How the Cedar Campus Engaged Stakeholders in Group Model Building to Inform its Evaluation Plan

Community Brief

What Is the Cedar Campus?

PHMC's Public Health Campus on Cedar (Cedar Campus) offers medical, behavioral, and social services in a single place. It also helps community members meet other needs, like healthy housing, access to food, and jobs within the community. Drexel's Urban Health Collaborative at the Dornsife School of Public Health is partnering with PHMC's Research & Evaluation group to evaluate the Cedar Campus based on feedback from community members and care providers.

What is Group Model Building (GMB)?

GMB helps people work together to see how well a complex system (like a health center) is working for everyone who participate in it. People who participate in this process create a map, called a Causal Loop Diagram, that shows how each part of the system is connected. This helps them see how the system should work, and whether it is meeting its goals. GMB helps participants understand where change is needed and make group decisions on how to make that change.
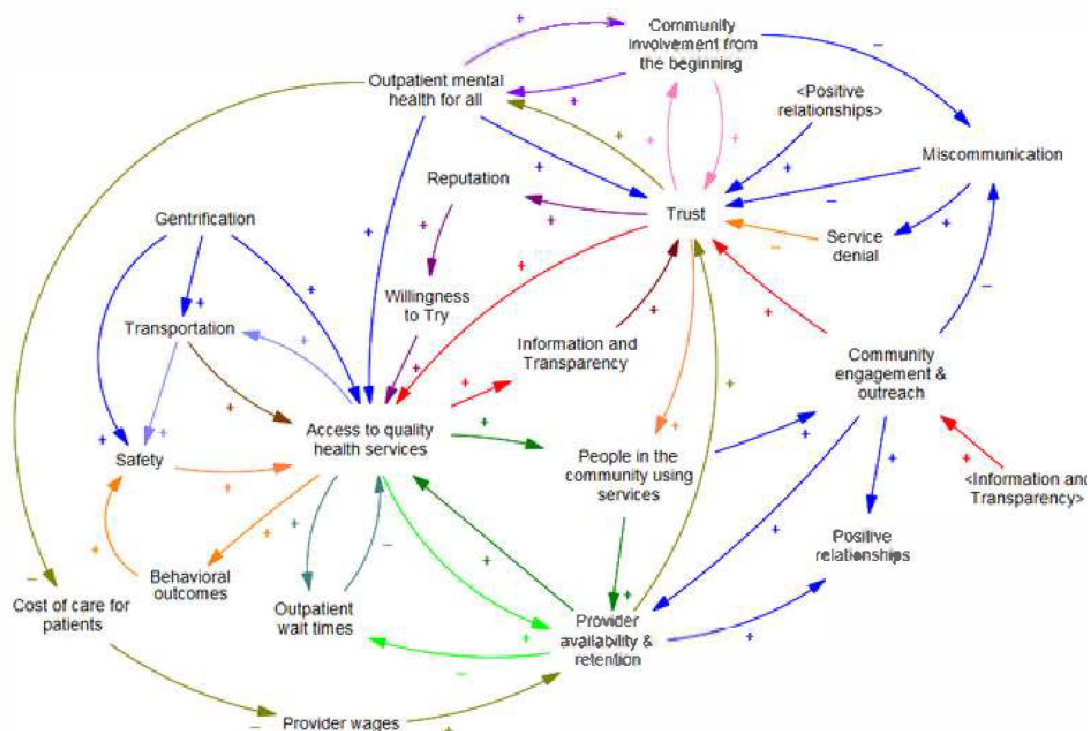
How We Did It

We conducted two GMB workshops in October 2023 to create Causal Loop Diagrams of the connections between different factors influencing access to high quality health care in the Cedar Campus area.

The goals of the Cedar Campus GMB workshops were to:

1. Bring together *stakeholders*: people who receive care, provide care, or are interested in the Cedar Campus.
2. Learn more about the Cedar Campus and its stakeholders, in order to create an evaluation plan that works best for them.
3. Do activities to help everyone understand how easy or difficult it is for people who live near Cedar Campus get care.

Each workshop included a different group of stakeholders. The **community workshop** had 15 participants: community residents, representatives from community-based organizations, and Cedar Community Advisory Board members. The **provider workshop** had 8 participants: PHMC and Penn providers and administrators.

Causal Loop Diagram Created by the Community Workshop

What We Learned

Using GMB, the participants came up with models that showed how to provide high-quality care that best meets the needs of people living in the Cedar Campus area. Each group (the community members and the providers) created their own models. These models had similarities and differences, but they both showed that certain factors can make it easier or harder for community members to access care.

In the community session, the next most important factor after access was trust. As seen in the model above, the discussion showed that trust is critical for Cedar Campus to become integrated into the community, and not just physically located in the community.

In the provider session, the next most important factor was an improved business model. Much of the emphasis in this workshop was on integration of services within Cedar Campus: This means that providers know about each other and the services they offer, that they are well-coordinated in directing patients to the care they need, and that resources are used as efficiently as possible.

Both of these perspectives are needed to create a successful model: Cedar Campus needs to build trust with the community while also making sure that their services and provided are coordinated with each other. into the community while also integrating services within Cedar Campus.

GMB participants also identified four areas for action:
1. Provider recruitment and retention, in general and in higher-need provider types and specialties.
2. Information flow, including between Cedar Campus and the community, and between providers.
3. Integration of Cedar Campus into the community, including outreach, trust-building, information flow, and responsiveness of services & programs.
4. Integration of services and programs within Cedar, including efficient and effective referral processes, awareness of resources between providers.

Next Steps

We are using GMB results to create a framework for the key metrics that will be tracked in the evaluation to understand whether Cedar Campus is improving, how these systems behave and interact to increase community access to quality care, address social determinants of health, and achieve health equity throughout West and Southwest Philadelphia