Developing a bank of compelling “success stories” about the Health Equity Zones (HEZ) Initiative, RIDOH’s community-led, place-based model to address the determinants of health at the local level. Internal RIDOH communications to promote health equity among RIDOH staff.

**Key Findings**

**HEZ Story Bank**

Interviewed HEZ Collaborative members representing seven out of the nine total RI HEZs, including:
- Bristol HEZ
- Central Providence HEZ
- West Warwick HEZ
- Newport HEZ
- Woonsocket HEZ
- Pawtucket/Central Falls HEZ

Shared stories relating to food and healthcare access, elderly engagement, and overdose prevention. Interviews resulted in 27 written “success stories” and eight short videos which can be shared at events, via social media, and through other means.

**HEZ Newsletters**

568 HEZ Collaborative members and other interested parties have been notified on a monthly and as-needed basis about important information including:
- Funding and networking opportunities
- Special events

All 516 current RIDOH staff members received “Health Equity Now”, providing readers with information about how RIDOH programs have worked to promote health equity. This work can be done through hosting health equity-related events, or completing projects that advance health equity in Rhode Island.

**Conclusion**

With the HEZ story bank and HEZ Update newsletter, HEZ Collaborative members and RIDOH staff have access to and share valuable resources, that can help lead to:
- Growth of the initiative through an increased number of collaborating organizations, and support from funders or sponsor organizations.
- Increased interest from non-participating localities, leading to the creation of new HEZs.

With “Health Equity Now” in the NOW@RIDOH weekly newsletter, RIDOH staff are more aware of how their own work and that of their colleagues has advanced health equity in Rhode Island. This knowledge can then spread throughout the Department, making health equity more tangible and relatable for all RIDOH staff.

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