NPHPSP
NATIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH PERFORMANCE STANDARDS PROGRAM
STRENGTHENING SYSTEMS, IMPROVING THE PUBLIC’S HEALTH

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support
Division of Public Health Performance Improvement
Health Department and Systems Development Branch
Introduction
The National Public Health Performance Standards (NPHPS) instruments help users answer questions such as, “How well are we ensuring that the essential public health services are being provided in our system?” and with the governance instrument, “How can we as a governing body better ensure that we are contributing as much as possible to the essential public health services being met in our jurisdiction?” This discussion helps identify strengths and weaknesses within the governing body, and ways that public health services can be more effectively coordinated. In addition, the results from this Assessment provide a better understanding of the governing body’s performance in key areas. This information helps decision makers make more effective policy, program, and resource decisions to improve the public’s health.

Understanding the Benefits of Conducting the Assessment
The NPHPS is a valuable tool in identifying areas for system improvement, strengthening state and local partnerships, and assuring that a strong system is in place for effective response to everyday public health issues as well as public health emergencies. NPHPS Governance Assessment users report numerous benefits, including:

- Identifying the governing body’s strengths and weaknesses;
- Setting a “gold standard” to which governing bodies can aspire;
- Building awareness of the range of governing body responsibilities; and
- Informing the strategic planning process;
- Informing policy development activities.

Four Key Concepts
There are four key concepts that provide a framework for the NPHPS:

1. The standards are designed around the Ten Essential Public Health Services. The use of the essential services assures that the standards cover the range of public health action needed at all levels.
2. The governance tool focuses on the individual governing body. However, the state and local standards focus on the overall public health system. A public health system includes all public, private, and voluntary organizations that contribute to public health activities within a given area. This ensures that the contributions of all organizations are recognized in assessing the provision of essential public health services.
3. The standards describe an optimal level of performance rather than provide minimum expectations. This ensures that the standards may be used for continuous quality improvement.
4. The standards are intended to support a process of quality improvement. System partners and governing bodies should use the assessment process and the performance standards results as a guide for learning about public health activities throughout the system and determining how to make improvements.
Defining Public Health

The mission of public health is to fulfill society's desire to create conditions so that people can be healthy. Public health includes the activities that society undertakes to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy. These include organized community efforts to prevent, identify, and counter threats to the health of the public. Public health is:

- the science and the art of preventing disease, prolonging life, and promoting physical health and mental health and efficiency through organized community efforts toward a sanitary environment;
- the control of community infections; the education of the individual in principles of personal hygiene;
- the organization of medical and nursing service for the early diagnosis and treatment of disease; and
- the development of the social machinery to ensure to every individual in the community a standard of living adequate for the maintenance of health.


The Governance Functions

During initial development of the NPHPS tools in 1999, five interlocking functions of governing entities were identified by a working group. They have remained the foundation of thinking about how governing entities work. With this updated version of the NPHPS governance tool, the functions have been modernized to remain current with research in the fields of governance and public health. The initial five functions have been more clearly defined, and one additional function (oversight) has been strengthened. The governance functions are an underlying concept in this tool.

Depending upon its legal position, not all governing entities are responsible for all functions to the same extent. However, all governing entities are responsible for some aspects of each function. No one function is more important than another.
Definitions of the Six Governance Functions

- **Policy Development:** Contribute to the development of policies that protect, promote, and improve public health while ensuring that the department and its components remain consistent with the laws and rules (local, state, and federal) that it is subject to.

- **Resource Stewardship:** Assure the availability of adequate resources (legal, financial, human, technological, and material) to perform essential public health services.

- **Legal Authority:** Understand the legal authority, roles, responsibilities, obligations, and functions of the governing entity, health officer, and department staff.

- **Partner Engagement:** Build and maintain community partnerships to ensure the collaboration of all relevant stakeholders in promoting and protecting the community’s health.

- **Continuous Improvement:** Routinely evaluate, monitor, and set measurable outcomes for improving community health status and the health department’s/governing entity’s own ability to meet its responsibilities.

- **Oversight:** Assume ultimate responsibility for public health performance in the community by providing necessary leadership and guidance in order to support the health department in achieving measurable outcomes.

**Link to Public Health Accreditation**

This Governance Assessment is a useful tool for the governing entity to complete while their public health department is preparing for public health accreditation from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). While the public health accreditation process is designed to only accredit the public health department using pre-determined standards, the Governance Assessment is a method for the governing entity to also measure its performance against a set of optimal standards.

Domains 1-10 of the PHAB Standards and Measures Version 1.0 are referenced in the relevant Essential Public Health Service chapters of this document. Domain 11, Maintain Administrative and Management Capacity, has two standards for health departments seeking accreditation:

11.1 Develop and Maintain an Operational Infrastructure to Support the Performance of Public Health Functions

11.2 Establish Effective Financial Management Systems

Domain 12 of the Standards focuses on the relationship between a health department and its governing entity. A governing entity that completes the NPHPS assessment will better understand how it supports the health department and where gaps may lie. This can help a
health department and its governing entity can improve their ability to serve the public as a member of the public health system as they work towards accreditation.

