

COLLECTIVE IMPACT NETWORK BUILDING TEMPLATE



A tool to help your community tackle complex problems through collaboration.

Introduction

Invest Health is an initiative funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Reinvestment Fund. The program seeks to bring together diverse leaders from mid-sized U.S. cities to develop new strategies to improve health, in neighborhoods that face big challenges. The INVEST Health initiative provides a planning opportunity for mid-sized cities to transform the way local leaders work together, with an emphasis in making changes in low-income neighborhoods to improve resident health and well-being.

Through a competitive application process, leaders of mid-sized cities were encouraged to apply to the program to receive a planning grant of \$60,000 over 18 months. Over 180 cities applied to the program, competing for 50 awards.

Beginning in June 2016, INVEST Health facilitated numerous networking and learning opportunities for the selected cities including online and in person convening's. A learning community developed as leaders from INVEST Health cities interacted and participated in various sessions to learn new strategies to improve cross sector and multi-disciplinary collaborations.

Social determinants of health are the structural determinants and conditions in which people are born, and live such as factors like socioeconomic status, level of education and employment and things such as one's social network and access to healthcare. Disparities in these structural differences are difficult to address with a single entity as these issues are crosscutting and require a multi-disciplinary approach.

Although it makes sense for multiple sectors to work together to improve these types of disparities, true collaboration is incredibly difficult to implement. Each collaborating entity has its own vision and goals, its own regulatory and funding streams as well as its own strategic plan that is supported by the entity's decision-making body. It is rare that entities share goals and priorities and even rarer that they share resources. Therefore, although collaborations are typically approached with the best intentions of all parties, they often do not result in the type of sustainable change necessary to impact social disparities.

Therefore, it's difficult to collaborate effectively in a way that fully supports a shared agenda and uses resources efficiently. To address these multifaceted issues, INVEST Health teams were charged to develop a model for their community that helped create cohesive and sustainable collaborations and would define and implement an agenda to measure and improve outcomes.

Collective Impact is a model of collaboration that has been used successfully to tackle deeply entrenched and complex social problems. The approach is structured such that it supports collaborations across sectors, encourages a shared agenda and is adaptable to local strengths. It is an

innovative and structured approach that uses the principles of creating a shared agenda, developing shared metrics to track outcomes and deploying continuous quality improvement strategies. The model utilizes the strengths of each entity and person to best create activities that are mutually reinforcing. It's all held together by strong communication strategies to keep all collaborators actively engaged. Finally, the collective impact model necessitates the importance of a backbone conveyor, an entity (or shared combination of entities) that take responsibility for convening, communicating and moving the initiative forward through assuring that dedicated resources are available for the continuous planning process.

The Iowa City INVEST Health team embraced the collective impact model at the onset of the project. Our team was unfamiliar with each other, and although our agencies had done some work together, the projects were prescriptive and time limited. At that time, our INVEST Health Team members were not familiar with each other. Those involved in the health sector were familiar with each other and those who were familiar in the housing sector were familiar with each other, but the team was completely new and we saw that as an opportunity. We wanted to gather stakeholders and develop a dynamic working model and collective impact provided the process to make collaboration work across government, business, philanthropy, non-profit organizations and citizens to achieve significant and lasting social change.

There are several principles used by the Collective impact model. Community members must be involved in the collaboration and the basic premise of collaboration begins with equity. Recruit team members of persons from the sectors you hope will be involved and from those sectors who have unique data and information to provide insight into big system issues. The focus of the collaboration should be on collaborative leadership, system strategies and building a culture that fosters trust and respect in relationships. Importantly, the collaboration should be designed so it works within the local milieu and utilizes the strengths of the area¹

Below you will find an explanation of collective impact and how to build your own network map to effectively implement a collective impact approach.

¹ <https://collectiveimpactforum.org/resources/collective-impact-principles-practice>

Collective Impact

What is collective impact? Collective Impact is a way to tackle complex problems through collaboration. The model supports collaboration across sectors, encourages a shared agenda, and is adaptable to local strengths. Addressing health disparities is best done through multiple sectors working together to solve the identified problem, but true collaboration is incredibly difficult to implement.

Typically, each collaborating entity has its own vision, goals, as well as specific regulatory and funding streams. Therefore, it's difficult to collaborate effectively in a way that fully supports a shared agenda and uses resources efficiently. In a Collective Impact model, all the collaborators share in the development of the shared agenda, measurements and mutually reinforcing activities. A backbone convenor and regular communication is essential in this model. To learn more, watch this short informational video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzmMk63ihNM>



Network Map

Why develop a network map?

