

CORE El Centro Data Dream Project Report

This document is a summation of a Data Dream project presented by Madeleine Gianforte on behalf of CORE El Centro at Data Day 2018. The Data Dream contest is a shark tank type event, introduced at the 2017 Data Day. Representatives of three local nonprofits stand up in the room of data fans in Milwaukee and present a short description of the important work they do, and then discuss a way in which better data could improve their work. Madeleine Gianforte was the first of two winners of the Data Dream contest in 2018.

Data You Can Use is a nonprofit in Milwaukee that serves as a data intermediary, established in 2016 to serve Milwaukee nonprofits and local funders in using data to address community problems and build community solutions. We are a diverse group of local professionals who help people access data and make it useful in improving neighborhoods. We work with clients to ask the rights questions to get the right data, put it into a local context, present it visually and put it to work in addressing important issues.

In the original application to be a data dreamer, CORE wrote:

With this data, we'd be able to show our work's impact, leading to more funding and ability to serve more people who ordinarily would not have access to natural healing. It could influence how healthcare is delivered in low-income communities.

In early discussions between CORE El Centro and Data You Can Use staff, and by referencing CORE's data on client visits and usage of the services and classes, the project became more defined, and topics of priority were determined. There was also a request for CORE staff to have more exposure to qualitative data methods and rationale.

The process identified for this project was focus groups for high-usage clients defined as those who have had 100+ visits to CORE El Centro within the past 10 years. The questions were designed to solicit participants' opinions about their relationship with CORE, barriers to receiving services, use of integrated health services¹, and movement classes.

Methodology

This Data Dream project became an opportunity for CORE to hear back from clientele who had 100 or more visits to CORE El Centro during the past 10 years using a systematic inquiry process to invite feedback on what is appealing to clients, and what might be improved. Staff of CORE had previously collected testimonials from clients, primarily of attendees who have a relationship with their teacher or care-provider. These testimonials were used for communications pieces and grant applications

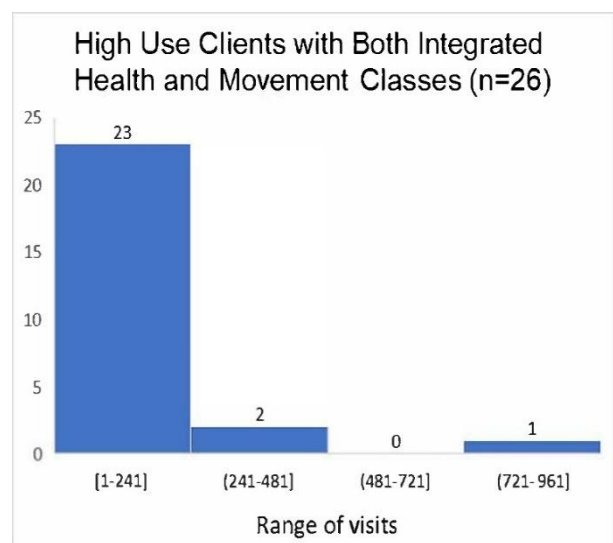
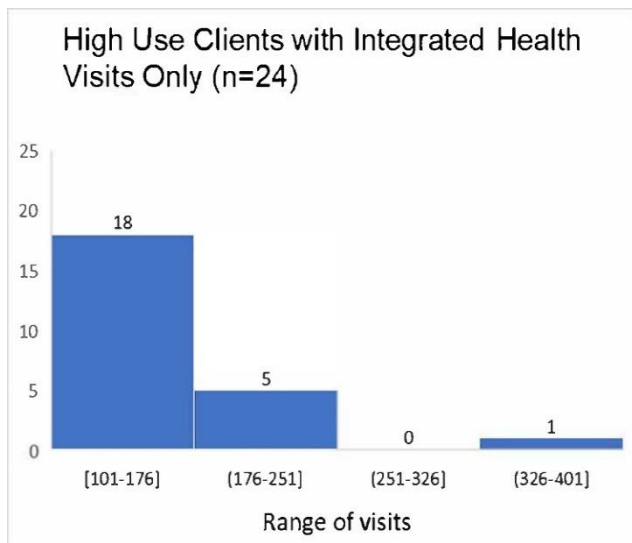
¹ Integrative health services are direct services between a provider and client, and include acupuncture, massage therapy, craniosacral therapy, reiki, and energy work. Movement classes include yoga, zumba, danza consciente and Nia.

Testimonials were shared with Data You Can Use and reviewed as a possible source for qualitative data. Testimonials were in both English and Spanish and varied in length. This preliminary review found that the testimonials did not provide feedback regarding recommendations or suggestions in areas where CORE could improve. Testimonials were frequently collected by CORE staff with the express purpose of using for communications by the agency. In the past, CORE El Centro hadn't collected qualitative feedback in a method that would invite clients to give both positive feedback and guidance on where they can improve their services.