Domain 12, Maintain Capacity to Engage the Public Health Governing Entity, has three Standards:

12.1 Maintain current operational definitions and statements of the public health roles, responsibilities, and authorities

12.2 Provide information to the governing entity regarding public health and the official responsibilities of the health department and of the governing entity

12.3 Encourage the governing entity’s engagement in the public health department’s overall obligations and responsibilities

**Governance Assessment Format**

Each essential service chapter in this document has three pages.

**Page 1: Essential Service Definition**
The text on this page includes the essential service description and key definitions. Other key terms that are underlined but not defined on the page can be found in the glossary.

**Page 2: Public Health Department and Public Health Governing Entity Responsibilities**
This first section of this page describes the public health department’s responsibilities as they relate to the Public Health Accreditation Board’s (PHAB) standards for the essential service. A public health department applying for accreditation will need to demonstrate how they meet each of these standards. The public health governing entity should provide oversight and support as the public health department works to meet these standards. More details about public health department responsibilities can be found in PHAB Standards and Measures Version 1.0 at www.phaboard.org.

Also on page 2 of each essential service chapter is the public health governing entity model standard. This section describes the ideal activities that public health governing entities should be undertaking to support and oversee the public health department. While public health governing entities may not see themselves reflected in all activities listed, all public health governing entities should see themselves reflected in some activities.

**Page 3: Public Health Governing Entity Assessment Questions**
Each public health governing entity model standard is measured through 3-8 assessment questions, listed on the third page of the essential service chapter. Additional key definitions are on this page as well. The governing entity should review the model standard on the second page and then use the assessment questions on the third page to determine how well they are meeting the model standard. The PHAB standards, the essential service text, and the key definitions provide additional context.

Scoring options for the assessment questions are discussed on the next page.
There are six response options to each question:

- **Not applicable**: This activity is not legally part of this governing entity’s responsibilities; it is outside the public health governing entity’s mandate to participate in this activity. This option should ONLY be selected if the governing entity has no authority to complete a particular assessment activity. If the governing entity has evidence that another entity has authority over a particular activity, it should work with the other authoritative entity to measure their activity level to the extent possible.

- **No activity (0% of the activity is being met)**: The governing entity does not participate in this activity at all, but does have the legal authority.

- **Minimal (1-25% of the activity is being met)**: The governing entity provides limited activity, and there is opportunity for substantial improvement.

- **Moderate (26-50% of the activity is being met)**: The governing entity somewhat participates in this activity, and there is opportunity for greater improvement.

- **Significant (51-75% of the activity is being met)**: The governing entity participates a great deal in this activity, and there is opportunity for minor improvement.

- **Optimal (76-100% of the activity is being met)**: The governing entity is doing absolutely everything possible for this activity under its legal authority, and there is no need for improvement.
Essential Service 1:  
Monitor Health Status to Identify Community Health Problems

What’s going on in our community?  
Do we know how healthy we are?

This service includes:

- Accurate, periodic assessment of the community’s health status, including:
  - Identification of health risks, determinants of health, and determination of health service needs;
  - Attention to the vital statistics and health status indicators of groups that are at higher risk than the total population; and
  - Identification of community assets that support the public health system in promoting health and improving quality of life.
- Utilization of appropriate methods and technology, such as geographic information systems (GIS), to interpret and communicate data to diverse audiences.
- Collaboration among all public health system components, including private providers and health benefit plans, to establish and use population health registries, such as disease or immunization registries.

Key definitions:

**Community Health Assessment**
Community health assessment is a systematic examination of the health status indicators for a given population that is used to identify key problems and assets in a community.

**Public Health System**
The public health system is the constellation of governmental and nongovernmental organizations that contribute to the performance of essential public health services for a defined community or population.
Public Health Department Responsibilities
The following are the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards for this essential service. A public health department applying for accreditation will have to demonstrate to PHAB how the department meets these standards. The public health governing entity should provide oversight and support efforts as the health department works to meet these standards.

Domain 1: Conduct and disseminate assessments focused on population health status and public health issues facing the community.

1.1 Participate in or conduct a collaborative process resulting in a comprehensive Community Health Assessment;
1.2 Collect and maintain reliable, comparable, and valid data that provide information on conditions of public health importance and on the health status of the population;
1.3 Analyze public health data to identify trends in health problems, environmental public health hazards, and social and economic factors that affect the public’s health; and
1.4 Provide and use the results of health data analysis to develop recommendations regarding public health policy, processes, programs, or interventions.

