**Congratulations on achieving PHAB accreditation! The Florida Department of Health's integrated local public health department system is the first statewide centralized integrated local public health department system in the nation to achieve accreditation through PHAB.**

**The following press release can be sent to local media to announce your accreditation. Customize it by copying it to your health department’s letterhead and inserting your own information in place of the [brackets].**

**Send your customized press release (email is fine) to local newspapers, radio and TV stations, magazines, and trade journals.**

**Public Health Accreditation Board Awards Accreditation Status to the Florida Department of Health Integrated Local Public Health Department System**

*PHAB Accreditation Demonstrates a Continuing Commitment to Improving Public Health In Florida*

*Florida’s is the first statewide centralized integrated local public health department system in the nation to achieve PHAB accreditation.*

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) announced today that it has awarded five-year accreditation status to the Florida Department of Health Integrated Local Public Health Department System. PHAB is the nonprofit organization dedicated to improving and protecting the health of the public by advancing and ultimately transforming the quality and performance of state, local, Tribal, and territorial public health departments.

The Florida Department of Health Integrated Local Public Health Department System provides public health programs and services to nearly [xxx] Florida residents through its system of 67 local public health departments. PHAB awarded five-year accreditation status to the Florida Department of Health in June 2014. This accreditation is of the state’s centralized system of integrated local public health departments. With accreditation, this integrated local public health department system is demonstrating accountability and credibility to the public, funders, elected officials and partner organizations with which they work.

 "PHAB is pleased and excited to recognize the Florida Department of Health Integrated Local Public Health Department System for achieving national standards that foster effectiveness and promote continuous quality improvement," said PHAB President and CEO Kaye Bender, PhD, RN, FAAN.  “By going through the accreditation process, Florida's statewide public health department system is ensuring the integration of the programs and services provided by the central office and the 67 local public health departments. We congratulate this integrated system of 67 local public health departments and the state health department for demonstrating a consistent and continuing commitment to improving public health in Florida."

Since PHAB's launch in September 2011, 118 state and local health departments have achieved five-year accreditation status. The Florida Department of Health's integrated local public health department system is the first statewide centralized integrated local public health department system to achieve PHAB accreditation.

Public health departments play a critical role in protecting and improving the health of people and communities. In cities, towns, and states across the nation, health departments provide a range of services aimed at promoting healthy behaviors; preventing diseases and injuries; ensuring access to safe food, water, clean air, and life-saving immunizations; and preparing for and responding to public health emergencies.

The national accreditation program, jointly supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, sets standards against which the nation’s nearly 3,000 governmental public health departments can continuously improve the quality of their services and performance. To receive accreditation, a health department system must undergo a rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed assessment process to ensure it meets or exceeds a set of quality standards and measures.

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[Insert your organization’s 2-to-4-sentence boilerplate description here. Include information about the type of services your agency/system provides, your location, phone number, web address, etc.

For more information, or to schedule an interview with [name of your designated spokesperson] please call or email [contact’s name] at [contact’s phone number and email address].