



PHAB Accreditation: An Opportunity to Leverage the National Prevention Strategy

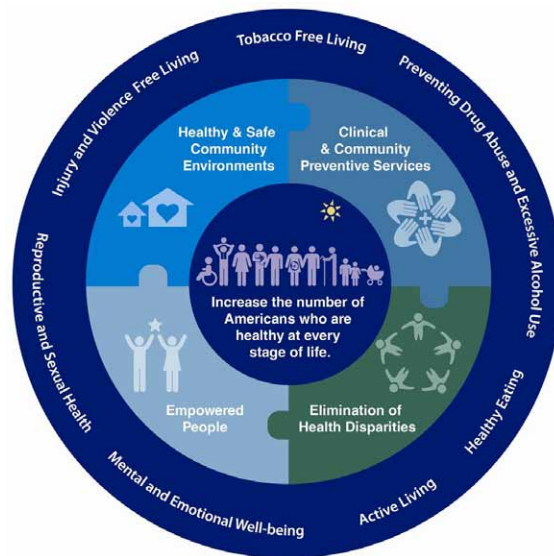
Public health departments that are seeking accreditation status from the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) will notice significant overlaps between the National Prevention Strategy's (NPS)¹ Strategic Directions and the Standards and Measures² outlined by PHAB for accreditation. This document includes an overview of PHAB accreditation, a discussion of the commonalities between the NPS and the PHAB Standards and Measures, and a look at how you can use the NPS to help with the PHAB accreditation process.

PHAB Accreditation

What is accreditation? Public health department accreditation is defined as the development of a set of standards, a process to measure health department performance against those standards, and reward or recognition for those health departments that meet the standards. PHAB's accreditation process seeks to advance quality and performance within public health departments.

Who is eligible? The governmental entity that has primary statutory or legal responsibility for public health in a tribe, state, territory, or locality is eligible to apply for accreditation.

What is the PHAB accreditation process? The PHAB accreditation process consists of seven steps: 1) pre-application, 2) application, 3) documentation selection and submission, 4) site visit, 5) accreditation decision, 6) reports, and 7) reaccreditation.



The National Prevention Strategy
America's Plan for Better Health and Wellness

The PHAB process outlines 12 domains, which are broken down into a group of standards that pertain to public health services. The first 10 domains address the 10 Essential Public Health Services.³ Domain 11 focuses on management and administration, and Domain 12 focuses on governance of the health department. All public health departments that apply for accreditation will be evaluated based on documentation that conforms to the PHAB Standards and Measures Version

The Public Health Accreditation Board is a nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing the continuous quality improvement of tribal, state, local, and territorial public health departments.

1.0. These serve as the official standards, measures, required documentation, and guidance blueprint for PHAB national public health department accreditation.

States submitting an application for accreditation must complete three prerequisites: a state health assessment, a state health improvement plan, and a health department strategic plan.

Using the NPS to Help with the PHAB Accreditation Process

Similar to the guidelines in NPS's "Healthy and Safe Community Environments" Strategic Direction, both the state health assessment, addressed in Domain 1 ("Conduct and disseminate assessments focused on population health status and public health issues facing the community"), and the state health improvement plan, addressed in Domain 5 ("Develop public health policies and plans"), must be collaborative efforts, incorporating partners from across the public health system. As states develop the strategies in their state health improvement plans, they are required to reference nationally recognized, state-of-the-art guidance and may use the NPS guidelines as a tool.

Domain 3 of the PHAB Standards requires states to "inform and educate about public health issues and functions," including disseminating public health information to the public. Information could address a broad range of public health issues, including health risks, health behaviors, disease, illness or injury prevention, and wellness. Additionally, health departments are required to show

evidence that the agency "implement[s] health promotion strategies to protect the population from preventable health conditions" and that those strategies "are evidence-based, rooted in sound theory, practice-based evidence, and/or promising practice." These requirements are easily relatable to the guidelines in the NPS "Empowered People" Strategic Direction.

Finally, both the "Clinical and Community Preventive Services" and the "Elimination of Health Disparities" Strategic Directions have counterparts in the PHAB Standards and Measures. Domain 7 ("Promote strategies to improve access to health care services") requires that health departments "participate in collaborative efforts to assess the health care needs of the population ... The focus is on the need for primary care, particularly preventive care and chronic disease management." In addition, a state health assessment (addressed in Domain 1) must address health status disparities, health equity, and high health-risk populations.

While the PHAB Standards and Measures do not mention specific health issues, as outlined in the NPS Priorities, the accreditation process requires states to use their population's data to determine and address the state's health priorities. Strategies to address the self-determined health priorities must be evidence based; as states use their state health assessment to determine their health priorities, the NPS recommendations for addressing specific issues can be implemented as part of the state health improvement plan.

Summary of Overlaps Between NPS Strategic Directions and PHAB Standards and Measures and Accreditation Activities

NPS Strategic Direction	PHAB Standards and Measures	Using the NPS to Advance Accreditation Activities
Healthy and Safe Community Environments	<p>Domain 1—Conduct and disseminate assessments focused on population health status and public health issues facing the community.</p> <p>Domain 5—Develop public health policies and plans.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use models of collaborative efforts in the NPS for the state health assessment. • Reference NPS guidelines for the state health improvement plan.
Empowered People	Domain 3—Inform and educate about public health issues and functions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use NPS guidelines to disseminate public health information.
Clinical and Community Preventive Services	Domain 7—Promote strategies to improve access to health care services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use models of collaboration to assess the healthcare needs of the population.
Elimination of Health Disparities	Domain 1—State health assessment must address health status disparities, health equity, and high health-risk populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use NPS guidelines to address health status disparities, health equity, and high health-risk populations.
NPS Priorities	n/a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use NPS strategies for state health improvement plan.

1. National Prevention Council. National Prevention Strategy. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General. 2011. Available at <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/initiatives/prevention/strategy/report.pdf>. Accessed 6-3-2013.
2. Public Health Accreditation Board. Public Health Accreditation Board Standards and Measures, Version 1.0. Alexandria, VA: Public Health Accreditation Board. 2011. Available at <http://www.phaboard.org/wp-content/uploads/PHAB-Standards-and-Measures-Version-1.0.pdf>. Accessed 6-3-2013.
3. American Public Health Association. Ten Essential Public Health Services. Washington, DC. American Public Health Association. Available at <http://www.apha.org/programs/standards/performancestandardsprogram/resexessentialservices.htm>. Accessed 6-11-2013.