

HELPFUL HINTS

from the Colorado Initiative

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DEVELOPING AN INITIATIVE

Setting Goals

Be realistic about what you can measure.

Identify data that can be used to measure progress over time.

Build in flexibility – goals and strategies often need adjusting.

Take smart risks when others won't.

Timeline

Allow adequate time for planning and implementation.

Everything takes longer than you think.

- In Colorado it took about two years to get up and running.
- It took four more years to see changes in policy, systems, birth rates, and abortion rates.

Progress on outcomes can lay the groundwork for more action/investment.

Develop a sustainability plan from the start.

Structure

Local, centralized coordination is essential.

Be mindful of capacity for growth.

Work in collaboration across sectors.

Begin with three-year grants to enable better planning.

Use a collective impact framework to clarify needs and roles.

Partners

Bolster organizations rather than create new ones.

Invest in local leadership.

Listen and learn – rely on partners' expertise.

Engage atypical partners that bring breadth and depth.

Building new partnerships requires time to build trust – waiting for positive results can help.

Get buy-in from state government.

Cultivate and provide a forum for collaboration.

Policy & Culture Change

Policy change doesn't always require legislation – administrative or regulatory change can make a big impact.

If at first you don't succeed – remember legislative changes can take more than one try.

Data and real-life stories are equally important to make the case.

Work with local champions within multiple institutions.

Develop a broad issue framework – find what resonates with different stakeholders.

Be patient – slow and steady drumbeat changes attitudes.

Communications

Fill the information void – people lack accurate, easy-to-use information.

It's how you say it – messaging matters.

Develop smart, trusted and reliable “voices”.

Recruit local experts (medical, education, economic security, etc.) as spokespeople.

Normalize conversations – “Just Talk About It.”

Listen to clients and others in the know for culturally-relevant approaches.

Embrace sexual health approach – one sexual health issue can be a gateway to others.

Support public health in its outreach – create a brand and provide marketing tools.

Strengthen clinic capacity before launching public education and outreach.

Leverage best practices endorsed by leading health organizations.

Word of mouth – patients spread the word (good and bad).

Smart phones & social media – it's what they use.

Service Provision

Help remove financial barriers to implants and IUDs – women should have those options.

Stock methods for same-day access.

Start with health centers with family planning expertise.

Reach more women – foster access at FQHCs, SBHCs and more.

Buy-in from health center leadership is essential for needed systems changes.

Start planning early – it's likely there is a greater need to train health care providers than there is capacity.

Don't assume all providers know best practice.

Combine training with use of both simulators and live patients.

Provide training to all staff – new best practices call for ongoing updates.

Contraceptive counseling leads to informed/effective decision-making.

Health educators improve clinic efficiency and patient experience.

Use “One Key Question” system wide – “Do you want to become pregnant this year?”

Connect women who don't want to be pregnant to contraceptive care immediately following a negative pregnancy test.

Offer IUDs and implants immediately postpartum and post-abortion.

Reimbursement is central to success – billing staff needs training too.

Payment strategies – work with state Medicaid right off the bat.

Have funds to stock methods prior to developing a billing and collection system.