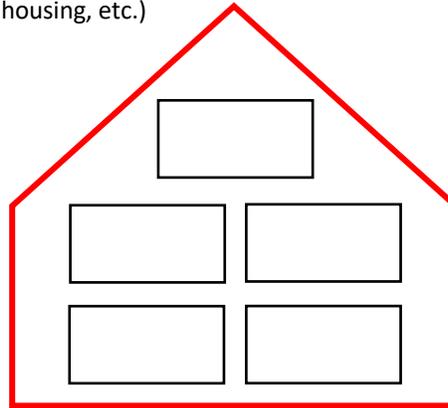
- Provides a structure to the collaboration
- Defines relationships
- Identifies different sectors
- Promotes effective dissemination of information

How to develop a network map:

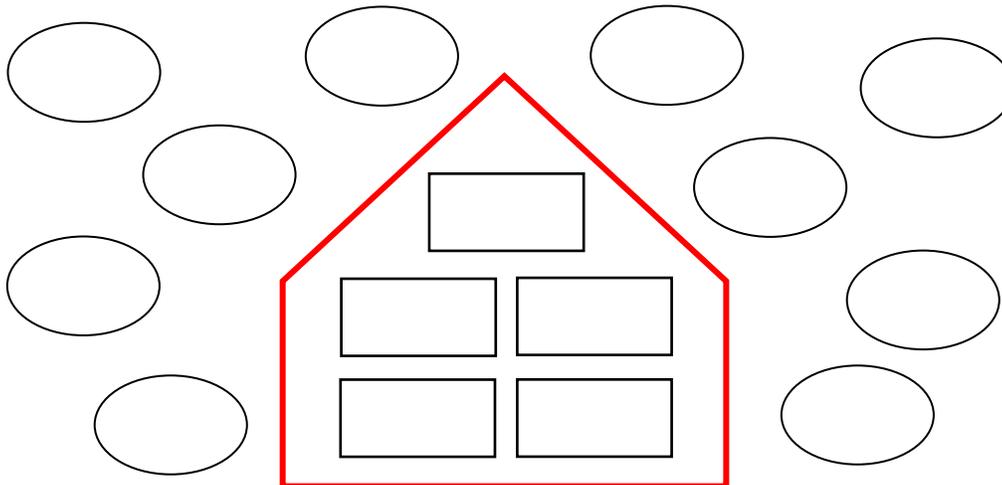
1. Define your leaders
 - a. Determine key partners that should be included in your local network (think about individuals, agencies and sectors)
2. Who is interested?
 - a. Determine what other key players are important to include in your collaborative network. You may have existing networks in your community that can strengthen your collaborative effort.
3. What sectors are they in?
 - a. Identify the sectors of each key player on the map.
4. Understand the strength of the relationship
 - a. Determine which leaders have established relationships with the individuals identified outside of the leader group. This provides an understanding of what role each leader can play in strengthening these relationships.

Developing your network map:

1. Define your leaders
 - a. Choose 3-5 leaders to be included in your local network.
 - b. Place them in the house below
 - c. Use different highlighter colors to differentiate which sectors they work in (i.e. Public health, health care, policy, housing, etc.)



2. Who is interested?
 - a. Write down other key players (outside of your house) that play a role in the collaborative effort at hand. These could be individuals or agencies.
 - b. Try to think of 10 to get you started.

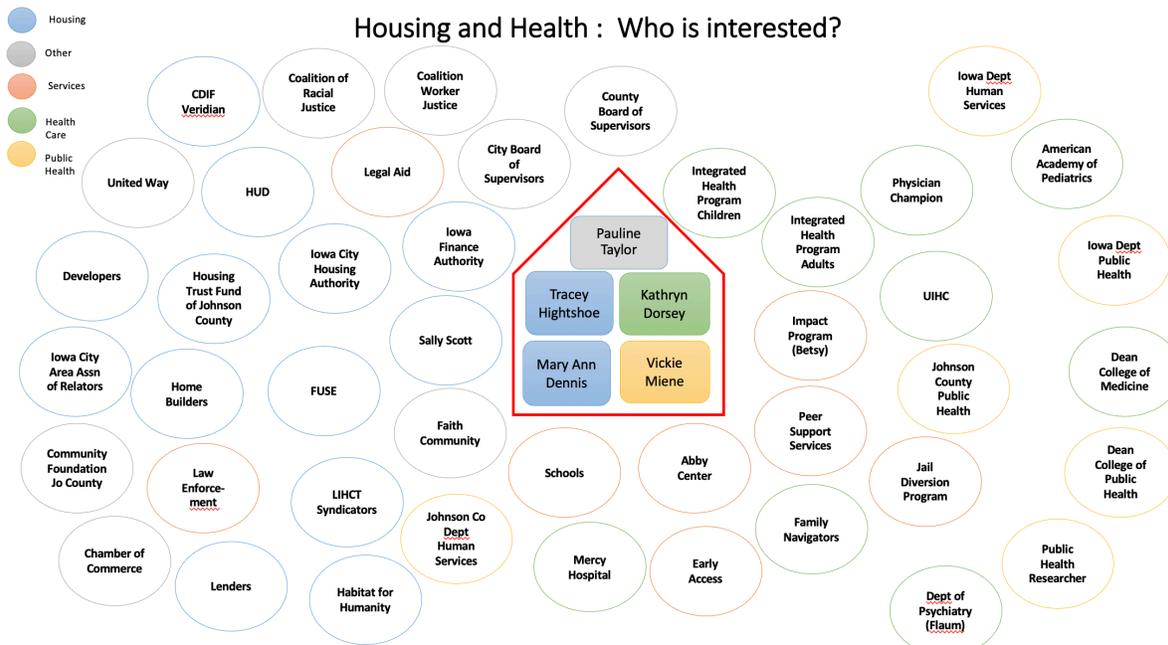
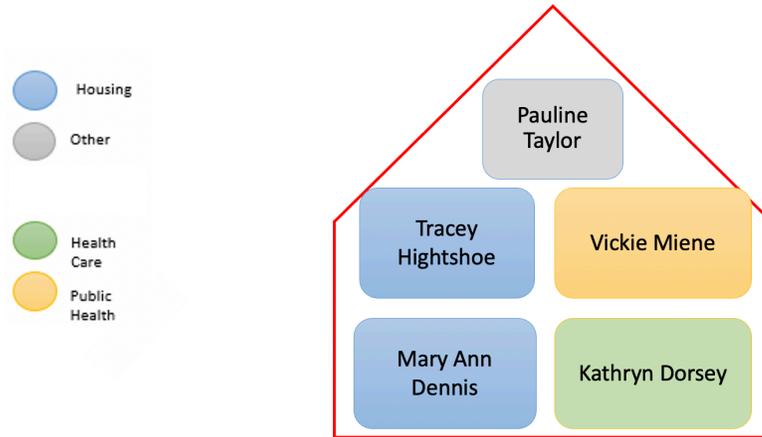


