Amplifying Voices through Community-Led Data Collection

harder + co | community research

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Presenters

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Agenda

- Introduction and Framing

- Case Study

- Questions and Discussion

- Key Takeaways

Introduction and Framing

Case Study

CalOptima Member Health Needs Assessment
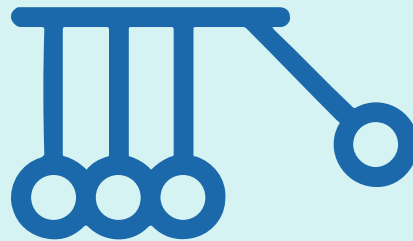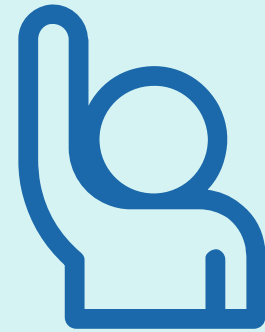
Evaluation Goals
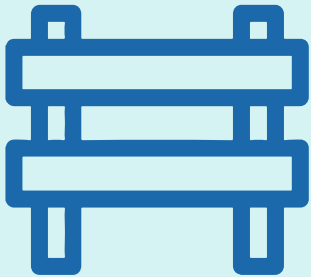
Barriers and Facilitators

Social Determinants

Representation

Scope of Data Collection

5,815 member surveys

31 focus groups

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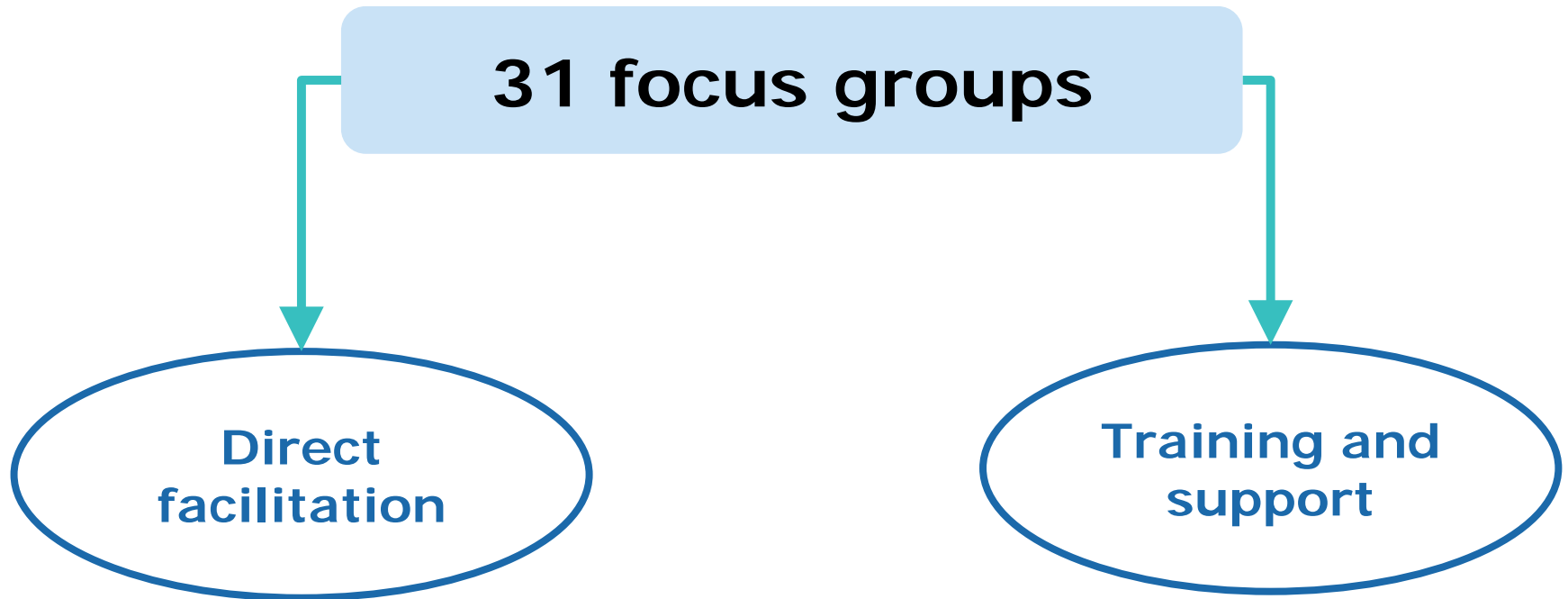안녕하세요
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10 languages

24 stakeholder interviews

21 provider surveys

Birth through 101 years old

Focus Group Approach

31 focus groups

Direct facilitation

Training and support

Training for Community Facilitators

Focus Group Protocol Overview

Introduction: explain the purpose of the study, identify the people involved, assure confidentiality, encourage honest opinions

Opening Question(s): introductions and other information relevant to the study

Key Questions: directly related to research questions; include more sensitive questions in the middle or end of this section

Ending Question(s): related to satisfaction, ask for recommendations, give respondents an opportunity to share anything that has not been addressed

Debrief: thank participants for their time, answer their questions

CalOptima Member Health Needs Assessment: Focus Group Training   August 2017   19