Public Health Governing Entity Model Standard
The public health governing entity provides oversight and support to assure that a collaborative and effective community health assessment process is in place. A governing entity’s members may participate directly in a community health assessment. Many entities, including but not limited to the public health agency, should contribute to the collection and monitoring of health data. To accomplish this, the public health governing entity:

- Recommends a budget for public health agency resources to be used for a community health assessment;
- Encourages active collaboration among all public health system stakeholder organizations involved in collecting, analyzing, and disseminating community health assessment data;
- Reviews progress of a regular, quality community health assessment that includes identification of health risks, determinants of health, health needs, and community assets for all citizens in the jurisdiction; and
- Uses information and evidence from multiple reports on the jurisdiction’s health to set priorities and measurable outcomes for improving community health status.

Key definition:
Stakeholder organizations
Another term for partners or any persons, agencies, or organizations that could have an investment in the health of the people in the jurisdiction. These stakeholders may include, but are not limited to, businesses, hospitals, physician offices, pharmacists, youth groups, etc.
At what level does the governing entity...

1.a. Advocate for policies that define a community health assessment process?

1.b. Encourage the public health department to actively collaborate with all public health system stakeholder organizations on a community health assessment?

1.c. Budget for public health department resources to be used for a community health assessment?

1.d. Set priorities for community health improvement based on information from the community health assessment?

Key definitions:

**Advocate for**
Discuss and encourage other public health governing entity members, elected officials, and/or other health-related organization boards to adopt a standardized policy.

**Active collaboration**
Make a commitment with other public health system stakeholder organizations to successfully develop and conduct a community health assessment. This could also be a board of health working with other organizations on a regular basis to meet common goals.

**Measurable outcomes**
Benefits that can be measured through terms such as how valuable, how reliable, how fast, and how expansive.
This service includes:

- Epidemiologic investigations of disease outbreaks, patterns of infections, chronic diseases, injuries, environmental hazards, and other public health threats and emergencies.
- Active infectious disease epidemiology programs.
- Access to a public health laboratory capable of conducting rapid screening and high volume testing.

Key definition:

Public health threat / emergency
Situations that have already unfolded in a community. These emergencies may include, but are not limited to, natural disasters, chemical release and exposure, mass casualty incidents, recent outbreaks of disease (i.e., influenza, E. coli, Salmonella), and bioterrorism.
Public Health Department Responsibilities
The following are the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards for this essential service. A public health department applying for accreditation will have to demonstrate to PHAB how the department meets these standards. The public health governing entity should provide oversight and support efforts as the health department works to meet these standards.

Domain 2: Investigate health problems and environmental public health hazards to protect the community

2.1 Conduct timely investigations of health problems and environmental public health hazards;
2.2 Contain/mitigate health problems and environmental public health hazards;
2.3 Ensure access to laboratory and epidemiologic/environmental public health expertise and capacity to investigate and contain/mitigate public health problems and environmental public health hazards; and
2.4 Maintain a plan with policies and procedures for urgent and non-urgent communications

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Public Health Governing Entity Model Standard
The public health governing entity is responsible for assuring that the jurisdiction is protected against health problems and health hazards. To accomplish this, the governing entity:

- Facilitates access to appropriate resources for public health surveillance;
- Facilitates access to resources to respond to public health threats;
- Recommends policies to ensure the diagnosis and investigation of public health threats and emergencies in the community; and
- Encourages the public health agency to collaborate with public health system stakeholder organizations for the diagnosis and investigation of public health threats and emergencies.

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Key definitions:

Environmental Public Health Hazard:
Situations or materials that pose a threat to human health and safety in the built or natural environment, as well as to the health and safety of other animals and plants, and to the proper functioning of an ecosystem, habitat, or other natural resource (Public Health Accreditation Board, Environmental Public Health Think Tank Report 2010).

Stakeholder organizations
Another term for partners or any persons, agencies, or organizations that could have an investment in the health of the people in the jurisdiction. These stakeholders may include, but are not limited to, businesses, hospitals, physician offices, pharmacists, youth groups, etc.
At what level does the governing entity...

2.a. Facilitate access to resources for the surveillance of public health threats?
- No Activity
- Minimal
- Moderate
- Significant
- Optimal
- N/A

2.b. Facilitate access to resources to respond to public health threats?
- No Activity
- Minimal
- Moderate
- Significant
- Optimal
- N/A

2.c. Recommend policies that address the surveillance of public health threats?
- No Activity
- Minimal
- Moderate
- Significant
- Optimal
- N/A

2.d. Encourage ongoing collaboration among public health system stakeholder organizations regarding issues of public health threats?
- No Activity
- Minimal
- Moderate
- Significant
- Optimal
- N/A
Essential Service 3:
Inform, Educate, and Empower People about Health Issues

This service includes:

- Health information, health education, and health promotion activities designed to reduce health risk and promote improved health.
- Health communication plans and activities such as media advocacy and social marketing.
- Accessible health information and educational resources.
- Health education and health promotion program partnerships with schools, faith-based communities, work sites, personal health care providers, and others to implement and reinforce health promotion programs and messages.

