

## CONDUCTING ASSESSMENTS WITH DEI CONSIDERATIONS

Conducting assessments is critical for addressing problems that communities face. We need to have a full understanding of the problems, and incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) considerations into our process of assessment is especially essential. The following guidelines can assist you in these efforts.

### Identify Diverse Community Population(s) and Their Needs<sup>1</sup>

Learning about the diverse populations and existing inequities in your community will help you identify characteristics and situations that place individuals at higher risk for your problem of interest. It will also help you identify factors that might mitigate those risks. An effective way to learn more about your community and their needs is to engage in a community driven approach. Community-based participatory research is one such approach, where community members are equal partners and actively involved throughout the research process, and within the assessment stage, it involves both primary and secondary, and quantitative and qualitative data.<sup>23</sup>

- Use existing data to identify your service area and/or population's demographics (e.g., race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, socioeconomic status, age group), community history, needs and trends overtime, and other related data. For example:
  - Use the U.S. Census to find demographic information on income, education, race and ethnicity, housing and other factors at national, state, county and smaller geographic area levels. <https://www.census.gov/>
  - Gather data from sources such as Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS); Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services' (SAMHSA) Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs (ATOD) and National Survey of Drug Use and Health (NSDUH); Hawai'i State Department of Health's Hawai'i Health Data Warehouse; Hawai'i State Department of Education; Hawai'i State Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA); Hawai'i Policy Map, 'Imi Pono Hawai'i Wellbeing Survey Dashboard; and Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS).
- Use primary data collection to identify and understand your community's current needs and inequities to establish baselines and monitor trends over time. Some examples include:

---

<sup>1</sup> Section adapted from <https://www.prevention.org/Resources/648ff313-5591-4528-8449-a883089d3e13/Delivering%20Culturally%20Responsive%20Prevention%20Resource%20Guide%20FY22%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/CBPR.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nimhd.nih.gov/programs/extramural/community-based-participatory.html>

## ASSESSMENT TOOL 4: CONDUCTING ASSESSMENTS WITH DEI CONSIDERATIONS

- Interviews** can be used to explore substance use issues experienced by diverse populations. Interviews also offer excellent opportunities to build relationships, raise awareness and inform key community members about problems and prevention efforts.
- Focus groups** can be used to have in-depth discussions about prevention-related topics with specific populations and offer an opportunity for marginalized groups to share their unique perspectives.
- Surveys** are beneficial for collecting information across a large geographic area, hearing from as many people as possible and exploring sensitive topics. Surveys can be conducted via paper/pencil, phone, mailings or online.
- Community mapping** can be a helpful tool to visually depict concerns and assets of communities. It can also help in visualizing differences in race/ethnicity, income level, geography, prevalence of disease/behavioral problems, and other factors and indicators.
- Think about other ways you can learn more about your community and their needs.
  - Examine the community contexts with the assistance of a variety of stakeholders (e.g., researchers, clinicians, community leaders, etc. with expertise in clinical, cultural, and epidemiological sciences).
  - Identify any disparities and make them apparent as you move forward in your efforts.
  - Understand relevant and cultural appropriateness of assessment strategies when learning about your community and the issues they face.
  - Learn about differences present in your populations, including different races, ethnicities, religions, abilities, genders, and sexual orientations so that you can accommodate differences during your assessment.
  - Explore different ability levels, including language differences, so that you can include assessment materials that are accessible and appropriate.