

International Journal of Population Data Science

Journal Website: www.ijpds.org



Improving community access to data and analytic services: an approach based on needs assessment and co-creation

Elise Leong-Sit¹, Laura Ferreira-Legere², Bilal Khan³, Susan Bronskill⁴, J Michael Paterson⁵, Lesley Plumptre², and Minnie Ho²

¹ICES, Toronto, Canada; Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Boston, USA

²ICES, Toronto, Canada

³Ontario Health, Toronto, Canada

⁴ICES, Toronto, Canada; Dalla Lana School of Public Health, Toronto, Canada; Sunnybrook Research Institute, Toronto, Canada

⁵ICES, Toronto, Canada; McMaster University, Hamilton, Canada; University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada

Objective

Communities who are the subject of administrative health and demographic data often encounter challenges accessing their own data and related analytic services, but achieving equitable access to data and analytic services is emerging as a crucial facet of ethical data stewardship, enabling communities to directly translate insights into real-world impact. As part of its mandate as a data institute, ICES offers organizations in Ontario (Canada) access to data analytics to support service planning and evaluation. Though community organizations are eligible, they accounted for only 2.4% of projects before 2023. To address this gap, we launched a community engagement and co-development process to increase service awareness and simplify access.

impact-focused communication, leading to a novel suite of communication tools. Implications: Ongoing evaluation of these new approaches will be used to continue to refine promotion strategies as well as potentially tailor or expand future services.

Approach

We conducted a two-pronged needs assessment: environmental scan and seven key informant interviews based on purposive sampling. We then co-developed promotional materials with two other community members, and pilot-tested drafts with focus groups that included a mix of previous and new key informants (eight in total).

Results

The needs assessment revealed the importance of developing materials using plain language, storytelling, messaging on impact, and trusted messengers. Products developed included a testimonial video showcasing previous community projects, a plain language webpage, and a 3-year dissemination strategy centered on building trusting relationships.

Conclusion

Intentional needs assessment and embedded co-design approaches revealed the importance of narrative, plain, and

