

1.1 STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO CREATING A STEERING COMMITTEE

This guide provides practical steps for establishing a steering committee to lead Healthy Brain Community efforts. It can be used by a lead organization, coalition, or community champion to build a cross-sector group that plans, implements, and sustains toolkit activities.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY A LEAD ORGANIZATION OR CONVENER

- Select the organization or individual who will convene the committee (Tool 1.2), e.g., public health, senior services, a community coalition, library, or clinic.
- Define the convener's responsibilities: scheduling, communication, meeting facilitation, and documentation.
- Confirm administrative support for basic coordination tasks (emails, meeting space/virtual platform, notes).

STEP 2: CLARIFY THE STEERING COMMITTEE PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- Write a short purpose statement (1–2 sentences) that explains what the committee will do (Tool 1.2).
- Define the initial scope for the first 6–12 months (e.g., launch community education, start a dementia support group, build dementia-friendly practices).
- Set a few guiding principles (equity, inclusion, confidentiality where needed, collaboration).

STEP 3: DECIDE ON COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND ROLES

- Choose a simple structure appropriate for your community (Tool 1.3) chair/co-chair, coordinator, evaluation lead, outreach lead.
- Decide whether the committee will be formal (charter, bylaws) or informal (role descriptions and meeting norms).
- Plan for shared leadership - one person may fill multiple roles in small communities.

STEP 4: MAP AND RECRUIT CROSS-SECTOR PARTNERS

- List the sectors that should be represented (Tools 1.4 and 1.5) recommended: public health, senior services, healthcare, EMS/first responders, libraries, faith/civic groups, local government, community organizations, and caregivers.
- Identify 1–2 trusted organizations or leaders per sector and send a clear invitation.
- Include people with lived experience (caregivers, people living with early-stage dementia, or advocates) when appropriate.

STEP 5: PREPARE AN INVITATION AND RECRUITMENT MESSAGE

- Explain the purpose, time commitment, meeting frequency, and expected contributions (Tool 1.2).
- Share what partners gain: coordinated action, shared resources, community impact, and alignment with state/national priorities.
- Provide a simple way to respond (email/phone) and a date for the first meeting.

STEP 6: CONVENE THE FIRST MEETING

- Use the first meeting to build relationships and agree on how the group will work together.
- Recommended agenda: introductions (Tool 1.6), identification of priorities (Tool 2.4), community needs assessment (Tool 2.1), committee purpose, roles, and next steps (Tool 1.3).
- End with clear action items and a confirmed next meeting date.

STEP 7: ESTABLISH OPERATING NORMS (GROUND RULES)

- Co-develop meeting norms (Tool 1.2): respectful communication, shared airtime, staying on agenda, confidentiality when discussing sensitive topics.
- Confirm how decisions will be made (consensus, majority vote, or advisory recommendations).
- Decide how meeting notes, action items, and documents will be shared.

STEP 8: CREATE A 6–12 MONTH WORK PLAN

- Conduct/Review assessment findings (Component 2) to choose priority focus areas.
- Select 1–3 achievable initiatives to start (select from components 4 – 7).
- Use Tool 1.2 to assign leads, timelines, and resources.
- Identify quick wins (e.g., one awareness event, one training, one resource campaign).

STEP 9: HOLD REGULAR MEETINGS AND TRACK PROGRESS

- Meet consistently (monthly or every other month is common).
- Use a standard agenda format (Tool 1.6): updates, problem-solving, decisions, action items.
- Track accomplishments and participation using Tool 1.7.

STEP 10: COMMUNICATE, EXPAND, AND SUSTAIN

- Share updates with partners and the community (newsletters, local media, social media, partner channels).
- Recruit additional partners as new needs emerge (schools, employers, tribal partners, transportation, behavioral health).
- Sustainability Plan: integrate efforts into existing systems, seek funding/in-kind support, and rotate leadership roles (Tool 8.6).

RECOMMENDED STEERING COMMITTEE DELIVERABLES (OPTIONAL)

- Steering Committee roster and contact list
- Purpose statement and scope (6–12 months)
- Role assignments (chair/co-chair, coordinator, outreach lead, evaluation lead)
- Meeting schedule and standard agenda template
- 6–12-month work plan (with 1–3 priority initiatives)
- Documentation plan (notes, action items, and progress tracking)

TOOLS THAT SUPPORT THIS PROCESS

- 1.1 Steering Committee Step-by-Step Guide
- 1.2 Steering Committee Companion Templates
- 1.3 Steering Committee Roles Template
- 1.4 Partner Engagement Checklist
- 1.5 Partner Engagement Planning Template
- 1.6 Steering Committee Agenda Template
- 1.7 Steering Committee Meeting Log
- Component 2 Community Readiness & Assessment
- 8.6 Sustainability Toolkit