

NACCHO WEBCAST

Building Blocks for Public Health Departments: Connecting Standards and Accreditation Tuesday, June 12, 2007

This Webcast is part of a NACCHO series entitled "Transforming Public Health Infrastructure: Innovative Health Department Practices and Tools." The Webcast focuses on how several existing programs and projects serve as the basis of public health, and how these programs can be used for performance assessment in preparation for national accreditation. This document provides a brief overview of each of the projects and program discussed during the Webcast.

For more information and other upcoming events, please visit <http://www.naccho.org/topics/infrastructure/operationaldefinition/events.cfm> .

I. National Public Health Performance Standards Program (NPHPSP)

This program is a collaborative effort among seven national public health organizations to enhance the nation's public health system by developing national performance standards for state and local health systems. These standards are designed around the 10 Essential Public Health Services and are composed of three instruments:

1. **The State Public Health System Performance Assessment Instrument (State Instrument)** focuses on the state public health system, which includes state public health agencies and other partners that contribute to public health services at the state level.
2. **The Local Public Health System Performance Assessment Instrument (Local Instrument)** focuses on the local public health system or all entities that contribute to public health within a community. This system includes all public, private, and voluntary entities, as well as individuals and informal associations.
3. **The Local Public Health Governance Performance Assessment Instrument (Governance Instrument)** focuses on the governing body ultimately accountable for public health at the local level. Such governing bodies may include boards of health or county commissioners.

They describe an optimal level of performance to support a process of quality improvement. Some of the benefits of National Public Health Performance Standards include improved organizational and community communication and collaboration, a

strong, diverse network of partners within state and local health systems, and a benchmark for public health practice improvements.

For more information, please visit the Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/od/ocphp/nphpsp/index.htm> .

II. Ten Essential Public Health Services

The Essential Public Health Services were developed in the 1990s by a broad-based working group of public health leaders. They better define the activities that comprise the three core functions of public health: assessment, policy development, and assurance. The Ten Essential Public Health Services are:

1. Monitor health status to identify community health problems.
2. Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community.
3. Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues.
4. Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.
5. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.
6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
7. Link people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
8. Assure a competent public health and personal health care workforce.
9. Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.
10. Research for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

These provide the fundamental framework for the National Public Health Performance Standards Program (NPHPSP) instruments, by describing the public health activities that should be undertaken in all communities. The Essential Services present a working definition of public health and a guiding structure for the responsibilities of local public health systems.

For an in-depth description of each Essential Service, please visit the Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/od/ocphp/nphpsp/EssentialPHServices.htm> .

III. Mobilizing Action through Planning and Partnerships program (MAPP)

MAPP is a strategic approach to community health improvement developed by NACCHO. As a tool, it helps improve health and quality of life through community-wide and community-driven strategic planning. Through MAPP, communities seek to optimize health by identifying and using their resources wisely, taking into account their unique circumstances and needs, and forming effective partnerships for strategic action. MAPP utilizes the local instrument from the National Public Health Performance Standards Program as part of the evaluation process.

For access to the MAPP web-based tool or handbook, please visit the Web site at <http://www.naccho.org/topics/infrastructure/MAPP.cfm> .

IV. Understanding State Public Health Project

The goal of this Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO) project is to define the purposes, functions, roles and responsibilities of state governmental public health agencies to improve health outcomes. One aim is to create a database as a resource on structure, activities, and responsibilities of state public health, along with a description of state public health services. The project will also conduct a review of state public health system organization and develop a comprehensive marketing strategy to improve the public's understanding of state governmental public health. The Understanding State Public Health Services Project aims to analyze the relationship between state public health infrastructure and health outcomes, as well as provide evidence for decisions about organizational structure and comparison data for assessing outcomes. This project contributes to an effort to assure clear, consistent messages about state public health in an effort to align public expectation with state public health activities, and thus demonstrate the value of state public health.

For more information, please visit the Web site at <http://www.astho.org/pubs/StatePublicHealthServicesWeb site.htm> .

V. Operational Definition of a Functional Local Health Department

Governmental public health departments are responsible for creating and maintaining conditions that keep people healthy. NACCHO's Operational definition of a functional local health department (LHD) describes what everyone, regardless of where they live, can reasonably expect from governmental local public health. The Operational Definition standards provide a framework by which LHDs are accountable to the state health department, the public, and the governing bodies to which they report. The standards are built around the Ten Essential Public Health Services, which have been reworded to more accurately reflect the specific LHD roles and responsibilities in each category. They are regarded as the framework for LHD standards in the voluntary national accreditation program.

For more information, including Quality Improvement tools, case examples, and access to the Peer Assistance Network, please visit the Web site at <http://www.naccho.org/topics/infrastructure/operationaldefinition.cfm> .