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Medical Needs Grant

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Abstract

Children Miracle Network (CMN) is a nonprofit organization under the Salinas Memorial Hospital that serves Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Benito. The Medical Needs Grant (MNG) is an application that provides medical assistance for families who have children under 17 years of age and may not be able to afford services. The majority of the MGN applications come from Monterey/Santa Cruz county leaving out San Benito due to a lack of outreach in that area.. This project's purpose is to promote the Medical Needs Grant in all areas that connect with children, pediatric hospitals and schools in San Benito County where outreach is minimal. During the process of outreach, emails were sent out to all nonprofit organizations, schools, and pediatric hospitals that connect with kids in San Benito county with the Medical Needs Grant attached. The results of sending out emails to the community partners was not the expected outcomes the foundation had hoped for. The next step for CMN is to figure out which method of outreach works best to bring in more applications from San Benito.

Keywords: outreach, healthcare, nonprofit, San Benito County, tri-counties

Agency & Communities Served

Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Foundation is part of the Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital (SVMH). Their mission is to, "increase funds and awareness for Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital and other Children's Miracle Network Hospitals" (Children Miracle Network Hospital, 2022). CMN serves the tri-county (Monterey, Santa Cruz, San Beinto) and provides donated toys and PJs to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and Pediatrics (PEDs) at SVMH, helps families cover medical equipment/services, as well as hosts outreach at local stores to encourage more fundraising skills.

There are four towns in San Benito county (Hollister, Ridgemark, Tres Pinos, San Juan Baustista) and within these towns the population of children between the age of zero to seventeen is roughly about 13,567 (San Benito County Summary, n.d.). Being with that range, as of 2021, 3.2 per 10,000 kids in San Benito county are hospitalized due to asthma (San Benito County Summary, n.d.). Within this county, Hispanics/Latinos make up the majority of the overall population, with thirty-seven percent of the population speaking Spanish (San Benito County, California Population 2022, n.d.). CMN fills in the gap by finding how the agency can address the issue of how families that have children can get the resources they need. How can the agency reach these families and let them know about a resource they can take full advantage of.

Problem Model Background and Literature Review

Problem Statement

The Medical Needs Grant (MNG) is a grant that is supported by funds to the CMN to help families with children under the age of 17 that are in need of medical equipment/services. The application is applied by families within the tri-county. Most of the applications are coming

from only two counties which are Monterey/Santa Cruz County. Leaving out San Benito County due to many factors of lack of awareness, language barriers, lack of outreach.

Another issue that the MNG solves is the high cost of healthcare. It was reported that in the year 2020, the nation's highest personal health care spending was in California (NHE Fact Sheet | CMS, n.d.). More than a million undocumented Californians who are not offered job-based coverage and are not qualified for Medi-Cal, is one of two groups that do not receive premium assistance. With this being an issue to many families, they tend not to seek help for medical services due to not having a citizenship status, being uninsured, or simply can't make ends meet. All other racial and ethnic groups are expected to have uninsured rates between 4% and 6%, whereas Latinos are predicted to have an uninsured rate of 16% (UC Berkeley Labor Center, 2021).

Contributing Factors

One of the contributing factors is lack of promotion or outreach of the Medical Needs Grant. Since the agency is located in Salinas which is in Monterey County, most of the outreaches are mostly within the borders of Monterey County. Which means most of the medical needs grant applications are coming from families that live in Monterey County and with a few coming from Santa Cruz County. The reason for that could possibly be that the agency may not have many partners of organization, local shops, etc in San Benito county to connect and educate them on a useful source that can benefit so many families. Usually a single nonprofit organization like CMN can't handle all things at once and sometimes asking for other agencies and/or organizations could help build outreach strategies. Such as in-person, one-on-one encounters and talks where connection, rather than agenda, is priority are what work best for many types of communities (Why Embracing Outreach Is Important for Nonprofits, 2019).

When there is a lack of outreach, the community won't be aware of the issue or cause that is happening, or even educate them on what's going on. In order for people to tackle a problem on their own and persuade others to do the same, community outreach must teach people how to accomplish it (General Studies, Human & Health Services News, 2021).

