

OPEN PATH RESOURCES

Building the Relationship
Between Minneapolis
Public Health
Department and a
Network of MN Somali
Community Influencers



Project Goals

Building or restructuring community-engagement capacity between local community influencers/leaders and a Public Health Department's internal stakeholders to test a new model of engagement that is led by a community-base that has been organized to identify its role, power, and obligations to foster right relationship.

The Team

- 2 staff from Open Path Resources
- 15 Community Influencers from the MN Somali Community
 - Faith leaders
 - Healthcare leaders (Imams and Muslim Chaplains)
 - Civic Leaders (nonprofit leaders)
 - Somali Healthcare providers
 - 5 youth
- 8 Staff from Minneapolis Public Health Department
- 1 Lead Evaluator from the University of MN Department of Family Medicine and Community Health
- Organizing and financial support from NACCHO Team

Why the need for a new model?

- Years of experience as a community-based organization had us looking for new models.
- Impact of COVID related health disparities were obvious and painful.
- The impact and moral imperative in Minneapolis systems highlighted by the murder of George Floyd

What we sought in a new model.

- We are looking to reverse from the standard model of public health institution to community model of engagement.
- Strengthen the importance of community organizing – pushing community to use their opportunity to gather voices – represent the diversity of the community.

We also sought
the following

- Help agencies to see the importance of that sub-community's diversity. A Somali agency or contact does not equal adequate voice or relationship.
- Explore how a community-based organization can develop the capacity of others to engage systems in sustainable manners.