**TO:** PLA Board of Directors

**RE:** Health Initiatives and Collaborations

**DATE:** June 4, 2019

**ACTION REQUESTED/INFORMATION/REPORT:**

Information

**ACTION REQUESTED BY:**

N/A

**DRAFT OF MOTION:**

N/A

**LIBRARIES CONNECTING YOU TO COVERAGE**

*Submitted by Leighann Wood, Program Manager*

In August 2018, PLA received a grant from Community Catalyst, along with nearly a dozen other organizations throughout the U.S., to promote health insurance enrollment and understanding. Under the name [*Libraries Connecting You to Coverage*](http://www.ala.org/pla/initiatives/connectingyoutocoverage)*,* our primary goals were to promote enrollment in the health insurance marketplace during the Open Enrollment period of the Affordable Care Act and to help educate people to understand how to use health insurance. PLA did this by offering two phases of funding: to advertise about the Open Enrollment Period (Round 1), and to conduct activities around health insurance literacy (Round 2). In total, 104 total libraries received funding: 26 suburban libraries; 19 town libraries; 23 city libraries; and 36 rural libraries. PLA’s strategy for dissemination at the local level via libraries included mailing patron facing outreach and education materials; and placing ads in print and digital media including newspapers, community press releases, radio, newsletters, social media channels. These included a guide on how to host a library event related to insurance enrollment, and communications. PLA also needed to create new materials that would educate public library staff including: webinars, blog posts, a podcast, conference presentations, and contributions to a policy briefing to be used among field practitioners and advocates.

Between October 2018 and May 2019, the 104 grantees of Libraries Connecting You to Coverage initiative achieved the following: 150,000+ emails sent, 350+ events held, 69,000+ handouts distributed, 253,000+ Facebook and 24,000+ Twitter impressions, and ads on local and regional radio stations from 15 libraries. PLA also reached 82,000+ email inboxes, delivered printed materials in Public Libraries magazine 3 times for 30,000 total copies distributed, held 4 events including two webinars that had a combined total registration of over 400, and produced a podcast which has had over 550 listeners.

According to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, almost 8.5 million people in the 39 HealthCare.gov-participating states enrolled in coverage during the six-week open enrollment period. This represents a 4% decrease compared to last year’s open enrollment numbers. Thanks to the hard work of enrollment advocates, including public libraries, the drop was much smaller than anticipated despite the drastic cuts to the Federal Navigator funding and advertising budgets.

**OPIOIDS**

*Submitted by Larra Clark, Deputy Director*

The joint “Public Libraries Respond to the Opioid Epidemic with Their Community” project with OCLC/WebJunction continues to go well.The steering committee has met regularly, all eight case study communities have been confirmed and interviews have been conducted, and the first four case studies should be released by the time the PLA board meets in Washington, DC. There will be a [program](https://www.eventscribe.com/2019/ALA-Annual/fsPopup.asp?Mode=presInfo&PresentationID=496286) with PLA Board member Michelle Jeske, her local partner and OCLC researchers on Monday, June 24. Virtual cross-sector discussions are being scheduled for later in the summer, featuring representatives from diverse groups (libraries, public health, health, mental health, substance abuse, government, funders, public safety, law enforcement, courts, etc.). Input from those sectors will contribute to tools and guidance released to the field along with the case studies. Some discussion of sustainability after the IMLS award period has started. A project [website](https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/opioid-crisis.html) also has been created and is featuring regular updates on articles and other issue related to libraries and opioids.

**OTHER HEALTH LITERACY AND PROGRAMMING ACTIVITY**

*Submitted by Scott Allen, Deputy Director*

This section covers activity PLA is undertaking with partners from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NNLM) as well as independently.

* PLA is completing a small grant project with the NNLM Pacific Northwest Region (PNR) which included a sold-out preconference on health equity at the 2019 Midwinter Meeting and a Public Libraries Online blog post. An article for Public Libraries on this topic has been written, and both a webinar and podcast are planned for fall 2019.
* Three NNLM regional medical libraries funded Project Outcome (PO) to develop questions for health programming as a new service area. The questions were completed and made available to PO users in [April 2019](http://www.ala.org/news/member-news/2019/04/pla-nnlm-expand-strategic-partnership-through-consumer-health-programming-survey). PLA is also supporting all regional medical libraries in the NNLM to learn about these questions, so they can require use of them when they fund public libraries to do community programming.
* PLA staff met with NNLM leaders who presented multiple options for continued partnership with PLA during the 2019-2020 carryover funding period, when each regional medical library has funds to repurpose. Ideas included coordinated outreach to healthcare professional groups, creation of a health-related speakers bureau for public libraries, continued education based on the opioid project, new DigitalLearn modules on health-related topics, an internship initiative similar to PLA’s but focused on health projects and public *and medical* librarianship as careers, and traveling exhibits about precision medicine and genetics. PLA is considering these options but is likely to decline them, due to multiple factors. Primarily, funding is time-limited (September to April) and funds to sustain projects are unlikely, and the projects would occur during a very busy time for PLA, given the office move, reorganization and PLA 2020 Conference.
* PLA worked with the ALA Graphics office to create a new poster for purchase through the ALA catalog that focuses on the role of libraries in health, including a series of ten statements focusing on health literacy, using library computers and databases for health information, etc.
* The ALA Washington Office released a new *ALA Policy Perspectives* paper entitled “Healthier Communities: Libraries Improve Health Literacy, Access.” The paper outlines the myriad ways that libraries of all types, but particularly public libraries, support health and wellness, and included multiple examples from PLA initiatives. PLA staff provided input and content for the paper.
* PLA is continuing to support and expand its health-focused web site ([publiclibrary.health](https://publiclibrary.health/)) but discontinued its monthly health e-newsletter.

**PLA STRATEGIC GOAL LINK (check all that apply)**

TRANSFORMATION  LEADERSHIP  ADV. & AWARENESS  E.D.I.S.J.  ORG. EXCELLENCE