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PLAN

Identify an opportunity and plan for improvement.

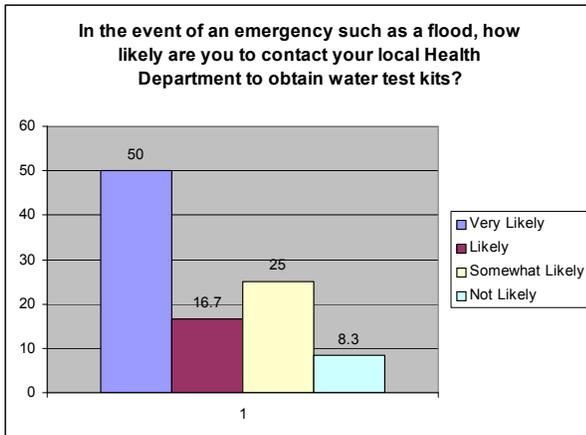
Area for Improvement

In the aftermath of Hurricane Irene community organizations expressed confusion about how to access public health information and services. Months after the storm numerous local citizens were boiling well water and unaware of VDH water testing resources. The change team identified a need to improve community knowledge of Brattleboro District Office public health emergency preparedness resources and support.

Target Goal

Increase by 25% the likelihood that targeted community organizations would access local district office water test resources and services.

Baseline Data



DO

What ideas for improvement did you test?

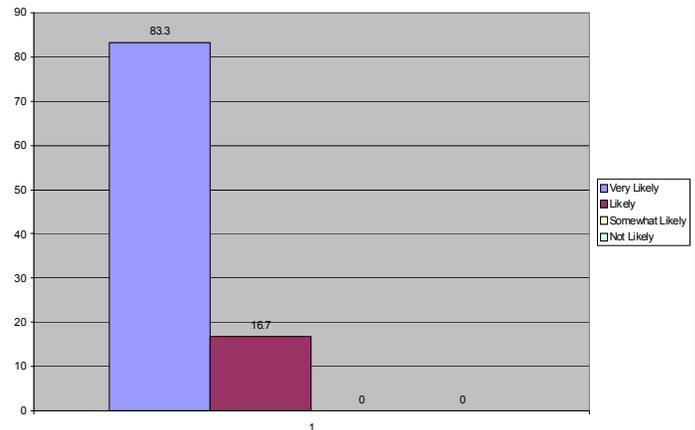
Change tested

In response to the question "Which of the following local Health Department resources would help aid you in your response to public health emergencies?" 83% responded that informational sessions on local resources would be helpful. Survey comments spoke to "keeping the lines of communication open between VDH and town officials" and becoming "more connected on a local level." Our change idea was to improve connections with community organizations through face to face informational sessions and discussions.

STUDY

What were the results of your test(s)? What is your final post-change data compared to the baseline data?

In the event of an emergency such as a flood, how likely are you to contact your local Health Department to obtain water test kits?



ACT

What lessons did you learn from the process? How will this change be sustained?

Feedback from survey participants during face to face meetings:

- *This has been helpful, it would be good to take to Town Select Boards.*
- *I didn't know that you offer adult immunizations.*
- *Can you bring this information to our staff meeting?*
- *I see this as the start of a bigger quality improvement project between our hospital and the Brattleboro district.*

Participants viewed these meetings favorably and felt periodic face to face meetings would enhance collaboration between the Brattleboro District Office, Town officials (especially Town Health Officers) and community organizations. Following these meetings people reported they were more likely to contact the VDH District Office in natural and man made emergencies. To sustain this project we will continue face to face meetings with Town Select Boards, Town Health Officers and other community organizations. These meetings will be tracked using a District Office meeting log.