Key definitions:

Empower
Engage participants so they learn more effectively and are motivated to maintain their commitment to healthier living. This could include citizen participation in health policy initiatives as well as individuals learning more about their own health. (adapted from http://www.healthempowermentinitiative.com/)
Public Health Department Responsibilities

The following are the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards for this essential service. A public health department applying for accreditation will have to demonstrate to PHAB how the department meets these standards. The public health governing entity should provide oversight and support efforts as the health department works to meet these standards.

Domain 3: Inform and educate about public health issues and functions

3.1 Provide health education and health promotion policies, programs, processes, and interventions to support prevention and wellness; and

3.2 Provide information on public health issues and public health functions through multiple methods to a variety of audiences.

Public Health Governing Entity Model Standard

Informing, educating, and empowering people about health issues depends on appropriate health education and community-based health promotion activities. To accomplish this, the governing entity:

- Facilitates access to resources that could be used to reduce health risks and promote better health;
- Ensures public health agency is using health communication plans and promotion activities that are culturally and linguistically appropriate;
- Recommends public health agency policies to support activities that inform, educate, and empower people about public health issues; and
- Encourages all citizens in a jurisdiction to provide input on community health issues to the public health governing entity.

Key definition:

Health communication plan
A way for staff at the public health agency to inform, influence, and motivate persons and organizations in a jurisdiction about public health issues and prevention.

Culturally and linguistically appropriate
Culturally and linguistically appropriate materials include customs, beliefs, values, and influences of various racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. Making culturally and linguistically appropriate materials for audiences is vital to the success and adoption of health promotion programs, policies, and interventions.
At what level does the governing entity...

3.a. Recommend budget items for community health promotion programs?

3.b. Ensure the public health department is using a health communications plan?

3.c. Recommend policies that support culturally appropriate health promotion activities?

3.d. Encourage citizens to provide input on community health issues to the public health department governing entity?

Key definition:
Community health
More reflective of the health of a jurisdiction rather than a group of people with similar characteristics. The public health agency should implement programs that promote health prevention and wellness among all individuals in a jurisdiction.
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Essential Service 4:
Mobilize Partnerships to Identify and Solve Health Problems

How well do we really get people and organizations engaged in health issues?

This service includes:

- Identifying potential stakeholders who contribute to or benefit from public health and increasing their awareness of the value of public health.
- Building coalitions, partnerships, and strategic alliances to draw upon the full range of potential human and material resources to improve community health.
- Convening and facilitating partnerships and strategic alliances among groups and associations (including those not typically considered to be health-related) in undertaking defined health improvement projects, including preventive, screening, rehabilitation, and support programs.

Key definition:

**Partnership**

A partnership is a relationship among individuals and groups that is characterized by mutual cooperation and responsibilities. (Scutchfield, FD, and CW Keck. *Principles of Public Health Practice*. Delmar CENGAGE Learning. 2009).
Public Health Department Responsibilities

The following are the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards for this essential service. A public health department applying for accreditation will have to demonstrate to PHAB how the department meets these standards. The public health governing entity should provide oversight and support efforts as the health department works to meet these standards.

Domain 4: Engage with the community to identify and address health problems

  4.1 Engage with the public health system and the community in identifying and addressing health problems through collaborative processes; and
  4.2 Promote the community’s understanding of and support for policies and strategies that will improve the public’s health.

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Public Health Governing Entity Model Standard

The public health governing entity is responsible for supporting traditional and non-traditional partnerships and strategic alliances to identify and solve health problems. To accomplish this, the governing entity:

- Facilitates access to resources for jurisdictional development, partnership, and strategic alliance building activities;
- Recommends policies to support constituency development, partnership, and strategic alliance building; and
- Promotes the inclusion of public health in policies developed by traditional and non-traditional partners.

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Key definitions:

Traditional and non-traditional partnerships

Since public health is such a diverse field and involves various aspects of a person’s wellbeing, it is important to include both traditional and non-traditional partners. Traditional partners are those stakeholders that the public health agency typically collaborate with including other public health agencies, hospitals, Federally Qualified Health Centers, mental health institutions, and child services. Non-traditional partners may include, but are not limited to, faith-based organizations, academic institutions (including higher education), media, businesses and corporations, and other government agencies.

Jurisdictional development

Includes any methods to improve or expand the health and safety of a particular territory. For example, if the governing body represents a district within a state, they should strive to improve the health and safety of the entire district and not a particular county seat or select community within the district.
At what level does the governing entity...

4.a. Support coordination of resources for strategic alliance building activities?

- No Activity
- Minimal
- Moderate
- Significant
- Optimal
- N/A

4.b. Encourage the public health department to engage in strategic alliances with public health system stakeholder organizations to solve community health problems?

- No Activity
- Minimal
- Moderate
- Significant
- Optimal
- N/A

4.c. Promote the inclusion of public health in policies developed by other governing entities?

- No Activity
- Minimal
- Moderate
- Significant
- Optimal
- N/A

Key definitions:

Strategic alliance
Partnerships formed among organizations to advance mutual interests. In the case of health, strategic collaboration with business, education, government, faith, and community partners to protect and improve health.

