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Practicum Site: Tennessee Healthcare Campaign

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Bridging Data and Advocacy: Tools and Strategies for TennCare Expansion in Tennessee



Introduction: Tennessee Health Care Campaign's (THCC) main goals are to advocate for TennCare expansion to reduce barriers to healthcare access and to promote rural health equity in Tennessee. This practicum focused on multiple outreach efforts to address healthcare disparities and support advocacy efforts, county health fact sheets were created to inform Tennesseans about their county's health status and to guide engagement with state and local leaders.

Methods: County health fact sheets were created for all 95 counties in Tennessee using publicly available data including, but not limited to, U.S. Census, Kids Count, and County Health Rankings and Roadmaps. A webinar was conducted with the help of a Tennessee State Representative, the advocacy board of THCC, and THCC interns. The webinar included methods for data compilation, advice for engaging with your local representative, and an advocacy role-play. After the conclusion of the webinar, a "Talking Points" flyer was published to aid with future advocacy efforts.

Results: The county health fact sheets were published on the THCC website for public access to aid individuals who want to engage local leadership in a discussion about TennCare expansion. The webinar recording was published for individuals who want guidance on how to interact with state representatives when discussing Medicaid expansion and for individuals who might want to create county health fact sheets for their state.

Conclusions: The publication of the county health fact sheets and webinar had a positive impact on public health advocacy by equipping individuals with crucial data and strategies for engaging with local leadership on TennCare expansion. The initiative successfully met its goals by enhancing understanding and advocacy capabilities, although challenges such as ensuring widespread access and engagement were addressed throughout the process. These efforts have highlighted the importance of clear communication and resource accessibility in advancing public health initiatives.