CORE had a special interest in learning from clients who have had a long-term relationship with the agency. CORE provided data from 2008-2018, including the number and type of patient visits. Analysis by Data You Can Use found that during that ten-year period, the number of client visits ranged from one to 947. Based on the distribution, "high-use clients" were defined as those who visited over 100 times in the past ten years. Visits could include either integrated health services (reiki, acupuncture, massage), or movement classes (yoga, dance).

Next, CORE El Centro staff provided a list of clients who attended 100 or more integrated health services. This group of individuals were referenced as the 100+ user group. The original list included a total of 55 distinct clients. The list was vetted to remove staff, leading to 50 potential clients to invite to participate in the focus groups.

In exploring the data, it was discovered that within the group of 50 clients, there was a nearly even split between clients who used integrated health services only (n=24) and those who used integrated health and movement classes (n=26). The distribution of the data provides the opportunity for a "naturally occurring experiment," comparing those who participated in integrated health services alone and those who participated in both the integrated health and movement services. The following charts illustrate the distribution of the number of visits in the two groups.



Based on the identification of outliers in the histogram, the focus was placed on people with between 100 to 175 integrated health visits; and 1 to 241 movement classes. Forty-one clients were identified by the data as candidates for the focus groups. A final review of the list to check for individuals known by CORE staff to have moved, or to be otherwise unavailable led to a potential list of 37 people to invite to the focus groups.

Table 1: Clients with 100+ visits, (n= 50)

	Integrated Health only	Integrated Health and Movement classes
English preference	10	13
Spanish preference	9	9
Conversant in both English and Spanish	5	4

Finally, although the group explored the idea of having a focus group for the clients who use integrated health services only, and another for clients who use both integrated health and movement classes, because of the distribution in language preference, focus groups were arranged according to language preference.

Barb Wesson, Data Manager served as project liaison to involve CORE’s staff in deciding priorities for questions to ask these clients. Topics of most interest to the staff were: client experience at CORE El Centro, reasons for high engagement, and opportunities for improvement. The questions used in the focus groups are included in the appendices of this document.

Recruitment of the 100+ user group was done by sending a postcard to the home address listed for each client, in the preferred language for that client. Follow up phone-calls were made by the bilingual front desk team at CORE. Participants were informed that food and childcare would be available and that they would receive a pass to attend free classes for their participation. Although nine participants expressed an interest, seven actually participated.

Two focus groups were held on April 23rd, 2019, in the Clock Shadow Creamery building where CORE El Centro is located, at 3:30 PM for English speakers and 5:30 PM for Spanish speakers. Attendees checked in at the front desk, and then went to an upstairs conference room for a more neutral setting in which to speak to the facilitators, who were staff of Data You Can Use. There were three attendees at the English language focus group, and four attendees in the Spanish language focus group. No staff of CORE participated in the facilitation of the focus groups. Attendees were given dinner during the focus group, offered childcare during the discussion and afterwards received a one-month movement pass.

Afterwards, Spanish language notes were translated into English in order to better recognize themes from both focus groups. Themes were agreed upon by the team of focus group facilitators and reviewed by CORE El Centro staff before inclusion in this document.

Who are the high-volume users?

The reason that these clients come to CORE El Centro initially is to help with pain. In particular pain in the back and neck were in the top five complaints from two separate lists of why clients come to CORE El Centro. Acupuncture, massage and Reiki are the most highly used services by these clients.

ZIP code 53215 is the most common ZIP code of residence for this group, and for clients overall. Until recently in CORE's history, the most common ZIP code has been 53204.

What did focus group participants have to say?

Participants appreciate the value of CORE El Centro

The **staff at CORE El Centro** is perceived as welcoming, caring and compassionate. By creating a welcoming environment, CORE has facilitated development of long-lasting relationships among staff and participants, considering them as part of their own family.

"They [staff] are CORE's greatest asset...warm, compassionate and caring."

"Everyone at CORE is outstanding."

"CORE is like a second family to me...we support each other."

"La gente es muy amable... siempre son positivos con toda la gente... te reciben bien."
(*"People are very friendly... they are always positive with everyone...they are welcoming."*)

"Tuve una crisis. Vine muy mal. Como me trataban a mí, me sentí mejor. Se preocuparon mucho por mí, cuidan mucho de mi, traigo a mi mama, y son muy atentos. Son profesionales, pero te hacen sentir feliz."