Other governing entities
The public health department may not be the only community group or organization with a governing entity. Other community departments, corporations, hospitals, and nonprofit organizations often have governing boards as well, and public health governing entity could engage with them in a variety of ways.

Constituency development
The process of developing relationships with community members who benefit from or have influence over community public health actions (CDC/ATSDR, Principles of Community Engagement, http://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/communityengagement/pce_mosFrameworks.html)
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Essential Service 5:
Develop Policies and Plans that Support Individual and Statewide Health Efforts

What policies promote health in our community?
How effective are we in planning and setting health policies?

This service includes:

- Effective public health governance.
- Development of policy, codes, regulations, and legislation to protect the health of the public and to guide the practice of public health.
- Systematic public health system and state-level planning for health improvement in all jurisdictions.
- Alignment of public health system resources and strategies with community health improvement plans.

Key definitions:

Governance
The process of governing, including concepts such as meeting management (minutes, procedural rules, institutional recordkeeping) and information flow (open meeting requirements, etc). Governance can also focus on the responsibility that a board has with respect to exercising their authority to fulfill the mission of the public health agency and meet the needs of the community served.

Public health policies
Used broadly to include laws, rules, and regulations intended to accomplish certain goals. Can be defined as “a system of laws, regulatory measures, courses of action, and funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a governmental entity or its representatives.” (Dean Kirkpatrick, Definitions of Public Policy and the Law, available at www.musc.edu/vawprevention/index.html).

Legal authority
The legal authority of a public health governing body is often detailed in state statutes as well as through home rule charters, court rulings, or other mandated documents. It is essential that the public health governing body learn about their legal authority and execute it to their fullest ability.
Public Health Department Responsibilities
The following are the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards for this essential service. A public health department applying for accreditation will have to demonstrate to PHAB how the department meets these standards. The public health governing entity should provide oversight and support efforts as the health department works to meet these standards.

Domain 5: Develop public health policies and plans
  5.1 Serve as a primary and expert resource for establishing and maintaining public health policies, practices, and capacity;
  5.2 Conduct a comprehensive planning process resulting in a Tribal/State/Community Health Improvement Plan;
  5.3 Develop and implement a health department organizational strategic plan; and
  5.4 Maintain an all hazards emergency operations plan.

Public Health Governing Entity Model Standard
Public health planning and policy development requires that individual members of the governing entity understand, exercise, and advocate for the authority to improve public health. The governing entity should operate under the framework of statutory charter, mission statement, or other similar strategic planning statement. To accomplish this, the governing entity:

- Annually requests that all governing entity members are provided appropriate documentation on their statutory charter describing their legal authority, mission statement, strategic planning document, and agency operating procedures;
- Budgets for appropriate public health agency resources to implement a community health improvement plan;
- Participates in the development of strategic plans for both the public health agency and governing entity;
- Develops public health policies (which may include codes, regulations, and ordinances) to protect the jurisdiction's health and to guide the practice of public health;
- Recommends policies based upon community health assessments, community health improvement plans, strategic plans, and evidence-based recommendations;
- Monitors the development and implementation of plans (e.g., community health improvement plans, all-hazard emergency preparedness and response plans, risk communication plans, strategic plans, etc.) that protect the health of the public; and
- Supports aligning jurisdiction resources with state-level plans for health improvement.
At what level does the governing entity...

5.a. Annually review documentation of its legal authority?

5.b. Annually review the governing entity’s guiding documents?

5.c. Budget appropriate public health department resources to implement a community health improvement plan?

5.d. Participate in the public health department’s strategic planning process (every 3-5 years)?

5.e. Develop a governing entity strategic plan?

5.f. Recommend evidence-based policies to address identified health priorities?

5.g. Monitor the establishment of the public health department’s all-hazards emergency response plan?

5.h. Support aligning jurisdiction resources with state-level plans for health improvement?

Key definitions for these questions are on the next page due to space limitations.
Additional key definitions for essential service 5:

Guiding documents
A collection of documents that outline the public health governing body’s statutory charge, structure, function, roles, and responsibilities. May include bylaws, mission, vision, strategic plan, and operating procedures.

Health priorities
Areas or facets of the public health system that need addressed through program and/or policy development, implementation, and evaluation to positively impact and benefit the public’s health. Priority areas can be social, physical, behavioral, or environmental.

All hazards emergency operations plan
An all hazards plan is an action plan for the jurisdiction developed to mitigate, respond to, and recover from a natural disaster, terrorist event, or other emergency that threatens people, property, business, or the community. The plan identifies persons, equipment, and resources for activation in an emergency and includes steps to coordinate and guide the response and recovery efforts of the jurisdiction. (adapted from FEMA, Principles of Emergency Management, 2007 - http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/edu/08conf/Emergency%2520Management%2520Principles%2520Monograph%2520Final.doc)

Community Health Improvement Plan
A Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) should be used to develop policies and define actions to target efforts that promote health.

