

Express Outreach Planning Award

Kittitas Valley Community Hospital
Community Health Library
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Project Lead: Melanie Jones, Library Coordinator

Award: \$2,000

Period of Performance: June 2007 – November 2007

The assessment and planning of the
health informational needs of
Upper Kittitas County

The first step I took was to learn about the demographics of Upper Kittitas County and the potential population growth in the next ten years. I presented a power point report to the NNLM regional advisory committee meeting on June 28th with these findings.

I had several conversations and emails with the HR and PR departments at Suncadia Resort. Suncadia is a 6300 acre destination resort that is being built between the communities of Cle Elum and Roslyn. When completed by 2010, 1000-1400 new jobs will be created in Upper Kittitas County.

Hospital district one in collaboration with hospital district two developed plans to expand and remodel the Cle Elum Medical Center and Urgent Care Clinic in Upper County in anticipation of the population influx. The remodel is now almost complete. In hind sight, my project would have been more consummate after meeting with key people when the remodel was complete and the dust settled. Nether the less, I was able to garner useful information and thoughts from the groups and individuals that I did have the pleasure of meeting.

The most successful accomplishment of this project was the awareness that I raised to those that I met. Even individuals who do know about the library are now more informed about the library and its mission. This alone was well worth the time and money spent from this grant. It also led me to some conclusions about what to do in the near future of implementing a plan for the health informational needs of Upper County residents.

I investigated some ideas before my visitations so that I could use them as suggestions in my interviews. I didn't want to lead my audience into thinking that I had plans or give them specific options, but I did want to give them a sense of what might be available. This included kiosks, available library space, customer appointments, expanded database services, classes, presentations, and library hours within the city libraries.

I had twelve meetings with groups and individuals which included: The KVCH clinic administrator; The Kittitas County Board of Health Advisory Committee; Regional Library Board; Cle Elum & Roslyn librarians; Cle Elum clinic manager & employees; Roslyn Library Board; upper county newspaper, The Tribune; Parents As Educators advisory board; Suncadia managers; KVCH directors for employee education, Cancer Outreach & Patient Assistance Program, Diabetes Educator; budget

discussion with my supervisor; and most educational to me was the visit that I made to the Planetree Health Resource Center in The Dalles, Oregon.

My day visit with the staff at Planetree gave me many wonderful ideas for outreach possibilities at our library. And most importantly, I was also able to get their feedback about their branch facility at Hood River, which had to be closed. A branch facility would seem to be the most desirable option for upper Kittitas County in a perfect world. Learning from Planetree's attempt, I can see why this would be a long range goal and not an option to offer during the early growing years. From recent budget discussions that I had with my supervisor, the satellite option would not work well even with the possibility of future grant funding. Due to FTE constraints within the hospital, I would not have the employee hours to operate the facility.

Many suggestions were given to me in my meetings. Everyone seemed to have a different take on what would work best for them. There were also differing opinions on what space is available at the clinic. Options were discussed; areas were suggested, and then eliminated by other discussions. Since the clinic staff are still moving into their building, there isn't a sense of what space might be available yet.

A group of KVCH directors that I met with would like to combine our services on a particular day and meet with patients. For example, the diabetes educator, the cancer outreach coordinator, and myself would travel together and offer our services at appointed times. When I suggested this to others such as the librarians and clinic manager, they did not see this as a worthwhile option. The kiosk idea was also eliminated due to staff time not available to monitor, cost of additional IP range, and the likelihood of patrons not using it without verbal instructions.

Many other suggestions were made but eliminated by the recommendations of others. The suggestion voiced by all and made the most sense is to promote awareness to upper county residents and clinic staff about the services of the library. More people just need to know about the library. Traveling to Ellensburg to visit the library does not seem to be a problem for most of the population. Receiving information by email and mail was also not a concern.

I have developed short term goals and worked them into the library budget for 2008 with the suggestions received from future partners, staff members,

and community members. With evidence of the needs assessment, I was able to add funds for quarterly visits to offer training to the Cle Elum clinic staff and physicians. I will be working with the city librarians to help educate their patrons about the health library by making presentations to board meetings, the senior center, and Friends of the library. I made connections with the upper county newspaper and they wrote a nice article about the library. KVCH just hired a new PR person who I will work with to help promote the library in Upper County. The hospital will soon have an intranet website available to all staff including the upper county staff. The library will have its own webpage on the staff intranet where I can publish information about our resources and services. In 2008, I will also be adding some of our database IP ranges to include the clinic in Cle Elum. My quarterly visits will include training on the use of the databases.

After promoting the library services and influencing attitudes and beliefs of what our services can do, I will reassess our long term goals. My intention is to establish the library with the citizens and medical staff so that expanding our physical presence into Upper County will be more acceptable.