Facilitation Tips and Reminders
CalOptima Member Health Needs Assessment Focus Groups

Before the focus group begins
In the days before the group
- Review the protocol ahead of time, paying close attention to the questions in **bold**; make sure you bring your copy of the protocol to the focus groups
- Review the "Facilitation Techniques" handout to get tips on keeping the focus group discussion on track
- Confirm location, date, and time of the focus group
At the focus group location
- Arrive 30 minutes before the group is scheduled to begin so you have time to set up and get ready, including setting up the digital recorder

Minding the digital recorder
- Get the digital recorder from CalOptima or Harder+Company staff member and ask participants' permission to record as part of your discussion of ground rules
  - If any person refuses to be recorded, you cannot use the digital recorder
  - If someone enters the focus group late, make sure that you receive their consent to record
- During the focus group, state participants' body language out loud (e.g. "I see many of you nodding" or "It looks like five of you have raised your hands") so that it is captured on the recording

Role of the facilitator
- Guide and keep the discussion on track
- Encourage participation and open conversation
- Be non-judgmental and do not influence answers
- Establish rapport and make participants feel relaxed
- Read protocol introductory text (background, ground rules, etc.) and ask protocol questions and probes as written

Facilitation "Do's"
- Pause – resist the temptation to fill silence after asking a question
- Scan the room – move your eyes across participants' foreheads to invite participation non-verbally
- Probe – be sure you really understand what is being said by asking for more information through questions like "Would you explain further?" or "Could you say more about that?"

Facilitation "Don'ts"
- Arrive at the focus group unprepared
- Express your views or opinions
- Agree or disagree with participants
- Influence conversation through your actions:
  - Saying things like "right" or "excellent"
  - Nodding or shaking your head in response to what is said

After the focus group
- Thank participants for attending
- Work with note-taker to distribute demographic surveys
- Give completed demographic surveys back to CalOptima or Harder+Company staff member

All facilitation and note-taking training materials are available here:
https://harderco.app.box.com/s/2tgvjndv3xi2ck3u1ki9159x3fsitzk   harder+co | community research

Questions? Please contact Ellen Marya at emarya@harderco.com

Scope of Focus Group Participation

Community-led focus groups were conducted in:

- American Sign Language
- Arabic
- Cambodian
- Chinese
- English
- Farsi
- Korean
- Marshallese
- Spanish
- Vietnamese

Scope of Focus Group Participation

Community-led focus groups included:

- High school students
- LGBTQ teenagers
- New mothers
- Older adults
- Homeless individuals and families
- Parents of children on the autism spectrum
- Young adults on the autism spectrum

Focus Group Example – Original Question

"Let's talk about behavioral health issues in your community. Behavioral health issues include depression, stress, anxiety, disorders like schizophrenia, interfamilial violence, drug/alcohol abuse, and sexual abuse/assault. How would you describe behavioral health?"

Focus Group Example 1

Young Adults on the Autism Spectrum

"What we're going to be talking about is feelings and emotional health. Let's talk about any challenging feelings or emotional challenges that people your age face, like maybe depression or anxiety, stress, anything like that. Are there any emotional challenges that you guys face yourselves?"

Participant: "ABA really, really does help. I'm learning how to build relationships. Communication and conflict resolution. If we didn't have that service, we wouldn't know where we'd be."

Facilitator: "Oh yeah. Totally. My daughter has had ABA and it was amazing for me. I learned so much about myself. It helped me with learning coping skills, too. Problem solving."

Participant: "Problem solving is key in a lot of situations. Not a lot of us know how to do it because not a lot of us are willing to accept the help. At first, I was 18, so I was way late in the emotional train. I was very closed off from the world. Would not associate myself with anyone, would not talk to anyone. Then my mom took me to ACES. I started breaking down my walls little by little, and they've helped me a lot."

Focus Group Example 2

Adults

"Let's talk a little bit about behavioral and mental health. How do you describe the behavioral and mental health, and which groups are suffering more behavioral or psychological problems in your opinion? Like depression, nervousness."

Participant 1: "The main cause is lack of job opportunities. Some people can't get a job at all."

Participant 2: "This is affecting even the family and the couple's relationship; it's obvious now even if we try to deny it. The stress causes tension between the man and his wife or his children. We have daily problems at home, we can't deal with the children's requests, and this is causing a huge stress."

Facilitator: "So basically, number 10 they have already answered to it. So we will move to number 11."

Challenges

- Ensuring consistent and neutral facilitation

- Providing sufficient training for facilitators to be confident in probing and reframing

- Logistics, coordination, and expense

Benefits

- Generally high-quality data

- Members responded positively to facilitators from their communities

- Strengthened communication channels between community members and the client

- Built capacity of community organizations

Questions and Group Discussion

Discussion Questions

Think about a needs assessment you're currently working on or have recently completed:

- *How might community-led data collection change the breadth or depth of information you're able to gather?*
- *What challenges might you encounter?*
- *How could you overcome these challenges?*
- *What might the benefits be?*

Lessons Learned

Keep focus group guides simple with **straightforward questions**

Leverage existing network of community partners

Continuously **engage facilitators** for additional feedback and meaning-making

Thank You!