Strategic plan
Once a CHIP is constructed, a strategic plan should be developed for both the public health governing entity and the public health department. The strategic plan should include a vision, mission, objectives, strategies, and action plans that will move either the governing entity or health department forward in improving the public’s health.
Essential Service 6:
Enforce Laws and Regulations that Protect Health and Ensure Safety

When we enforce health regulations, are we up-to-date, technically competent, fair and effective?

This service includes:

- Assurance of due process and recognition of individuals’ civil rights in all procedures, enforcement of laws and regulations, and public health emergency actions taken under the governing entity’s authority.
- Review, evaluation, and revision of laws and regulations designed to protect health and safety, reflect current scientific knowledge, and utilize evidence-based practices for achieving compliance.
- Education of persons and entities obligated to obey and agencies obligated to enforce laws and regulations to encourage compliance.
- Enforcement activities in a wide variety of areas of public health concern under authority granted by local, state, and federal rule or law including, but not limited to: abatement of nuisances, animal control, childhood immunizations and other vaccinations, food safety, housing code, sanitary code, on-site wastewater disposal (septic systems), protection of drinking water, school environment, solid waste disposal, swimming pool and bathing area safety and water quality, tobacco control, enforcement activities during emergency situations, and vector control.

Key definitions:

**Evidence based practice**
A strategy for explicitly linking public health or clinical practice recommendations to scientific evidence of the effectiveness and/or other characteristics of such practices. (adapted from Community Guide, [http://www.thecommunityguide.org/about/glossary.html](http://www.thecommunityguide.org/about/glossary.html))

**Legal counsel**
Attorney who provides advice or assistance to or represents a government agency. (Black's Law Dictionary)
Public Health Department Responsibilities
The following are the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards for this essential service. A public health department applying for accreditation will have to demonstrate to PHAB how the department meets these standards. The public health governing entity should provide oversight and support efforts as the health department works to meet these standards.

Domain 6: Enforce public health laws

6.1 Review existing laws and work with governing entities and elected/appointed officials to update as needed;
6.2 Educate individuals and organizations on the meaning, purpose, and benefit of public health laws and how to comply; and
6.3 Conduct and monitor public health enforcement activities and coordinate notification of violations among appropriate agencies.

Public Health Governing Entity Model Standard
The public health governing entity is responsible for assuring that public health policies (which may include codes, regulations, and ordinances) designed to protect the health of the jurisdiction are appropriately adopted, enforced, and evaluated. To accomplish this, the governing body:

- Confirms that appropriate legal authority exists for the adoption, enforcement, and evaluation of public health policies designed to protect the health of the jurisdiction;
- Annually reviews bylaws, rules, and procedures for compliance with local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- Budgets for resources to be used for public health inspection and enforcement activities;
- Has access to and utilizes legal counsel;
- Advocates for the enforcement of public health policies that protect community health and ensure safety; and
- Encourages development and implementation of programs that educate those who are impacted by public health policies to encourage compliance.

Key definition:
People impacted by public health policies
Public health policies are affected at the federal, state, and local levels. Since policies are developed and amended on a continuous basis, it is important for people impacted by the public health policies to be educated by public health agency staff. The public health agency staff may conduct programs with those impacted to encourage compliance. Persons impacted may include the general public (with tobacco control laws), restaurant owners (food safety procedures), and septic installers (wastewater regulations).
At what level does the governing entity...

6.a. Confirm legal authority exists for the enforcement of public health policies?

6.b. Annually review its legal documents to ensure that they comply with other existing statutes?

6.c. Budget for resources to be used for enforcement activities?

6.d. Utilize legal counsel?

6.e. Advocate that public health policies are appropriately enforced?

6.f. Encourage those impacted by public health policies to participate in programs developed to improve compliance?
**Essential Service 7:**

**Link People to Needed Personal Health Services and Assure the Provision of Health Care When Otherwise Unavailable**

Are people receiving the medical care they need?

This service includes:

- Assuring the identification of populations with barriers to personal health services.
- Assuring identification of personal health service needs of populations with limited access to a coordinated system of clinical care.
- Assuring the linkage of people to appropriate personal health care services through coordination of provider services and development of interventions that address barriers to care (e.g., culturally and linguistically appropriate staff and materials, transportation services).

Key definition:

**Culturally and linguistically appropriate**

Culturally and linguistically appropriate materials include customs, beliefs, values, and influences of various racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups. Making *culturally and linguistically appropriate* materials for audiences is vital to the success and adoption of health promotion programs, policies, and interventions.
Public Health Department Responsibilities

The following are the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards for this essential service. A public health department applying for accreditation will have to demonstrate to PHAB how the department meets these standards. The public health governing entity should provide oversight and support efforts as the health department works to meet these standards.

Domain 7: Promote strategies to improve access to health care services

7.1 Assess health care capacity and access to health care services; and
7.2 Identify and implement strategies to improve access to health care services.

