

**Accreditation Prerequisites:  
How to conduct processes that yield a CHA, a CHIP, and a strategic plan**

NACCHO's Accreditation Preparation & Performance Improvement Webinar Series  
Thursday, November 15, 2012 12:30PM ET

*In November 2012, NACCHO hosted a webinar where presenters discussed the three prerequisites for national accreditation: the community health assessment (CHA), the community health improvement plan (CHIP), and the agency strategic plan. The webinar provided insight from three local health departments: Columbus Public Health (OH), Madison County Health Department (KY), and Dutchess County Health Department (NY). Click [here](#) to download the slides and [here](#) to watch the free archived recording.*

*The questions below were posed during the webinar.*

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**Community Health Assessment Questions**

**What sort of data meets primary and secondary data requirements set by PHAB?**

PHAB's Standards and Measures version 1.0 describe the data requirements for the CHA. Examples are given in the guidance for standard 1.1. Any specific questions about the data should be directed to PHAB.

**How much overlap was there between the hospital and LHD approaches to a community health assessment? What were the notable similarities and differences?**

The approaches were similar because both organizations had worked on similar projects in 2005 and the same people and groups were at the table. OSU provided the structure, which was a plus because it was a neutral facilitator. The only drawback was that there wasn't as much community input as the health department would have liked – this is something that Columbus Public Health plans to address in the next revision.

**How did you leverage the ACA Community Benefit requirements in order to engage the local hospital(s)?**

The fact that non-profit hospitals are required to conduct community health needs assessments in order to continue to receive their non-profit status is a great opportunity for local health departments. In Columbus, the staff at the health department was able to leverage the common goals and requirements in order to create an efficient partnership to develop a CHA that meets both PHAB and IRS requirements.

**Community Health Improvement Plan Questions**

**Were all the CHIP partners involved with the CHA? If not, how did you invite new partners?**

Most of the CHA partners were invited to participate in the CHIP process. A MAPP framework was used and new partners and organizations were constantly recruited and encouraged to participate. The partners involved community organizations, elected officials, hospitals, school systems, chamber of commerce, faith-based groups, etc.

**What prioritization techniques did you use to determine the health priorities in the CHIP?**

Guided questions were used for group members to select priorities. There was a round-robin process to gather input and all members' contributions were considered.

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**How much time does it take your staff to monitor the CHIP priorities?** This is a difficult question for MCHD to answer. Much of the on-going monitoring of local services &/or programs' status is conducted during community meetings. Data reports (Ex. County Health Rankings, BRFSS, Kids Count Data, Census data, etc.) are reviewed at time of release and are compared with the CHIP's evaluation strategies during community meetings, e-mail communications and through MCHD's website.

**What are some strategies to incorporate information from the CHIP into the agency strategic plan?** During the strategic planning process, the CHA data and CHIP priorities were presented to the strategic planning work group. This helped them with the information they knew about the community and key issues related to health and safety. The CHIP was used as a baseline for the information used by the strategic planning committee to determine their initiatives.

Strategic Plan Questions

**How were competing interests managed?**

Having a neutral and objective facilitator made it possible for Dutchess County to manage competing interests. The facilitator was able to ensure everyone's voice was heard and everyone's input was incorporated.

**How was your strategic plan connected to your community health improvement plan?**

In Dutchess County, the CHIP was not completed when the strategic plan was developed. As the CHIP is being finalized, the team in charge of strategic plan implementation, is considering revisions based upon its contents.

Questions relating to all the prerequisites

**How long did it take each organization to complete each of the prerequisites, from start to finish?**

Columbus Public Health: The CHA process took 18 months, and there are still a few more months needed to finish it for release.

Madison County Health Department: The CHIP process took 15-16 months.

Dutchess County Health Department: The strategic planning process took 6-8 months.

**What were the roles of Board of Health Members in the prerequisites of accreditation?**

Columbus Public Health: The BOH was not directly involved with the CHA, but they were regularly updated and kept informed. They were heavily involved with the strategic plan.

Madison County Health Department: Some BOH members attended community forums and CHIP planning meetings. The BOH is always kept informed about the CHIP progress.

Dutchess County Health Department: All BOH members participated in the strategic planning process. They took the survey as key stakeholders and were updated regularly on the progress. Their input was constantly collected.

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**After applying for PHAB is there anything you would do differently to meet any of the prerequisite documentation requirements?**

It is important to consider the connections between these documents if you are starting them for the first time. Also, be sure to review the requirements within the standards and measures so that you can incorporate them into your documents rather than having to share additional documentation.

**Was stake holder input more for: a) information, e.g. data, b) input into decision making, or c) way to build constituency or support?**

All of these are important factors. Also, remember that PHAB requires community input and community review of the CHA and CHIP.

**How can small LHDs conduct this work without the benefit of specific expert staff?**

Several small health departments, including Madison County in Kentucky, have conducted successful CHA, CHIP and strategic plan processes. Examples can be found online at [www.naccho.org/chachipresources](http://www.naccho.org/chachipresources).

**General Accreditation Questions**

**Is there a tool and process for training staff on standards and measures?**

Both PHAB and NACCHO have basic introductory PowerPoint presentations that can be customized and presented to staff. PHAB's is available [here](#) (click on "PHAB generic presentation for health departments") and NACCHO's is available [here](#) (click on "Accreditation 101 PowerPoint for Orienting Staff"). If you are interested in templates for more in-depth training of staff, you can contact NACCHO at [accreditprep@naccho.org](mailto:accreditprep@naccho.org) and we can connect you with an Accreditation Coordinator at another local health department who can share the resources they used to educate staff on the process.

**How did accreditation influence the planning initiatives presented? A motivation on the front end? Meeting certain requirement in the process itself?**

Columbus Public Health: Accreditation was a push to complete the prerequisites. It wasn't the only motivation, but it helped accelerate the timeline.

Madison County Health Department: The Kentucky Department of Public Health encourages all local health departments to conduct assessment and improvement planning as a core public health service. Once the accreditation movement started, it was a natural fit because of this work.

Dutchess County Health Department: Accreditation was not the motivation to begin strategic planning, but it did affect the timeline so that the plan was completed in a timely manner due to the added incentive of applying for accreditation.

**Can NACCHO share examples about success stories of accreditation from different agencies and how it has made them better so it may serve as an encouragement for other agencies to follow in steps?**

NACCHO has information about several health departments who have pursued or prepared for accreditation. You can browse our list of [demonstration sites](#) to learn about the projects and activities of several of these agencies. Our most recent set of demonstration sites, featured in this webinar, was the NACCHO/CDC Accreditation Support Initiative (ASI). Information about the ASI and the sites funded to prepare for accreditation is available [here](#). When you visit this page, if you select Columbus Public

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Health, you can view their CHIP and Strategic plan. Their CHA is not yet available for public viewing because they are waiting for approval from their hospital partner. If you select Madison County Health Department, their CHIP is available for download along with other preparation resources. If you select the New York SACHO, you can view sample strategic plans from the LHDs that worked with the SACHO. Sample Strategic Plan #2 is based on the Dutchess County Health Department strategic plan.