Let's Stay Connected: Building a Cannabis Network

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Why A Cannabis Network?

- We all benefit when we share information and ideas.
- Especially in cannabis, where research, policy, and healthcare practice are scrambling to keep up with changing laws.
Existing Collaborative Efforts I

- **Rick Garza**
  - Director, Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board

- The Regulator’s Roundtable. Rick has been gathering state regulators—from recreational and medical states nationwide—to share experiences and develop best practices.

- Within the state of Washington, he has convened working groups that include regulators, public health professionals, and the cannabis industry.
Existing Collaborative Efforts II

- **Gillian Schauer**
  - Founder, Multi-State Collaborative on Cannabis and Public Health
  - Senior Consultant to NIDA and CDC

The Multi-State Collaborative brings state health officials and public health regulatory contacts from adult use states together to share lessons learned, discuss challenges, and work together on common issues.

As part of that work, Gillian conducts comprehensive quarterly policy tracking for the ten adult use states, and synthesizes cross state information as needed for the group.

Gillian has also led an effort by all HHS agencies and CSTE to identify and improve key cannabis surveillance indicators for population based surveys.
Existing Collaborative Efforts III

- Rebecca Jesseman
  - Policy Director at Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction

- CCSA is developing a “Cannabis Policy Research Hub, with the intention of supporting collaboration and information sharing.

- One of the first resources will be a searchable online database of researchers and research projects in the field.

- RJesseman@ccsa.ca
Issues to Consider as we think about Building a Network

- Funding has been a major barrier to existing efforts.
- We don’t want to undermine existing efforts.
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- With that in mind, can we create a network of people from this Summit (or who wish they were here) who want to stay connected?
Formal vs. Informal Networks

- Rick & Gillian’s collaborative efforts speak to the power of collaboration.
- Their groups are formal, and have specific, large-scale goals.
- Without dedicated people/time/funding we probably can’t do this.
- Perhaps we could create an informal network using social media or other free online tools.
Possible Example: Anti-Racism Organizing in the Suburbs

- In 2017 Boston non-profit Community Change Inc. sponsored a gathering to bring together suburban groups working for racial justice.

- We wanted to stay connected, expand our numbers.

- We settled on:
  - a closed/moderated facebook group for informal sharing of events and information
  - a Google Group for sharing documents
What Would A Collaborative Network Look Like for us?
Questions

- What would the goals of a collaborative network be?
- How formal or informal should/can it be?
- Will it be open to all who are interested?
- Are free/low maintenance efforts viable?
- What platform/s would we use?
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