



Public Health Accreditation Board
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Public Health Accreditation Board awards five-year accreditation to three health departments

Number of PHAB-accredited health departments now totals 22

Alexandria, VA — Three health departments this week joined the growing ranks of those accredited by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The decisions bring the number of public health departments now recognized by PHAB as high-performing health departments to 22.

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.

Five-year accreditation status was awarded Nov. 19 to the Kane County Health Department in Aurora, Ill.; the Kenosha County Division of Health in Kenosha, Wis.; and the Licking County Health Department in Newark, Ohio.

"Each of the accredited health departments announced this week demonstrated a consistent and continued commitment to improving public health in their communities," said PHAB President and CEO Kaye Bender, PhD, RN, FAAN. "Preparing for accreditation is not easy, but these health departments rolled up their sleeves and got it done. They are to be commended for working to serve their communities in new and improved ways."

The national accreditation program sets standards against which the nation's more than 3,000 public health departments can continuously work to improve the quality of their services and performance. The peer-review process provides valuable feedback to inform health departments of their strengths and areas for improvement so that they can better protect and promote the health of the people in the communities they serve.

"Congratulations to these newly accredited health departments," said PHAB Accreditation Committee Chair F. Douglas Scutchfield, MD. "They join others who have demonstrated, by their adherence to the high PHAB standards, that they are committed to quality in their efforts to protect and improve the health of their communities. They have demonstrated to their communities that they are capable of making a major contribution to improving the health of the people they serve in an efficient, effective, and transparent way. In leading the accreditation movement for health departments, they are demonstrating that public health is leading the effort to make our nation and every community healthier."

PHAB-accredited agencies range in size from small health departments serving communities of 45,000 to those serving large metropolitan areas of millions, such as the Chicago Department of Public Health. 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.

Kane County Health Department in Aurora, Ill., was both “energized and strengthened” through the accreditation process, said Barbara J. Jeffers, MPH, the newly accredited health department’s executive director.

“We used the process as an opportunity to critically assess our effectiveness, improve our processes, and continuously improve the quality of our public health programs for the residents of Kane County,” Jeffers said. “The constant support of the Kane County Board and community partners was vital to this historic accomplishment. Achieving accreditation opens the door to a number of benefits, including increased credibility, accountability, and possible funding advantages. Our journey of continuous process and quality improvement moves forward each day.”

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.

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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 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.