance/Food Security ● Financial Planning ● All sectors

What do you want to know? What data do you wish you had access to when planning or evaluating services? *Note this data may be collected by another sector.*

- Metrics related to benefit of intergenerational engagement i.e. improved educational outcomes linked to inter-generational interactions
- Are program recipients able to manage chronic diseases and how does that relate to meaningful day?
- What are the impacts on family financial stability of being a family caregiver?
- What are the annual trends in numbers of people moving to Skilled Nursing and Assisted Living?
- How do regulatory differences for nonprofit vs. for-profit providers lead to different outcomes and or different client populations?
- A resource directory of organizations serving or who could potentially serve clients. Who is providing services, what do they provide, and what are the eligibility criteria?

Health Care

When you envision better outcomes for the population your organization serves, what does that look like?

- Affordable, accessible, and meaningful health services for everyone.
- Emphasize early identification and prevention over management of chronic conditions.
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What short and mid-range outcome metrics would you like in order to demonstrate the impact of your organization/sector?

- Improved health care outcomes based on selected HEDIS measures
- Developing an "affordability" measure for health care expenses, in the same way that 35% of income is considered "affordable" housing

What other sectors do you need to partner with to achieve the long-range outcome (or desired change) for your population?

● Affordable Housing ● Food Security/Nutrition Assistance ● Transportation ● Dental and Behavioral Health providers ● Immigration and Legal Services ● All sectors

What do you want to know? What data do you wish you had access to when planning or evaluating services? *Note this data may be collected by another sector.*

- Collaborate with service providers in other sectors to work as true partners in care operating at the prevention level to keep people out of crisis.
- Emergency department and ambulance use data to understand how underinsured people are utilizing services
- Less fractured case management network – currently there are case managers for each entity

Behavioral Health

When you envision better outcomes for the population your organization serves, what does that look like?

- Optimal mental wellness for each individual, ultimately leading to a stronger, more resilient community.
- Ability for all people who can benefit from mental health support to access and receive services
  - People may benefit on their own behalf or on behalf of a loved one
  - People may need short-term or long-term service
- Education, prevention, and early intervention services are effectively deployed leading to long-term benefits such as family stability, individual mental wellbeing, and financial wellbeing.
- For people who need a higher level of support, crisis intervention and broad services are effectively integrated with other supports such as food assistance, housing, etc. to stabilize the individual and help him/her become fully well.

What short and mid-range outcome metrics would you like in order to demonstrate the impact of your organization/sector?

- Number of referrals processed
- Number of referrals effectively connected to non-behavioral health services
- Number of clients for whom treatment led to clinically significant improvement

What other sectors do you need to partner with to achieve the long-range outcome (or desired change) for your population?

● Providers across continuum of Behavioral Health care ● Medical care ● Affordable Housing ● Youth Development ● Nutrition Assistance/Food Security ●
● All sectors

What do you want to know? What data do you wish you had access to when planning or evaluating services? *Note this data may be collected by another sector.*

- Trend line for children and adults referred to crisis center behavioral health crisis
- Trend line for children and adults referred to/presenting at hospital behavioral health crisis
- Data on services provided during continuum of care

Emergency Assistance

When you envision better outcomes for the population your organization serves, what does that look like?

- For the real poverty rate in Montgomery County to be the lowest in the state.
- Stabilize individuals who require services and provide them with the necessary tools to excel.
- Achieved through effective collaboration across sectors.

What short and mid-range outcome metrics would you like in order to demonstrate the impact of your organization/sector?

- Rate at which people referred to services connect and access services
- Reduction in homelessness and length of stable residence
- Increased employability and self-sufficiency
- Improved quality of life

What other sectors do you need to partner with to achieve the long-range outcome (or desired change) for your population?

● Food security/Nutrition Assistance ● Behavioral Health ● Clothing Assistance ● Utility Assistance ●
● All sectors

What do you want to know? What data do you wish you had access to when planning or evaluating services? *Note this data may be collected by another sector.*

- See above.

Appendix B: Participating Organizations

- Capital Area Food Bank
- Career Catchers
- CASA
- CHEER
- City of Rockville
- Community Bridges, Inc.
- Community Ministries of Rockville
- Easter Seals DC MD VA
- Empowered Women International
- Every Mind
- Impact 1890 National Lutheran Program
- Interfaith Works
- Interfaith Works
- Manna Food Center
- Maryland Health Care for All
- Mobile Medical Care, Inc.
- Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless
- Montgomery County Food Council
- Montgomery Housing Partnership
- Nonprofit Montgomery
- Primary Care Coalition
- RBW Strategy LLC
- Rebuilding Together Montgomery County
- Redaptiv
- Regional Primary Care Coalition
- The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation
- Vietanamese American Services
- Worksource Montgomery

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primary care coalition

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