

MCH Community Workgroup
Meeting Minutes
October 21, 2022

Member Attendees

Amy Lell, Wilson County (Southeast Public Health Region)
Cortney Murrow, Mitchell County (North Central Public Health Region) – **arrived 10:21 a.m.**
Jennifer Bruns, Lawrence-Douglas County (Northeast Public Health Region)
Julie Laverack, Community Health Center of SEK (FQHC)
Monica Reuber, Sheridan County (Northwest Public Health Region)
Shanea Bea, Delivering Change/Geary County (Nonprofit/Community Organization)
Shruti Chhabra, Finney County (Southwest Public Health Region)
Shaylee Mosher, Kearny County Hospital (Hospital System Partner)

Other Attendees

Jennifer Marsh, KDHE
Carrie Akin, KDHE
Kelsee Torrez, KDHE
Hollie Frye, KDHE
Kaylee Goss, KDHE
Kayzy Bigler, KDHE
Dennis Kriesel, KALHD
Shelby Ostrom, KALHD

Review of Last Meeting

Jennifer Marsh with KDHE called the meeting to order at 9:00 am (Central).

Jennifer M. reviewed last meeting's minutes with the group and what this new grant may look like moving forward.

Review Recommendations

Jennifer M. opened the discussion for the group to review recommendations. For the discussion, a JAM board was opened to keep track of the discussion. The JAM board can found here:

<https://jamboard.google.com/d/1bFP3D9zQ6myj0tAcJjEB7c7n2tKwAjidxJHdkSt5yoU/viewer>.

- *Eligible Applicants*
Dennis asked if nonprofits and rural health clinics would be considered eligible for the grant. Kelsee recommended that the words "government entity" be specified to "local government entities".
- *Project Period*

Jennifer M. would like to extend the project period from one year. However, MCH is on a five-year action plan, and it might be difficult. She opened the discussion to the group. Dennis suggested that the group cycles through two-to-three-year grants. Amy agreed with Dennis and thought a five-year would be too much for applicants.

Monica asked if applicants who didn't apply the first year, could still apply for the grant in a later year because many LHDs may be worried about staffing changes. Dennis and Cari mentioned concerns of staggering the grant because some applicants would apply for the first year, and others may not get any if there is not money the next year. Carrie suggested doing the staggered approach with the full grant plan and application during the first year to continue for the full grant cycle and add a new budget each year of the grant. Amy expressed concern that the current MCH application is complex and asked the group if they will make the grant less extensive, and this might help determining the scope of the project period. Shruti offered that she liked the five-year planning idea, and the one-year applications don't give them an opportunity to grow their program. Cari offered that the five-year grant might also help with staffing and encourage people to stay.

Monica suggested have a dynamic application that will have you only answer questions about people you will be working with. Jennifer mentioned that KDHE is working on a new application and will take that into consideration. Jennifer M. mentioned that the state action plan will be on year 5 (the final year) when these MCH grant changes will go into place and these suggestions may be a good way to benchmark the effectiveness of the application process. Amy suggested that this group use the first grant cycle as a "practice term" to help change the narrative of the grant.

- *Applicant Pathways*

Jennifer M. mentioned that this grant application will be dynamic application for various provider types including community-based services, statewide services, and special projects. She would like to build in different applicant types to submit one application instead of multiple. Jennifer also mentioned that she has heard a regional application might also be a good option.

Cari asked if there would be clarification of someone applied for a grant but didn't get all the funding asked for (specifically for add-on special projects.) Jennifer M. and Carrie mentioned that this feedback will be included with the grant process. Cari also suggested that there might be a benefit to doing a middle of the grant cycle application(s) for special projects. Holly offered that the special project grant might be a good avenue for groups who did not apply for the original grant would have an opportunity to apply for a special project later. The group stressed the need for flexibility within this grant.

- *Funding*

Jennifer M. mentioned that the grant is still required to provide the match. But the application budgets are flexible and wants to know what the group thinks about structuring RFP funding guidance.

Dennis suggested that there would be no “floor”, but a ceiling would be consistent among all applicants (can’t apply for more than \$100,000, etc.). He also suggested that you could do a tiered ceiling based on population. Jennifer M. mentioned that the tiered ceiling concerns her initially because of all the rural counties. Dennis suggested that the budget have a “base” number and then a percentage over for population. Amy agreed that a base number would be a good idea so applicants can have a better idea of how much they will get, even if they apply for more. Shaylee mentioned that her county has quite a few of clients that come from other counties and the tier would not be an overall indication of her services.

Jennifer M. mentioned that there is a match from the federal government that is required, so many do not feel they can use all the money within the match. Many of the nonprofit organizations don’t have many funds to match, so that could be an issue with meeting spending requirements.

- *Selection and Scoring*

Jennifer M. brought up the current grant scoring process and potential questions for the reviewers with the new grant. There are currently 3 grant reviewers from various organizations within KDHE, and some external partners for each grant application. She would like to add more types of reviewers in the future.

Cari recommended that informing reviewers about special cases, including evidence-based programs would be a good idea, and she mentioned sometimes letters of support can be a barrier, especially getting them in on time. Carrie suggested that putting the information for the letter into the application would be ideal, and then an official letter or support would be needed prior to the start of the grant.

Amy expressed concern that multiple counties/groups may apply for the same funding for the same program and one group may get it over the other. Jennifer M. suggested that adding the number of people served in each county in the grant application might be a solution. Cari mentioned that virtual visits and webinars can also be something to consider within that funding.

Shruti mentioned the regional collaboration piece of the application and that should also be taken into consideration. Carrie mentioned that KDHE can work with groups on finding regional collaboration avenues. The lead county or group would apply for the funding and work on a regional level with other groups. Holly offered to reach out to a regional group she works with and give their info to Shruti.

- *Post Award Considerations*

Jennifer M. mentioned that they collect data from grantees and all grantees will be required to use MCH Workstation, Community Checkbox (for reporting), and DAISEY. Reports will be required semiannually and annually (twice a year).

Carrie offered that if you are not currently on the MCH Workstation, she can set you up on the system.

Jennifer Bruns mentioned that DAISEY has a lot of data, and she worries about providing more data. Jennifer (Marsh) mentioned that they can pull everything they need data-wise, but they want information about the qualitative pieces rather than quantitative though the other systems.

Monica asked if there were “success stories” from other grantees, like a spotlight or a case study. Hollie mentioned that there is a success story section within MCH Workstation, but only a couple of things have been posted. Holly also mentioned that the Workstation will have instructions and resources for grantees. Amy also suggested adding common problems to the workstation as well.

- *Anything Else?*

Carrie asked if moving the grant application process timeline would be a good idea. Jennifer M. mentioned that there are two options, which include State Fiscal and Federal Fiscal. The group agreed that staying on state fiscal year would be helpful. The group also discussed doing an in-person MCH meeting to review the grant and possibly write the grant together.

Holly mentioned that KDHE does Public Health Power Hour events, Holly is slated to present about MCH in January 2023, and Carrie suggested that MCH could be mentioned during the regional meetings. Jennifer M. mentioned that MCH will also have a pre-conference session during the Kansas Governor’s Public Health Conference and that might be a good opportunity to talk about the changes, Cortney mentioned that sometimes the pre-conference is difficult to attend for a lot of health departments. Dennis also offered the program staff to come to KALHD’s mid-year meeting in June.

Next Steps

Jennifer M. mentioned that this group is able to access the JAM board and add ideas prior to the next meeting in November.

Jennifer M. adjourned the meeting at 10:52 am (Central).