

National Public Health Department Accreditation Prerequisites

July 2012

As a prerequisite to health departments' applications for accreditation being approved, health departments must submit three documents with their application:

1. [Community health assessment \(CHA\)](#)
2. [Community health improvement plan \(CHIP\)](#)
3. [Health department strategic plan](#)

These documents lay the groundwork for health department programs, policies, and interventions, and the remainder of the review for accreditation.

PHAB staff will review the prerequisites submitted with the application **for completeness only**. Site visitors assigned to the health department will conduct the peer review for conformity with the measures describing each of the documents.

The documents that are submitted as prerequisites for the application may be revised for their submission as documentation for review for accreditation by the site visitors.

These three documents must be dated within the past 5 years.

This information sheet is intended to provide summary information only. For specific detailed information, please consult the [PHAB Standards and Measures Version 1.0](#).

Measures and specific guidance describing conformity requirements may be found in:

- [CHA – Standard 1.1](#)
- [CHIP – Standard 5.2](#)
- [Strategic Plan – Standard 5.3](#)

For more information, contact the Public Health Accreditation Board at [703-778-4549](tel:703-778-4549) or visit www.phaboard.org.



Community Health Assessment

- Purpose is to learn about the health status of the population that the health department serves.
- Describes the health status of the population, identifies areas for health improvement, determines factors that contribute to health issues, and identifies assets and resources that can be mobilized to address population health improvement.
- Developed through a participatory, collaborative process with various sectors of the community.
- **Required elements of a CHA:**
 - Various sources of data
 - Population demographics
 - Health issues identified
 - Special populations with health issues
 - Contributing causes of health issues
 - Description of assets to address health issues
 - Documented input from stakeholders

Community Health Improvement Plan

- Purpose is to describe how the health department and the community will work together to improve the health of the population that it serves.
- Based on the CHA.
- Community-driven with participation of public health system partners and process to set priorities.
- More comprehensive than roles and responsibilities of health department alone; includes community partners' roles and responsibilities.
- **Required elements of a CHIP:**
 - Community health priorities, objectives, strategies, measures, and time framed targets
 - Policy changes needed to accomplish objectives
 - Individuals and organizations responsible for implementation
 - Measurable health outcomes or indicators
 - Alignment with other levels of health departments' and national priorities

Health Department Strategic Plan

- Purpose is to describe what the health department plans to achieve in 3-5 years.
- Provides guidance for decision making, strategy setting, priority setting, and taking action.
- Focuses on the activities and programs of only the health department, not the broad community.
- **Required elements of a health department Strategic Plan:**
 - Mission, vision, guiding principles, and values
 - Strategic priorities
 - Goals and objectives with measurable and time-framed targets
 - External trends or events or factors affecting health status or the health department
 - Health department strengths and weaknesses
 - Link to CHIP and health department's quality improvement (QI) plan