Another factor that contributes to the first one is staff time. Which means the time the staff at the agency puts in each county on how we should raise funds or promote the medical needs grant. This could be due to the fact that the strategies of outreach, promotion, etc that works in Monterey/Santa Cruz County may differ then San Benito. Due to that there is probably a different population, not familiar with the crowd. Or we're not just giving much time and effort to that specific population. There are a lot of benefits of outreaching, that benefits both the staff and the community. One, it gives access to chances to view life from many angles and develop leadership abilities while increasing accountability and responsibility (Nzau, 2022).

Language barrier plays a big role in why there is a lack of awareness in San Benito County. Latinos/Hipanics make up the majority of the population in San Benito County. Spanish is the most spoken language after English in the county; being that 38% of children from age 5-17, 40% adults from 18-64 speak Spanish (San Benito County, California Population 2022, n.d.). In the past promotions, CMN realized that most of the families that came towards the table did not understand English and spoke Spanish the majority of the time. This may explain why the agency would not receive any applications, as the reader of the application may not understand English. Even when promoting the grant physically. Having resources in multiple languages can provide education resources in multiple languages for healthcare professionals and others to use in their communities. Resources are easy to read and culturally appropriate (Health Information Translations - Quality Health Education Resources for Diverse Populations., n.d.).

When language barriers exist it results in lower quality care, the lack of importance to serve the community and most importantly reduces the chance of access to resources. The healthcare field as a whole does not teach the people upfront caring for the community to interact with patients who don't speak the same language as they do. There are substantial gaps in the delivery of high-quality healthcare to the expanding Multilingual population as a result of the fact that health professions schools traditionally exclusively train professionals to speak with patients in English (Ortega & Shin, 2021).

Consequences

Due to lack of awareness in San Benito County can lead to lower funding in the future. If the board of the agency sees that certain funds are being used, it could eventually lead to only a certain amount of funding to cover families medical expenses. It would give the agency a little to spend on medical equipment/services for families that are in need of it. Usually, the agency has the whole fiscal year to use funds for whatever purposes they need. A fund that is temporarily restricted may state that it must be utilized for a specific objective within a certain amount of time. The money becomes restricted after the time period has passed (Lowery, 2022). When there is a lack of funding, it becomes difficult for the nonprofit organization to help the communities it serves, due to restrictions. In research from Grantmakers for Effective Organizations, in order to pay for the costs of delivering services that donors only partially support, nonprofit organizations divert cash that could otherwise be invested in their operations and infrastructure.(n.d.)

When families are in need without resources it might hinder their chance to succeed. They won't be able to motivate themselves or their children to a better life. Lack of supplies and resources may impede a child's ability to develop motivation. A youngster may withdraw and act

out if they receive inconsistent or no emotional support or consolation because they won't be able to control their own feelings. According to the authors Masten, Lombardi , and Fisher, “When families are able to meet basic needs such as food, housing, and medical care, parents and other caregivers experience less stress, which allows them to provide the critical support that children need to grow into healthy, productive adults (Just a Moment. . . , n.d.). When there are families in need without resources, it will cause a fall for parents to have family bonding with their children and to see needs/wants are. In order to care for their children at home, be active and interested in their children's education, extracurricular activities, and community life, parents may find it challenging to strike a balance between their professional and personal lives when making ends meet (*OACAS Library Guides: Poverty and Child Welfare: Home*, n.d.)

When funds are not being utilized, it just goes to waste. To make sure every single fund is being used, the agency will have to contribute into more outreach programs that can pull in families that are in need to use these kinds of resources to help them. When funds are not being utilized it could occur that the board could restrict the funds and only allow funds to be used on only one particular resource. It could turn into restricted funds which are, They are permanently restricted to that purpose and cannot be used for other expenses of the nonprofit (Foundation Group, Inc., 2018).

Contributing Factors	Problem	Consequences
Lack of promotion/outreach	The funds that are being raised are going to waste, due to lack of outreach/ information/ awareness from San Benito County	Lower funding in the future
Staff time/equity		Families in need without resources
Language barrier		Funds are not being utilized

Project Description

Project Description

This project would be to advocate more on the medical needs grant to more families to take advantage of this resource. The medical needs grant is a grant given to families with kids under the age of 17 or under with any disabilities and/or illness and that need help to pay for medically beneficial equipment/services. The project will focus on outreach about the medical needs grant by sending out emails with the medical needs grant application attached as well to the agency community partners in San Benito County, track responses, see different methods of outreach and report it to the agency.