3. What sectors are they in?
 - a. On the map above, using your different highlighter colors, identify what sector each person belongs to (i.e. Public health, health care, policy, housing, etc.)
4. Understand the strength of the relationship
 - a. On the map above, draw arrows from each leader inside the house to each individual outside of the house that they have an established relationship with.
 - b. For those individuals that do not have an established relationship with a leader, determine which leader would be best to begin to establish a relationship with that individual.

Now looking at your network map, what can you do by next Tuesday to begin this collaborative effort?

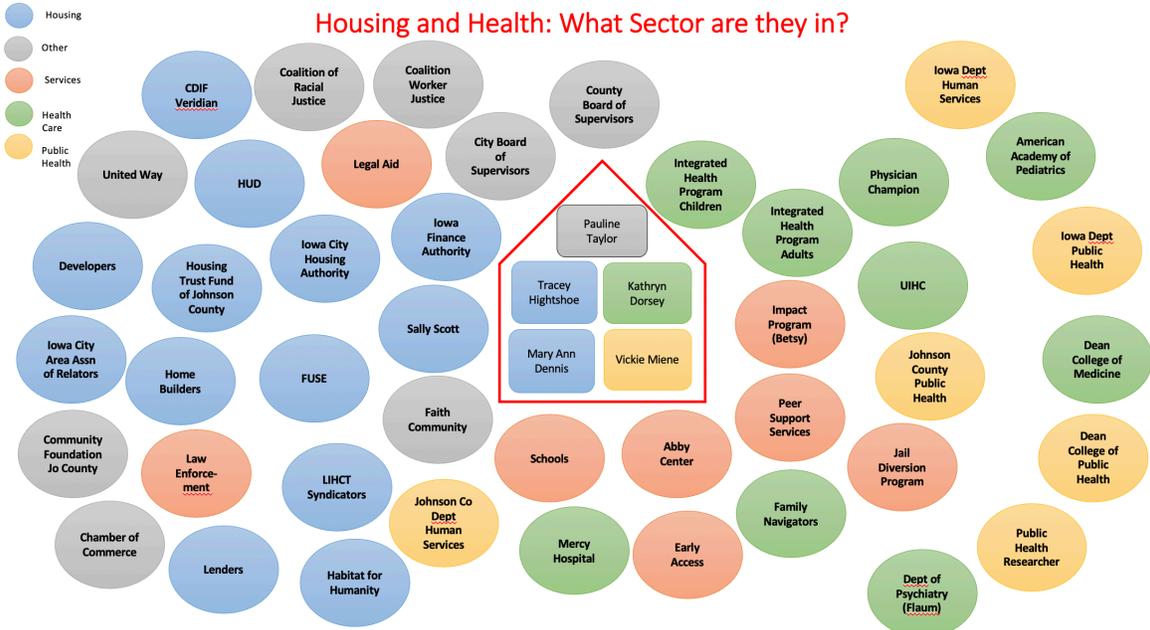
Example Collective Impact Network Map²

Housing and Health Project: Define Leaders



² Reprinted with permission from the Iowa City Invest Health project

Housing and Health: What Sector are they in?



INVEST HEALTH Network Map

