**Network Activities Update and NNIP Stewardship**

Thursday morning 9:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.

Last year’s [assessment of the NNIP network](http://www.aspeninstitute.org/sites/default/files/content/upload/NNIPAssessment_final_2014-Auspos.pdf) revealed that NNIP is valued by its partners for its strength as a peer-learning network and its success at building a community of practice. The assessment did identify several areas where the network could improve:

* Increase participation in network activities, particularly by newer partners, and existing partners with new staff and junior staff
* Increase influence on national and local policy
* Increase broad support for community information systems

In this session, Kathy will begin with an update on network activities and plans for 2016, including those to build and strengthen local capacity, as well as the latter two goals listed above from the assessment (25 minutes with discussion).

One of the strengths that the assessment identified was that the planning and development of network activities was not top-down and it involves the whole partnership. This means that NNIP can adapt as the environment changes, new challenges appear, or opportunities present themselves. Another strength is that the network does not rely on only NNIPHQ to make connections; partners often interact between meetings. In fact, 3 out of 5 partner staff members who responded to the survey during the assessment said they had direct contact with another partner outside of a meeting at least a few times per year. The NNIP Executive Committee and NNIPHQ are extremely pleased with the results of the assessment and want to continue to work with partners to build a strong peer network.

In the second half of this session, Bob Gradeck from Pittsburgh and Sheila Martin from Portland, both members of the NNIP Executive Committee, will describe what motivates their network participation and outline potential benefits to the network from increased participation and stewardship. Bob and Sheila will also review the range of ways partner staff can participate in the network and additional opportunities for stewardship (20 minutes).

Many partner staff shared what they see as the value of NNIP in the assessment--this information is important to help shape network activities going forward. We have asked several partners to describe the value of their participation in the network for themselves and their organization (10-15 minutes).

**Discussion:** (20 minutes)

* Are there ways the Executive Committee or NNIPHQ can help increase your ability to connect to other partners? At meetings? Between meetings?
  + What has worked, and why?
    - Consider both formal (e.g. cross-site projects) and informal.
  + What are some obstacles to expanding cross-partner relationships?
* How do you introduce your own new staff to NNIP?
* How can your organization create and maintain institutional relationships with NNIP to handle departures of key staff members?
* What NNIP activities do you see as most valuable to your organization?
* How has NNIP helped you connect to national organizations and initiatives?
* If you are a new to NNIP meetings or are a newer partner, are there things we could do differently or improve that would increase your sense of connectedness to the network?