As a collaborating center in NOPREN, the Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (HPDP) at UNC Chapel Hill is conducting a pilot research project to assess the applicability of the CDC Recommended Common Community Strategies and Measurements to Prevention Obesity (COCOMO) strategies for rural settings. COCOMO is among the most widely used set of evidence-based environmental and policy strategies for obesity prevention in community settings. We will also continue our leadership role with the Food Policy Council (FPC) Working Group, with the goal of assessing the work and impact of Food Policy Councils (FPCs) related to increasing access to healthy food and beverage options.

AIMS OF PROJECT

The Center for HPDP at UNC Chapel Hill has identified the following aims for this project:

1. Assess the nutrition-related COCOMO Recommended Strategies and Suggested Measurements for applicability to rural areas by conducting a mixed-methods review of the literature. We also hope to collaborate with PAPRN to assess the physical activity-related COCOMO strategies.
2. Identify additional suggested measurements (e.g., from Community Commons) to evaluate the processes and outcomes of implementing COCOMO strategies in both rural and urban locales.
3. Create a guide for practitioners to evaluate policy, systems and environmental (PSE) obesity prevention strategies using Community Commons (www.communitycommons.org)
4. Test usability of the guide with public health practitioners
5. Develop an evaluation website for public health practitioners (www.evaluationpse.org)
6. Disseminate the PSE obesity prevention strategies for rural areas evaluation guide and evaluation website to NOPREN and the CDC’s Physical Activity Policy Research Network

DISSEMINATION PLAN

Our research group will collaborate with NOPREN to disseminate findings for both the COCOMO and Food Policy Council projects through the Center for Training and Research Translation (Center TRT), which operates within HPDP.
SUCCESS STORIES

We have shared results of our initial project to evaluate local stakeholders' views on the feasibility and acceptability of COCOMO strategies with the North Carolina Department of Public Health Community Transformation Team. We have also written papers and given presentations related to this work:

Manuscripts:

Presentations:
- McGuirt, J. presented at the Agriculture, Food and Human Values Society (AFHVS) and Association for the Study of Food and Society’s (ASFA) 2013 Annual Meeting (June, 2013)
- Calancie, L. presented at the Carolina Farmer Stewardship Association’s Annual Conference (November, 2013)

NEXT STEPS

The Center for HDPD at UNC Chapel Hill has identified priority action items:

1. Complete literature review and use findings to develop evaluation guide for PSE obesity prevention strategies in rural areas.
2. Continue to collaborate with PAPRN, the Community Commons Team, and rural practitioners to assess PSE strategies used successfully in rural areas.
3. Continue working towards an FPC evaluation as leaders of the FPC Working Group

CONTACTS

Alice Ammerman, DrPH, RD
Principal Investigator
UNC Chapel Hill
alice_ammerman@unc.edu
(919) 966-6082

Stephanie Jilcott Pitts, PhD
Co-Principal Investigator
East Carolina University
jilcotts@ecu.edu
(252) 744-5572
*Rural COCOMO Pilot*

Larissa Calancie
Program Director
UNC, Chapel Hill
lcalancie@unc.edu

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PRC Program: http://www.cdc/prc/  NOPREN: http://nopren.net/
HPRC: http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/research/prc/projects/nopren