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STATEMENT OF POLICY

Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) as an Optimal Framework for Community Health Assessment and Improvement Planning

Policy

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) recognizes the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) process as an optimal framework for community health assessment and improvement planning.

NACCHO recognizes that there are many community health assessment and improvement planning models and that MAPP is one of these models. NACCHO recommends that local, state, and national public health system partners work together to increase the knowledge and understanding of the utility of MAPP and develop the capacity of all communities to implement MAPP.

Justification

MAPP is a robust community-owned strategic planning process for improving community health. MAPP is an iterative process that helps communities institute a practice of strategic, data-informed, collaborative, systems-based community improvements. By engaging stakeholders across the local public health system, MAPP helps communities prioritize public health issues, identify resources for addressing the issues, and take action. MAPP is more than an assessment or tool; MAPP helps institute a culture of continuous community health improvement. Using the MAPP process, communities build partnerships, develop collective visions, conduct community assessments, and develop, implement and evaluate community health improvement plans.

By design, MAPP is a comprehensive process that should result in a paradigm shift in public health practice. MAPP helps local public health system partners shift their focus from operational, day-to-day planning to long term strategic planning; from an emphasis on assessing needs to a focus on assets and resources; and from a medically oriented model to a broad definition of health that considers the social determinants of health. MAPP also builds upon the recognized expertise of the local health department by acknowledging and embracing the reality that everyone who works, plays, and lives in a community has expertise about public health.

MAPP is a flexible *framework* that can be tailored by communities to fit their needs. There are nine critical elements that truly define the MAPP process:



1. Strategic planning
2. Systems thinking
3. Community ownership and stakeholder investment
4. Shared responsibility and working toward a shared vision
5. Comprehensive data informs each step of the process (data includes information on health status, quality of life, assets, external forces, and how the public health system functions)
6. Builds on previous experience (not necessarily MAPP experience; may include partnerships, assessments, etc.)
7. Partnerships
8. Celebration of successes
9. Involves the local public health system

MAPP is an optimal framework that helps community stakeholders achieve their individual objectives while working toward a common vision of improved community health. For example, MAPP can help:

- Local health departments prepare for National Voluntary Accreditation, as indicated in the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards—MAPP will help local health departments meet community health assessment and planning standards for PHAB Accreditation;
- Hospitals meet federal and state community benefit requirements;
- State health departments understand local level community health issues;
- Emergency planners and responders mobilize and prepare the community.

All community stakeholders can benefit from understanding public health issues through community health assessment and developing, implementing, and evaluating community health improvement plans.

The MAPP process was developed in 2001 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and NACCHO.

MAPP communities cited many benefits of the process:

- MAPP brings communities together. Communities are groups of people who live, work, play and learn in the same area;
- MAPP increases the Local health department's understanding of its role in the public health system;¹
- MAPP increases local public health system collaboration;¹
- MAPP shows evidence of increasing public recognition and knowledge of the importance of health departments;¹
- MAPP can improve the commitment to maintaining quality data;¹
- MAPP increases the visibility of public health in the community;¹
- MAPP helps communities identify needs, themes, and strengths and evaluate public health system performance;
- MAPP contributes to obtainment of resources and funding.²

References

1. Outcome Evaluation of the NACCHO MAPP Program. (June 2009) TCC Group.

2. Healthy People 2020-NACCHO Partnership and Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships:
Survey Findings on Connections, Collaborations, and Challenges. (February 2012). The National Association of
County and City Health Officials.

Record of Action

Proposed by MAPP Workgroup

Approved by NACCHO Board of Directors

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