



Public Health Accreditation Board
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Ten More Communities Reaping Benefits of National Accreditation ***Population Served by a PHAB-Accredited Health Department Now Reaches Over 70 Million***

Alexandria, VA — The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) announced today that 10 more communities have joined the growing ranks of those reaping the benefits of national public health department accreditation. The decisions bring the number of governmental public health departments now accredited by PHAB to 54. PHAB is the non-profit 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.

"Residents of a community served by a nationally accredited health department can be assured that their health department has demonstrated the capacity to protect and promote the health of that community," said PHAB President and CEO Kaye Bender, PhD, RN, FAAN. "These 10 health departments join the 44 other accredited health departments in a strong commitment to their public health mission."

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 public health emergencies.

To receive accreditation, a health department must undergo a rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed assessment process to ensure it meets or exceeds a specific set of standards and measures. 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.

"Now, 22 million more people can be assured that their health departments are ready to meet these challenges," Dr. Bender said.

National accreditation status was awarded Sept. 16, 2014 to:

- Barren River District Health Department, Bowling Green, Kentucky
- Clackamas County Public Health, Oregon City, Oregon
- Crook County Health Department, Prineville, Oregon
- Erie County Department of Health, Erie, Pennsylvania
- Kent County Health Department, Grand Rapids, Michigan
- Mahoning County District Board of Health, Youngstown, Ohio
- New York State Department of Health, Albany, New York
- Sedgwick County Health Department, Wichita, Kansas
- St. Clair County Health Department, Belleville, Illinois
- St. Croix County DHHS-Public Health, New Richmond, Wisconsin

“We congratulate these health departments on achieving this milestone,” said Paul K. Halverson, DrPH, FACHE, vice chair of PHAB’s Accreditation Committee. “Accreditation demonstrates that health departments have the organizational capacity to serve their communities well.”

Serving a population of nearly 19.5 million people, the New York State Department of Health this week became the nation’s largest health department yet to be accredited by PHAB.

“The New York State Department of Health is proud to have obtained accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board, which recognizes both our commitment to advancing the quality of our programs, as well as the efforts of our dedicated staff,” said New York State Acting Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker. “Accreditation demonstrates that our department meets national standards for public health agencies and helps us pursue our vision for promoting the health of all New Yorkers.”

The Erie County Department of Health this week became the first health department in Pennsylvania to achieve national accreditation status through PHAB. Located in Erie, Pennsylvania, the health department serves a population of approximately 280,000.

“Erie County Department of Health (ECDH) is honored to be joining the elite credentialed cohort of nationally accredited public health departments,” said ECDH Director Melissa C. Lyon, MPH. “Additionally, we are ecstatic that ECDH is the first health department in Pennsylvania to achieve this distinction. We are proud to be recognized for our commitment to quality and performance while delivering public health services to the community.”

Hundreds of health departments around the nation are currently preparing to seek national accreditation through the program, which launched in September 2011 after more than a decade in development.

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.