(*"I had a crisis. I came in bad shape. They treated me well, and I felt better. They had concern and caretaking for me, I've brought my mother and they're so caring. They are professionals, but they also make you feel happy."*)

According to participants, CORE has had a **positive impact on clients' health, even beyond the clinic**. Participants reported experiencing improvements in their overall health after engaging with CORE. The support that people received along their healing journey for ailments including scoliosis, back pain and cancer, was lauded. In addition, benefits from engaging with CORE El Centro extend beyond direct physical improvements. Participants reported an improvement in the way they managed their frustrations at home and work, and referenced reduced stress and improved positivity.

"Uno siente la diferencia, mejora la salud. En casa, en el trabajo cambia hasta el humor de uno. Se hace la actitud más positiva. Duerme mejor y menos frustrado."

(*"One feels the difference, health improves. At home, at work your mood changes. There is more positive attitude. I sleep better and less frustrated."*)

"Acupuncture takes the stress away and I feel so relaxed..."

Participants identified barriers to participation

The lack of available parking at CORE was identified as a common barrier. Participants expressed parking as an issue as spaces are limited.

“Parking is an issue in this area”

“Es más difícil estacionarse aquí. Antes era más fácil. Me estaciono en McDonalds.”
(*“It is more difficult to park here. Before it used to be easier. I park at McDonalds.”*)

Some participants were **unsure of where to find information on classes and other services** offered by CORE.

“I’m not sure what they offer. Is that information on a paper?”

Scheduling conflicts were among the most common barriers mentioned by participants. Those who work during the day had trouble making it to classes.

“Yo trabajo de las 6:00 hasta las 3:00, y vivo lejos. No hay nada de horarios en ese tiempo”
(*“I work from 6:00 to 3:00, and live far. There are no classes that fit my schedule.”*)

Recommendations from attendees

Offer more class times weekends and evenings to accommodate individuals who work during the day.

“People who work in the day don’t have time to come”

“Hace mucho rato [que no vengo]. Trabajo en [otra ciudad] y vivo en el Northside”
(*“It’s been a while since I’ve come. I work in [other city] and I live on the Northside.”*)

Increase the **variety of classes and instructors**. Some participants mentioned attending cooking and herbalism classes in the past which they enjoyed. They suggested offering more classes that include other aspects of health such as cooking and tips for grocery shopping. Participants noted that bilingual instructors allow for participants to connect more authentically.

“Clases de cocina, son muy motivantes.”
(*“Cooking classes, they are very motivating.”*)

“Ojalá encuentren más terapeutas. Pueden hacer acupuntura comunitaria otra vez. ¡No era tan relajante, pero si servía!”
(*“I hope they find more therapists. They could do community acupuncture again. It wasn’t as relaxing, but it did help!”*)

“Clases de como leer los labels, o como comprar sin gluten. No explican esa parte.”
(*“[They could offer] a class about reading labels, or how to purchase gluten free food. They don’t explain that part.”*)

“No entendía mucho inglés, pero hice lo que hicieron las otras [personas]”
(*“I didn’t understand much English, but I did what everyone else was doing.”*)

Partner with other local organizations in the community. Participants recommended partnering with other organizations to offer courses at other locations in the community. In addition, engaging with other community agencies and **utilizing neighborhood resources** can be helpful for more referrals.

“Use neighborhood resources”

Offer incentives for bringing friends to the movement classes. According to participants, attending classes with a friend or companion can be more engaging.

“...It works if you have a friend”

“could a class involve both mothers and children...”

Improve advertisement for classes. This may involve reviewing where the current calendars and schedules are available (e.g. website access, paper sources, social media, etc.). One suggestion was to have paper schedules at the front desk with times and descriptions. Reconsider where the materials are currently stationed and if there are other adjustments that could be made such as other display options, size, etc.

“better advertisement...[information] at front desk on a frame that is easy to read with times and descriptions”

Continue to make calls for schedule openings. Establishing this type of communication with existing clients was recommended especially when there are openings for services.

“Hace ocho meses que no me llaman”, “que no se olviden de la gente.”
(“It’s been eight months that they (CORE) haven’t call me”, “don’t forget about the people.”)

“Call existing patients”

“CORE calls when there are some openings”

How can this be used going forward?

It is the expressed intent of CORE staff to listen to client feedback in order to improve programs and understand what is working well. In addition to suggestions from the clients on topics that were asked about additional topics came up which may inform program changes.