Public Health Governing Entity Model Standard

The public health governing entity works to assure outreach and services designed to link people to personal health services, with special attention to those who experience barriers to care. To accomplish this, the governing entity:

- Advocates for services for all citizens in the jurisdiction;
- Encourages linkages between the public health agency and other public health system stakeholder organizations to reduce barriers to care; and
- Assures the implementation of policies supporting outreach to all citizens in the jurisdiction.

Key definitions:

Barriers to care
The public health agency will need to identify any barriers that are preventing all citizens in a jurisdiction from using the programs and services of the agency. This identification of barriers, including physical, emotional, social, and financial obstructions, can occur during the community health assessment process, through public health system partners and stakeholders, or other health-related reports from the jurisdiction.

Outreach
The public health department and governing entity can strive to extend their outreach of services to all citizens in a jurisdiction. This outreach may occur by offering culturally-sensitive health promotion materials to subpopulations, providing satellite offices in rural communities, offering extended hours for services and educational programs, and promoting the benefits of the public health department.
At what level does the governing entity...
7.a. Advocate for services for all citizens in a jurisdiction?

7.b. Encourage linkages between the public health department and other public health system stakeholder organizations to reduce barriers to care?

7.c. Assure the implementation of policies supporting outreach to all citizens in the jurisdiction?

Key definition:
Linkages
The public health agency alone cannot reduce all barriers to care. Therefore, it is vital for the public health agency to develop linkages with other public health system partners to address as many barriers to care as possible.
Intentionally left blank
Essential Service 8:
Assure a Competent Public and Personal Health Care Workforce

This service includes:

- Education, training, and assessment of personnel (including volunteers and other lay community health workers) to meet community needs for public and personal health services.
- Efficient processes for licensure of professionals.
- Adoption of continuous quality improvement and lifelong learning programs that include determinants of health.
- Active partnerships and strategic alliances with professional training programs to assure community-relevant learning experiences for all students.
- Continuing education in management and leadership development programs for those charged with administrative/executive roles.

Key definitions:

Workforce development

Licensure
All programs that prepare people for work, including educational segments and special programs, and job training and employment programs, whether operated by public, private or non-profit entities (http://www.merriam-webster.com/medical/licensure).

Leadership Development Program
Public Health Department Responsibilities

The following are the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards for this essential service. A public health department applying for accreditation will have to demonstrate to PHAB how the department meets these standards. The public health governing entity should provide oversight and support efforts as the health department works to meet these standards.

Domain 8: Maintain a competent public health workforce

8.1 Encourage the development of a sufficient number of qualified public health workers; and
8.2 Assess staff competencies and address gaps by enabling organizational and individual training and development.

Public Health Governing Entity Model Standard

The public health governing entity is responsible for assuring the competence of the public health agency workforce, including the availability of workforce training and leadership development programs for both the workforce personnel and members of the governing entity. To accomplish this, the governing entity:

- Provides for the training and continuing education of the governing body that includes an annual self-assessment.
- Reviews position descriptions and standards for public health agency job classifications, both paid and unpaid;
- Establishes policies designed to ensure position descriptions are based on core competencies for public health professionals;
- Conducts an annual performance review for the public health agency executive

Key definition:

**Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals**

The Core Competencies are a set of skills desirable for the broad practice of public health, reflecting the characteristics that staff of public health organizations may want to possess as they work to protect and promote health in the community through the delivery of the 10 Essential Public Health Services. They are available at: [www.phf.org/resourcestools/Pages/Core_Public_Health_Competencies.aspx](http://www.phf.org/resourcestools/Pages/Core_Public_Health_Competencies.aspx)
**At what level does the governing entity...**

8.a. Conduct an annual self-assessment?

8.b. Participate in board development opportunities (e.g., orientation, conference trainings, webinars, National Association of Local Boards of Health, etc.)?

8.c. Establish policies designed to ensure public health department job classification requirements are based on core competencies for public health professionals?

8.d. Review public health department job classifications?

8.e. Conduct annual performance review of the public health department executive?

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**Key definition:**

**Self-assessment**

A process by which an organization or individual evaluates their own performance.
Intentionally left blank
Essential Service 9:
Evaluate Effectiveness, Accessibility, and Quality of Personal and Population-Based Health Services

Are we doing the best job we can? What opportunities for improvement do we see?

This service includes:
- Assurance of ongoing evaluation and critical review of health program effectiveness, based on analysis of health status and service utilization data.
- Assurance of the provision of information necessary for allocating resources and reshaping programs.

Key definitions:
Quality improvement
The process of bringing services to the next level with the aim to improve the overall health of a community. (http://www.phf.org/focusareas/PMQI/Pages/default.aspx)

Performance management
A systematic process aimed at helping achieve an organization’s mission and strategic goals by improving effectiveness, empowering employees, and streamlining the decision-making process. (http://www.phf.org/focusareas/PMQI/Pages/default.aspx)
Public Health Department Responsibilities

The following are the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards for this essential service. A public health department applying for accreditation will have to demonstrate to PHAB how the department meets these standards. The public health governing entity should provide oversight and support efforts as the health department works to meet these standards.

