

Institute for Faith and Public Health Leadership Aligning Perspectives to Eliminate Health Inequities

Presented by

UIC School of Public Health – Mid-America Public Health Training Center (MAPHTC)

AND

The Center for Faith and Community Health Transformation

Project Goal

The Institute for Faith and Public Health Leadership equips faith and public health leaders to work together more effectively to improve the health of their communities. More specifically, the Institute will strengthen faith and public health partnerships and help participants identify and mobilize the unique assets that both disciplines bring to the work of eliminating health inequities—the preventable and unjust differences in health status based on the social conditions in which a person lives.

Why?

Inequities in health status are rooted in complex and difficult social problems such as poverty, racism, unemployment, poor educational opportunities, etc. All of which lead to an unequal ability to lead a productive and rich life. The public health and faith communities have overlapping goals in addressing health disparities created by these inequities to not only improve the health status of populations but to also guarantee the opportunity to cultivate a life of fulfillment for all. Most of our current faith-based approaches stay at the surface of these issues and are centered on activities such as health education, screening, and health behavior change. Furthermore, we usually focus on the health of congregational members, versus the community as a whole. To make the changes necessary to eliminate these health inequities, faith and public health collaborations need to go beyond programs to more profound approaches. By strengthening sustainable relationships between two non-traditional partners we can achieve greater impact in addressing health disparities.

This Institute will give participants the opportunity to:

- Pause and listen to the rich wisdom found both in our faith traditions and in the voice of public health that speaks to social justice
- Utilize the spiritual practices of our faith traditions to reflect on and find sustenance for this challenging work
- Build relationships with each other so that we can work together more effectively
- Align what we know and do more intentionally and creatively to address these root causes
- Provide tools and resources for analyzing the needs and assets and for creating community-level interventions
- Expand networks for accomplishing work collaboratively
- Identify key strategies for mobilizing around the root causes that create and sustain health disparities

What?

This series will bring together faith and public health leaders from the metropolitan Chicago area who are working on HIV/AIDS, Emergency Preparedness, Chronic Disease, and Food Access. The Institute will provide tools and resources from both faith and public health perspectives to help leaders further develop or start a new collaborative approach to address root causes that lead to health inequities within these areas.

Participants will work in mixed, faith and health teams to explore four topics that are foundational to developing more coordinated faith and public health partnerships – Root Causes, Assets, Assessment, and Advocacy. Teams will work together during the class and outside the class to develop a faith and public health partnership strategy around their topic.

The series will include five sessions:

- Introduction and Root Causes
- Assets
- Assessment
- Advocacy
- Strategies

All sessions will draw on content experts from both faith and public health sectors. Sessions will be interactive and will utilize faith practice as one of the structures for reflection and dialogue. Sessions will include time for teams to work together to develop relationships and their partnership strategy.

Who?

This Institute targets leaders in both faith and public/community health settings who are committed to working collaboratively to eliminate health disparities. “Leaders” includes the spectrum of people who are working on faith and health. They may be formal leaders, such as clergy, health officers, or executive directors. They may be leaders on the ground—a lay leader of a health ministry, a community health worker, a clinic nurse, a project manager. We welcome those who lead in the community as well as in organizations.

Preferred participants will already be working on health issues and will have some experience in working in partnership. ***We particularly invite teams of faith and health leaders who are interested in working together on specific health issues to attend together.*** Participants without a team affiliation are also welcome to apply. Participants who come to the Institute on their own will be assigned to a team.

Participants do not need to be people of faith, but they will need to be comfortable being part of conversations and activities that explicitly draw on religious language and practice. ***The Institute is interfaith and highly values the wisdom and perspective of all religious traditions.***

When and Where?

Sessions will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the University of Illinois at Chicago campus.

Tuesday, April 24, 2012--Introduction and Root Causes

Tuesday, May 22, 2012--Assets

Tuesday, June 26, 2012—Assessment

Tuesday, July 24, 2012--Advocacy

Tuesday, August 14--Strategies

***Costs:** \$100 per team member – Costs includes training materials and lunch for each working session.

Additional Program Benefits

Participants will receive a Certificate of Completion upon completion of all the sessions. Participants will also have the opportunity to access on-going leadership development opportunities through The Center for Faith and Community Health Transformation and the MidAmerica Center for Public Health Practice, such as:

- Mentoring for participants from future Institutes
- Preparation for developing and sustaining congregational health initiatives
- Specialized training around specific health topics or intervention methods
- Partnership development and networking