Some ideas for how to continue using this client feedback going forward include:

- **Reflect on who is being served.** In the Data Dream application, staff wrote: *“We are creating a welcoming place where our immigrant community can feel safe enough to heal.”*
In one focus group, a participant asked regarding movement classes, *“is there a gender bias, men don’t want to come?”*
CORE may want to focus outreach to reflect the existing user base, or make targeted efforts to expand the population being served.
- **Develop goals for movement classes.** According to staff of CORE El Centro, the integrative health services program has a set of descriptive goals, while the movement program does not. To make decisions on how to practically apply client feedback for movement classes, consider first identifying program goals. Client ideas in this document may be useful for understanding how users would like to see the program change.
- **Pay attention to neighborhood development, especially as it affects parking.** Given that clients identified parking as a barrier, and recommended building partnerships with other agencies, explore sharing existing parking with local partners. Plan ahead when construction will be obstructing parking spaces. On the back of the printed class schedule, meter parking (with times), and free parking nearby could be indicated. Consider staff parking in a designated area if that is not the case.
- **Direct further client feedback methods and research.** Moving forward, this report can be used as a reference document. For instance, it may be of interest to give a survey on expanded classes and/or instructors to a broader audience at CORE.
- **Spread the message.** In the Data Dream application, CORE staff wrote, *“Our challenge is showing our work’s impact to healthcare systems and funders.”* This document and the words of the clients can be shared with partners, funders, and clients when discussing the influence CORE has in the community.

This is not meant to be a complete list of uses for this work.

Acknowledgements

Barb Wesson, Data Manager, served as project liaison and kept CORE staff involved and defined the priorities.

Pat Bogenschuetz, Development Director, who submitted the initial application.

Madeleine Gianeforte, CORE El Centro Executive Director made the initial pitch for the Data Dream at Data Day 2018.

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Attendees of the focus groups, who shared honest feedback with us: **Iris Accosta Alvarez, Erika Blija, Elvira Garcia, Guisela Dominguez, Anita Facchini, Helen Kenney, Barbara Ramos.**

Carrie Koss Vallejo, Gerardo Mares and Katie Pritchard of Data You Can use conducted the focus groups and wrote the report.

Appendix:

Focus Group Format and Questions

Good afternoon. Thank you very much for being here today. My name is [...] and I'm from a small organization called Data You Can Use. We are partnering with the people at CORE el Centro to look at some of the work they are doing and how it is helping to meet the needs of the people who come here. We believe the best way to do that is to hear from the people who use the services. You were chosen because you have come to CORE and you keep coming back. We want to learn from you what you like and what might be better.

The way we will have the discussion is sometimes called a focus group. That means that we will want to hear from everyone and that the way everyone responds is right for them. We want you to be as candid as possible. There are no right or wrong answers. We will write a summary of the discussion and will be taking notes as we talk. We will list the names of the people who participated but we will NOT connect your name with your comments. Your remarks will be confidential. Does anyone have any questions about that?

If there are any questions that make you uncomfortable or you do not want to answer, just say so. You do not have to answer. Your participation is voluntary and nothing you say will affect your access to services in any way.

You will receive a small gift of a pass for a free movement class to thank you for your time. I will also leave my contact information with you in case you think of something afterwards that you would like to add to the conversation.

The focus group will take about an hour and we will begin with a round of questions going around the table so everyone gets a chance to talk. As we move on, it will be more of a conversation and I will moderate to make sure we get to all the questions and that we hear from everyone. Are there any questions before we start? Great. Let's begin.

Questions

- A. First we're going to talk about **you** (questions for everyone in round robin format)
 1. Please tell us your first name and how long you have been coming to CORE el Centro?
 2. How did you learn about this place?
 3. Can you tell us what kind of services you get here?

- B. Now let's talk about the different services and programs at CORE(start to build conversation, not in a circle)
1. What is it that you like most about coming here? Probe: Can you say more about that?
- C. Let's talk first about the **health services**? Examples (Reiki, Acupuncture, and). [name] you mentioned that you like [health services] what is it you like about [***] repeat a few times
- D. And you know CORE also offers **movement classes** let's talk about these now Examples (Yoga, Zumba, and)
1. Have any of you participated in any of those? Can you talk about that?
Probe: How did they work out for you? (Listen to how the movement classes have helped)
 2. If you don't exercise here are there other places you go to participate in movement classes?
 3. Would you recommend the classes at CORE to others? [why or why not]
- E. Now, let's hear from those who **haven't participated in any movement classes**. [***]
1. Did you know these classes were available to you?
 2. Have you ever considered trying one?
 3. What do you think might make it easier for you to participate in a movement class?

This has been really helpful. And it sounds like the services at CORE have been really helpful to you! But before we finish, we want to ask if there are some things that CORE could do differently, especially to encourage people to participate in the movement classes. I'd like to give everyone a chance to respond to that so let's go around one more time and have everyone answer that question.

1. What could CORE do to get more people to participate in the movement classes?

Thank you very much for your time today. Thanks again for joining us today and for sharing your ideas.