



Environmental Public Health Tracking

USING EPHT DATA AND RESOURCES TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Missouri EPHT Tackles Social Determinants of Health

What was the problem/situation?

Socio-demographics and the built environment (i.e. food deserts, highway safety, concentration of liquor stores, etc.) are recognized as important determinants of health; in fact, they have been added as measures to Healthy People 2020. However, with few exceptions, analyses involving these types of measures have been fragmented and only applicable to specific, local areas scattered across the United States.

How was Tracking involved?

To address this gap, the Missouri Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT) program has created a framework for analyzing these measures consistently across the country down to sub-county levels. In the spring of 2012, the Missouri EPHT program began the process of gathering and analyzing socio-demographic and built environment data. This was accomplished by researching available data sources and compiling data from places as diverse as the U.S. Census Bureau, County Health Rankings, Missouri Highway Patrol (Uniform Crime Reporting System), the National Highway Traffic Safety Commission, and MOGrown (Missouri farmer's markets). Through analysis of these vast data sources, the Missouri EPHT team was able to determine many indicators such as food deserts by zip code, the saturation of fast food restaurants by zip code, locations with high language isolation, locations of vulnerable households, and locations with higher violent crime rates.

The analyses completed by the Missouri EPHT team can now be used to assist Local Public Health Agencies, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS), and others during their accreditation process by filling in information gaps concerning socio-demographics and built environment measures. Agencies such as DHSS, who are working to complete the public health accreditation process, can use the new Community & Infrastructure indicators and measures for their pre-application community assessments. Some analyses on the Missouri EPHT portal are not available anywhere else, such as the location of food deserts or the ratio of fast food to fresh produce selling establishments. The inclusion of these and other analyses can make a community health assessment more well-rounded.



The National Environmental Public Health Tracking Program
Missouri Environmental Public Health Tracking (EPHT) is a program within the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. EPHT is part of a larger initiative to establish Environmental Public Health Tracking systems at the national and state levels.



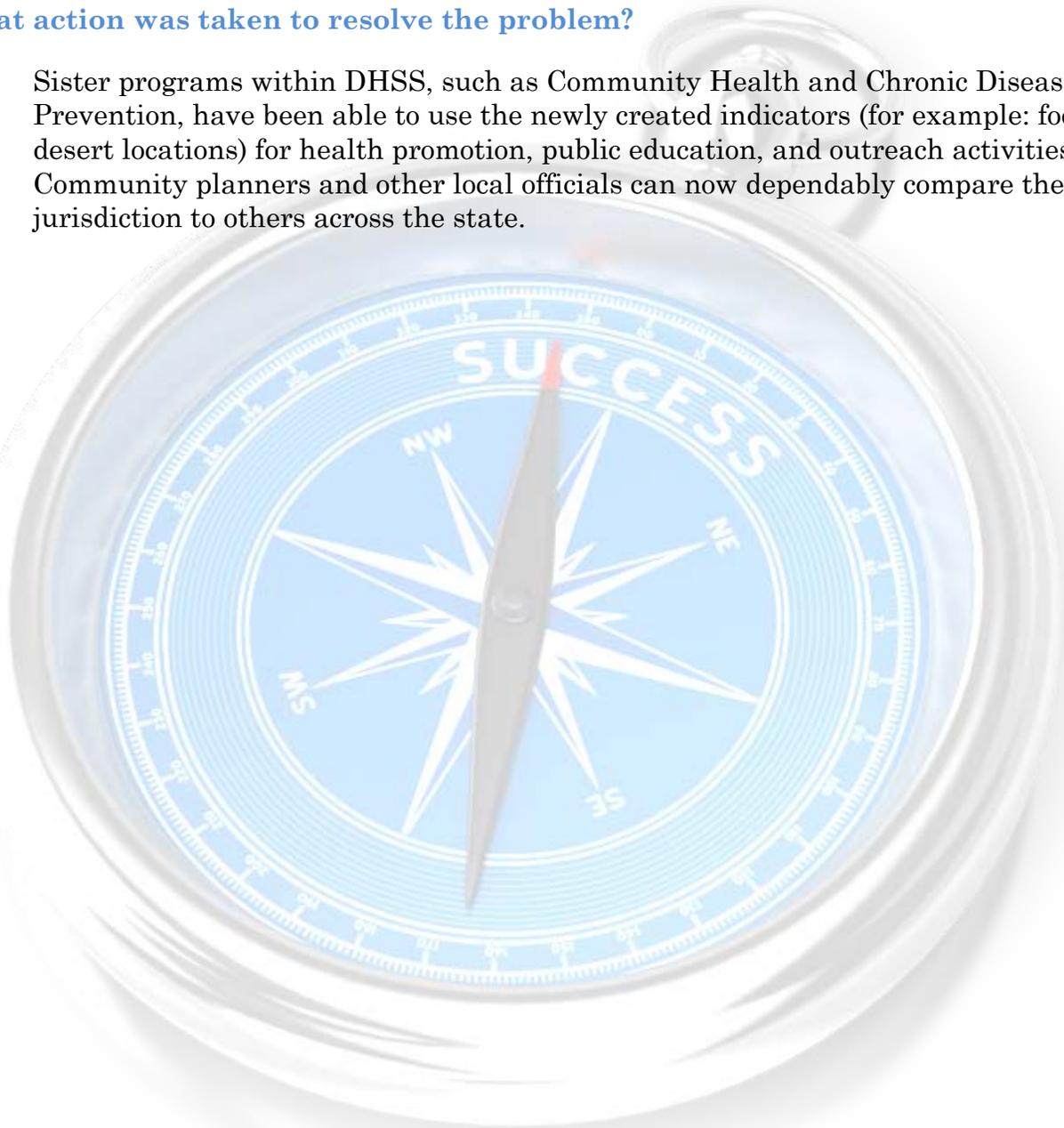


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What action was taken to resolve the problem?

Sister programs within DHSS, such as Community Health and Chronic Disease Prevention, have been able to use the newly created indicators (for example: food desert locations) for health promotion, public education, and outreach activities. Community planners and other local officials can now dependably compare their jurisdiction to others across the state.



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