Domain 9: Evaluate and continuously improve health department processes, programs and interventions

9.1 Use a performance management system to monitor achievement of organizational objectives; and
9.2. Develop and implement quality improvement processes integrated into organizational practice, programs, processes, and interventions.

Public Health Governing Entity Model Standard

The public health governing entity is responsible for the overall quality of public health services provided to the community. The quality of the service can be evaluated based on the scope, timeliness, frequency, and cost-effectiveness. The governing entity is also responsible for assuring that the results of evaluations are used to improve the public’s health. To accomplish this, the governing entity:

- Facilitates access to the necessary resources to conduct routine evaluations of population-based services provided in its jurisdiction to create quality improvement plans;
- Establishes policies supporting evaluations of population-based and personal health services;
- Encourages all public health system stakeholder organizations to provide input into evaluation processes;
- Utilizes information, including outcomes and evaluation results, for allocating resources to effective programs; and
- Encourages evaluation on the impact of public health policies (which may include codes, regulations, and ordinances) on the jurisdiction’s health and safety.

Key definitions:

Population-based services
The framework of public health since public health focuses on providing interventions or programs to an entire community. Examples of population-based services may include, but are not limited to, lead screening, violence prevention programs at schools, educational programs to increase physical activity and nutrition, and tobacco/drug/alcohol use prevention and control.

Personal health services
Those that only affect a single person such as treatment for an illness, rehabilitation for an injury, respiratory therapy for a heart attack patient, etc.
**At what level does the governing entity...**

9.a. Establish policies supporting a quality improvement plan for public health services?

- No Activity
- Minimal
- Moderate
- Significant
- Optimal
- N/A

9.b. Advocate for appropriate resources to support quality improvement activities?

- No Activity
- Minimal
- Moderate
- Significant
- Optimal
- N/A

9.c. Encourage public health system stakeholder organizations to contribute to the quality improvement process?

- No Activity
- Minimal
- Moderate
- Significant
- Optimal
- N/A

9.d. Use evaluation findings to allocate resources to effective programs?

- No Activity
- Minimal
- Moderate
- Significant
- Optimal
- N/A

9.e. Encourage evaluation on the impact of public health policies?

- No Activity
- Minimal
- Moderate
- Significant
- Optimal
- N/A

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**Key definition:**

**Evaluations**

Systematic approaches to determine whether stated objectives are being met. (Brownson RC, Baker EA, and Novick LE. Community-based Prevention: Programs That Work. Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishers, Inc.; 1999)
Essential Service 10:
Research for New Insights and Innovative Solutions to Health Problems

Are we identifying and using new ways to get the job done?

This service includes:

- public health research activities:
  - initiating research,
  - participating in research by others,
  - reporting results, and
  - implementing policy based on these results.

Key definitions:

Evidence based practice
A strategy for explicitly linking public health or clinical practice recommendations to scientific evidence of the effectiveness and/or other characteristics of such practices. (adapted from Community Guide, http://www.thecommunityguide.org/about/glossary.html)

Research
Research is a systematic investigation, including research development, testing, and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalized knowledge. (United States Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy People 2020. Washington, DC).
Public Health Department Responsibilities
The following are the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards for this essential service. A public health department applying for accreditation will have to demonstrate to PHAB how the department meets these standards. The public health governing entity should provide oversight and support efforts as the health department works to meet these standards.

Domain 10: Contribute to and apply the evidence base of public health
  10.1 Identify and use the best available evidence for making informed public health practice decisions; and
  10.2 Promote understanding and use of research results, evaluations, and evidence-based practices with appropriate audiences.

Public Health Governing Entity Model Standard
The public health governing entity is responsible for supporting and encouraging innovation to complete community-based research activities. To accomplish this, the governing entity:

- Recommends policies reflecting the public health agency’s commitment to public health research and evidence-based activities;
- Facilitates access to resources for research and identification of best practices, including encouraging collaboration between academic or other health-related institutions and public health entities to carry out community-based research activities; and
- Encourages the incorporation of research results and best practices into policies and programs to support the highest current standard of public health practice.

Key definitions:

Community based research
Focuses on studies that will involve and impact an entire jurisdiction. This type of research should include as many community partners as possible and serve to study programs, policies, or services that create social change through improved health outcomes.

Evidence based policy
**At what level does the governing entity...**

10.a Ensure the public health department implements evidence-based policies to support practices in its jurisdiction?

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Optimal</th>
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</table>

10.b Encourage collaboration between the public health department and academic institutions for community-based research?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Activity</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Significant</th>
<th>Optimal</th>
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10.c Facilitate access to resources for research?

<table>
<thead>
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<th>No Activity</th>
<th>Minimal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
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