

Fall 2016 SIM CAB Events

SIM CAB connected with different communities in a series of fall 2016 events. These included the Young Adult Community Conversations at Manchester Community College in October 2016, the Bilingual Healthcare Tweetchat in November 2016, and the Dinner Dialogues with Black Community Members at Cross Street AME Zion Church in December 2016. In each event, community members engaged in thoughtful, healthcare-related dialogue with each other and with participating members of the SIM CAB and PMO staff. Each event also gave participants opportunities to suggest how to best connect with their communities – helping the SIM CAB create a consumer engagement communication plan, and helping build a continuous feedback loop for the healthcare system. The three events built a strong momentum to engage consumers across Connecticut’s diverse communities. The events reiterated the idea that many people want to talk about and engage in healthcare but lack the opportunities, and that each community responds to different outreach strategies.

Manchester Community College - Young Adult Community Conversations:

On October 14, 2016 – The State Innovation Model Consumer Advisory Board (SIM CAB), in partnership with the North Central Regional Mental Health Board (NCRMHB) and Manchester Community College (MCC), organized Young Adult Community Conversations about Healthcare Access. The purpose of the joint sponsored forum was to offer young adults a place to discuss and learn about healthcare access, express their health concerns, and encourage them to take action steps together to address identified healthcare concerns. Small group discussions of 10-12 college students were organized to create a more secure and positive atmosphere for participants. The event took place at the Cheney Jarvis Dining Room in the Culinary Arts Center. From this event, we learned that young adults appreciated the opportunity to learn about healthcare – the exchanges between SIM CAB members and college students were especially productive. Young adults also want to learn alongside their parents. They anticipate that healthcare will be an issue for them in the future, and many feel unequipped to deal with the choices they will need to confront. Action steps included organizing more community conversations with their peers, and taking a more active role in learning about health insurance and healthcare options.



Bilingual Healthcare Tweetchat:

On November 21, 2016, the SIM CAB organized a bilingual tweetchat on healthcare access issues. The event was co-organized with community partners who are interested in healthcare, including Community Health Center (CHC), National Alliance on Mental Illness – Connecticut (NAMI-CT), and SIM CAB’s own contractor North Central Regional Mental Health Board (NCRMHB). Together, the group created an Eventbrite with directions to join the tweetchat in Spanish and English. To advertise the tweetchat, group members posted the event on their respective Facebook and Twitter newsfeeds, included the tweetchat in their various newsletters (whose reach totaled over 75,000 people), and reached out to relevant community partners like Hartford Behavioral Health, Hispanic

Health Council, Health Equity Solutions, and Access Health CT. The tweetchat attracted a few dozen participants, one of which is a famous New Haven chef, and another is a healthcare advocate with a following of 132,000 people. This is significant social media exposure for the SIM. While the tweetchat did not attract as many Latinos as expected, the tweetchat did expose many young adults and African Americans to SIM's work. Moving forward, the SIM can use the tweetchat to gather relevant analytics data and better understand the full reach of social media. Certainly, this is an important communication channel to engage in to maximize outreach efforts and to connect with young adult and African American communities. Social media is a relatively low-cost, but potentially high-impact communication channel for SIM to leverage.

Cross Street AME Zion Church - Dinner Dialogues with Black Church Leaders and Congregants:

On December 12, 2016 – The State Innovation Model Consumer Advisory Board (SIM CAB), in partnership with the North Central Regional Mental Health Board (NCRMHB) and Church Leaders from Hartford, Middletown, and New Britain, organized a Health Equity Listening Session at Cross Street AME Zion Church. The event offered round-table dinner discussions with church leaders and congregants. The conversations offered Black community members a place to discuss their healthcare access, and to respond to a call-to-action about how to move forward together. The participants sat in tables of 10-12, and ten Black Church Leaders served as facilitators to identify community healthcare concerns.

The Community Conversations engaged approximately 90 attendees. A variety of Black community members attended, including 12 Pastors, many Church Leaders, community members ranging from young adults to older adults, and included people from all walks of life who identified with the Black faith community.



The event kicked off with registration, prayers, and a full three-course, Southern-styled dinner. The keynote speaker was the Director of SIM, Mark Schaefer, who shared a powerful, personal account of how issues in the healthcare system affected his family. Afterwards, community members split into eight large dialogue circles. Each group was facilitated by a Black Church Leader. Groups covered an arc of dialogue, discussing healthcare issues specific to the Black community (like diabetes) and sharing ideas to address these concerns. The conversations were energizing, inspiring, and helped participating Black Churches from Hartford, Middletown, and New Britain unite across common healthcare access issues. The dialogues reiterated the importance of spiritual health along with mental and physical health and reminded us of the healing role that faith can play in communities.