Project Justification

The primary goal of this project is to promote the grant so families can make use of the fundings without it going to waste. The agency is expected to accomplish from this project that all trio counties get the right needs of resources/fundings to help families. The problems that need to be addressed are the language barriers- trio counties have a lot of Spanish speaking citizens which makes it difficult for them to communicate or even come forward. Families that are undocumented don't know that the grant doesn't need proof of documentation, and this goes well for the uninsured families. The grant itself is not promoted that much in many areas in Santa Cruz/San Benito county. An outreach program's three main objectives are to enhance learning, encourage civic involvement, and develop communities by attending to their socioeconomic needs (Suresan et al., 2019). To promote/outreach this grant to other community partners, they collaborate with each other in many ways, for example when an organization does not have the resources to help a client, they can refer to a different organization that might help them in what they need.

Benefits

Benefits of the project afterwards is both the foundation and the families that they are serving are both benefiting from this project. Families will be more knowledgeable about the resources to spread the word along. Families get their resources they need for their children. Most importantly funds do not go to waste. It will also bring awareness in other communities other than Monterey county, due to the fact most of the medical needs grants that are being submitted are mostly from Monterey county.

Assessment Plan & Expected Outcomes

The whole thought process of this project was to reach out to San Benito county with this MNG. We collected all the email addresses of all our community partners, entered them in a Google excel spreadsheet. Divided them into groups, for example the emails that were collected from schools website were under one spreadsheet and same for pediatrics, and nonprofit organizations. After sending out emails and following up with mailing them with more information, we tracked the date the email/mail were sent out. When responses were received, we also tracked the responses of emails/mails and ones who did not respond. The foundation at least expects email or mail responses from school staff such as counselors, coordinators, assistant principals and from nonprofit organizations. The reason for that is because school staff tend to work with the population that the foundation serves and by that, they can help spread these useful resources to the students' parents. Same goes for the nonprofit organizations that sent out emails that were dealing with the same population. They can use the MNG for their own clients if it benefits the clients as well.

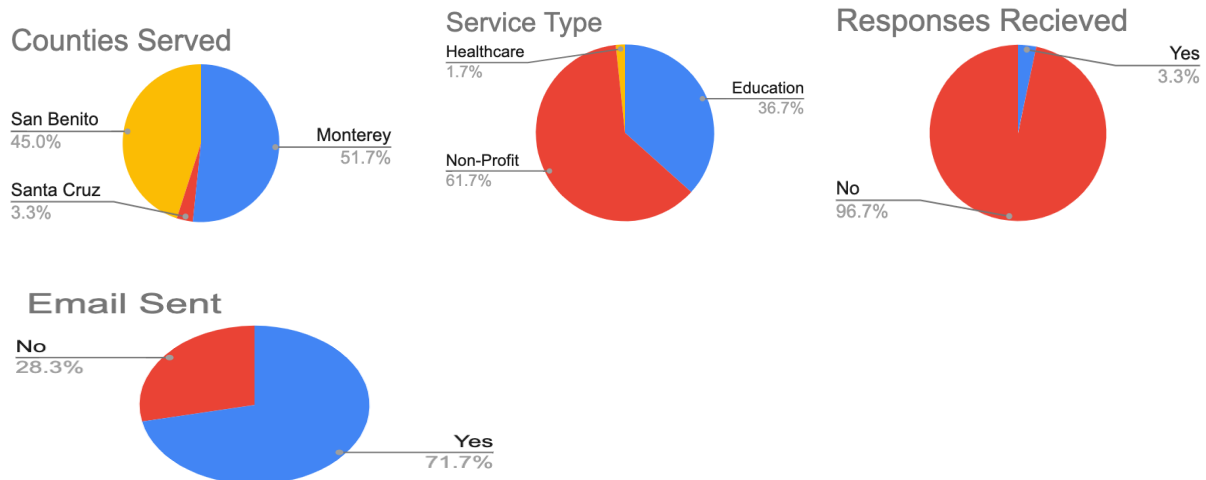
Implementation Process

In order to keep track of the process and know what future assignments that need to be done, My mentor and I sat down and started to create the implementation plan to make this capstone project work smoothly. We started off by thinking about what day should be the last day of completing the capstone project. By that we know how to plan out all in an easy matter. For example, the first week we started to outline the capstone, what areas in San Benito county are we focusing on? And what organizations or clinics can we send out emails to about this resource? After we planned out what's our reach, we planned out the deadline for each week and who is responsible for it.

