

Presentation Title: Disability Awareness-State-Wide Approach - Applying Data analytics and program development to addressing CRR and those with Disabilities

I. Formative Evaluation – Planning

Through three (3) years of data collection of fire fatality reports and home safety surveys, we saw trends indicating 25% of our fire victims were disabled, with 42% of the fires caused by smoking in the year 2020. By 2021 we already have 35% of the fire victims being disabled, with smoking still the #1 cause of these fatal fires. With more research into our data collection system, we determined the problem to be the lack of mobility of fire victims in smoking-related fires as the leading cause of fatal fires in Michigan.

A new partnership was formed with the Michigan Disability Network. We learned about the network and needs within their community and developed two (2) educational training videos. The first video is for Firefighters – this video discussed what MI Prevention has been doing across the state, trends our data is showing, types of disabilities, enhancing community relations with disability awareness, and the types of alarms available for this project. The second video is for Caregivers. This video educates Caregivers on fire behavior, how fire safety messages have changed over the years and why we are updating our message. This video will provide a firefighter perspective on what we see in our communities and how you can improve their risk.

II. Process Evaluation - Implementation.

After releasing both training videos, we established a statewide map with regions that identified a disability network manager and a MI Prevention advocate in each region. These advocate and disability network managers work together in their regions to install the disability alarms, smoke alarms, CO detectors and get the MI Prevention disability fire safety education out into the community.

Further, we developed a new home fire safety checklist specific to disability accessibility, a training video for the public, and an MI Prevention fire safety electronic device app for the public to educate themselves. We also created banners with disability fire safety messages and placed them in each Disability Network office in the state.

The disability program includes the following smoke alarms and equipment in our program: photoelectric and ionization smoke alarms, carbon monoxide CO detectors, strobe smoke alarms, Nest smoke and CO detectors, Sonic Alert Home Aware bed shakers, and a VIBE pager for specific disabilities. People wear the VIBE pager on the body, and Bluetooth connects to the bed shakers and signals the homeowner of alarms, doorbell, phone, and other connections.

Each MI Prevention advocate houses smoke alarms and equipment, promotes educational outreach, and coordinates the logistics for distributing alarms and devices in their region. The primary goal for each MI Prevention advocate and Disability Network manager is to develop a strong relationship, be trained by the MI Prevention advocate to install alarms properly and get the Disability Network manager up to speed on fire safety to be confident in the field.

The other goal is for each MI Prevention advocate is to introduce the Disability Network manager to network with the proper community Fire Chief where the homeowner lives. This improves community communication and further connects fire departments with homeowners on an improved level.

We also prepared a statewide MI Prevention Disability Map. We placed it on our webpage so fire departments can call the MI Prevention advocate directly to obtain alarms for their community homeowners. In addition, MI Prevention continues to expand relationships by connecting MI Prevention advocates with 15 regional disability network managers to coordinate local fire departments visiting and installing smoke alarms and alerting equipment in the homes of those experiencing disabilities.

MI Prevention is pleased to see over 400 fire departments statewide step forward to be part of this fire safety outreach and solution in our communities. Across the state, distributed the following:

- 6179 Smoke Alarms
- 1008 CO's
- 210 Nest
- 88 Strobe
- 647 Bed shaker
- 35 Vibes

II. Impact Evaluation – Short-Term Results

We have received statewide support from more public and private organizations than anticipated. We have gained over 50 partnerships in a three (3)-month period that are not fire organizations. Our regional MI Prevention advocates network has received attention from physical therapists, adult care centers, disability organizations, community centers, real estate agents, and builders.

Further, our relationship with the Sonic Alert company that makes the bed shaker alarm we are installing has been a full supporter, developing “installation troubleshooting” videos supported on our electronic device app. In addition, Sonic Alert has presented at MI Prevention virtual events to educate the fire service on installing and optimizing their product. They identified and dedicated a specialist from their company with a direct line for the fire service with questions from the field during a home fire safety visit.

III. Outcome Evaluation – Long-Term Results

As of March 24, 2021, Michigan has experienced 34 fire deaths. Unfortunately, 35% of the 34 fire deaths involve a person experiencing a disability. Therefore, we are aggressively targeting methods and approaches to reduce fire fatalities in the disability community. For example, a behavioral change in how people escape their homes and more working smoke alarms and devices with early detection will reduce fire fatalities, even during a pandemic. Our main goal is to provide the right smoke alarm or equipment, so the person experiencing the disability receives early notification of a fire, allowing time for an escape.