



Public Health Accreditation Board
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Thirteen High-Performing Health Departments Awarded National Accreditation

Number of PHAB-Accredited Health Departments Now Reaches 44

Alexandria, VA — Demonstrating a commitment to continuous quality improvement, 13 health departments this week joined the growing ranks of those accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The decisions bring the number of governmental public health departments now recognized by PHAB as high-performing health departments to 44.

PHAB is the independent organization that administers the national public health accreditation program, which aims to improve and protect the health of the public by advancing the quality and performance of the nation's Tribal, state, local, and territorial health departments.

“Each time PHAB’s Accreditation Committee meets, we are excited to see a growing number of health departments for their review,” said PHAB President and CEO Kaye Bender, PhD, RN, FAAN. “The group of health departments achieving accreditation this week is our largest group to date. They represent a diverse array of sizes and organizational structures of health departments, all committed to continuous improvement of their work to protect the public’s health.”

National accreditation status was awarded June 18 to:

- Champaign-Urbana Public Health District, Champaign, Illinois
- Deschutes County Health Services, Bend, Oregon
- DuPage County Health Department, Wheaton, Illinois
- Florida Department of Health, Tallahassee, Florida
- Johnson County Department of Health and Environment, Olathe, Kansas
- Lexington-Fayette County Health Department, Lexington, Kentucky
- Madison County Health Department, Richmond, Kentucky
- Minnesota Department of Health, St. Paul, Minnesota
- New Orleans Health Department, New Orleans, Louisiana
- Norwalk Health Department, Norwalk, Connecticut
- RiverStone Health, Billings, Montana
- Ventura County Public Health, Oxnard, California
- Vermont Department of Health, Burlington, Vermont

“Residents in these 13 jurisdictions can be confident they have access to services and public health protections that meet the PHAB standards of performance,” said Leslie M. Beitsch, MD, JD, chair of PHAB’s Board of Directors and chair of the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Social Medicine at Florida State University College of Medicine. “It is gratifying to see an ever-larger and growing community of accredited health departments nationwide, with this cohort representing our largest group yet, covering new areas of the country.”

The Minnesota Department of Health this week became one of five state health departments to have thus far achieved national accreditation.

“Accreditation is much more than a public recognition of a department’s effectiveness and adherence to best practices,” said Minnesota Commissioner of Health Ed Ehlinger, MD, MSPH. “This accreditation provides a valuable framework for connecting more closely with our communities, identifying ongoing improvement opportunities, and building even stronger accountability with the public and our partners.”

Ten local health departments achieved PHAB accreditation this week. Among them is Norwalk Health Department in Norwalk, Connecticut, which serves a community of 85,000 people.

“The PHAB program sets a high standard for the operation of a health department,” said Tim Callahan, MPH, Director of Health for the City of Norwalk. “With the support of the Mayor and Board of Health and the hard work of all of the members of our staff, we demonstrated compliance with all of the 97 measures. I am thankful for the effort and thrilled with the outcome. We are also proud that Norwalk is the first health department in Connecticut to achieve this distinction.”

PHAB-accredited health departments range in size from small health departments serving communities of 37,000 to those serving millions. Hundreds of health departments are currently preparing to seek national accreditation through the program, which launched in September 2011 after more than a decade in development.

Public health departments play a critical role in protecting and improving the health of people and communities. 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 health emergencies.

For more information, contact Teddi Nicolaus at (703) 778-4549 ext. 118, or email tnicolaus@phaboard.org. Learn more about PHAB and accreditation at www.phaboard.org.

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About the Public Health Accreditation Board

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) was created to serve as the national public health accrediting body and is jointly funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The development of national public health department accreditation has involved, and is supported by, public health leaders and practitioners from the national, tribal, state, local, and territorial levels. Learn more about PHAB or sign up for the PHAB e-newsletter by visiting www.phaboard.org.