Project Results

The results of this project was a different expectation than the foundation had thought the results would end up like. After sending out the results, the foundation expected within a week after the emails and mails being sent out that the foundation would receive at least a portion of responses from the community members. In this case, that did not happen what the foundation expected, out of the 60 agencies that the foundation has contacted, the responses were less than 20 percent. Beginning from the implementation part of the project, sending out emails was a more effective way of reaching out or outreaching to San Benito because it's an easier way to reach out due to the fact that they as in the community partners know their population they serve better then the foundation does. When the foundation did get a response from any of our community partners, we would track into our spreadsheet on the day the response was received. The foundation would respond back within 48 hours to give thanks for responding and for having interest. Overall, the responses were very low compared to how many community

partners the foundation has sent emails to. Throughout the seven week process of this project, the foundation didn't really come out with a reasoning on why the responses are very low and not as expected. The pie charts below show the counties served and the percentage of how many agencies were from that area. What is shown is that even though our focus was more on San Benito, the foundation had to move to the other two counties since the foundation ran out of community members to reach out and to increase the chances of responses to nearby towns. The other charts below show of emails that were sent which was 71 percent due to the fact some of the emails were not able to be sent.



The results overall did not achieve the expected outcomes that the foundation hoped for. There could have been plenty of reasons why the results were not achieved. One main reason would be that maybe the emails or mail addresses that were collected from either websites or from a handbook may have not been updated. Some of the members the foundation has contacted are not working at their company anymore.

Conclusion & Recommendations

All the factors addressed in this project, be language barrier, lack of outreach, staff equity are all reasons why the foundation strives to achieve different goals of ways to close the space of wanting to help but not knowing how to help. The foundation succeeds in ways to what method does not really work when its from a distance and that results may vary since it the foundation might be a “new” community partner in San Benito and that people may need to build trust between then.

A recommendation for the foundations based on the project results is that outreaching to a specific area that the foundation is not much familiar with the people and the surroundings, is better off to do an in person outreach other than sending out emails/mails. By this, the foundation would know the people of San Benito, the community partners and establish a different type of connection/communication to spread these useful resources. The outreach method that was used in this project was a communication with the community partners only, that way the foundation couldn't make a bond with the people as well.

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Appendix A

Project Implementation Plan

Week	Activities	Deliverables	Timeline/Deadlines	Supporting Staff
Week 1	Outline Implementation plan Compile school resource personnel and agency contact information in San Benito County	Submit plan for approval	September 5-11	Andrea & Tabark
Week 2	Create a draft of outreach email. Submit draft for approval & revision	Submit outreach email for approval	September 12-18	Andrea & Tabark
Week 3	Compile medical needs grant application and additional resources Begin outreach & send out emails to approved partners	Complete first round of outreach	September 19-25	Andrea & Tabark
Week 4	Respond to partners inquires Audit partners responses Do follow up emails to partners that have not responded	Tracking first round of partner responses	September 26-October 2nd	Andrea & Tabark
Week 5	Create letter/flier for medical needs grant application Compile a list of partners that have not responded	To begin the first round of outreach for new partners & second round for existing partners	October 3rd- 9th	Andrea & Tabark

	<p>Research potential new partners</p> <p>Mail out letters that have not responded from first round</p> <p>Send out emails to new partners</p>			
Week 6	<p>Respond to any new partners questions/inquiries</p> <p>Audit new partners that have not responded</p> <p>Update partner spreadsheet</p> <p>Mail out letters to partners that have not yet responded</p>	Complete partner outreach	October 10th-16th	Andrea & Tabark
Week 7 (Final)	<p>Update partner spreadsheet with partner responses</p> <p>Research effective outreach methods</p> <p>Provide final data & recommendation to agency</p>	Finalize capstone project	October 17th-21st	Andrea & Tabark