

The goals of the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) and the National Public Health Performance Standards Program (NPHPSP) are very similar: to improve and protect the health of the public by advancing the quality and performance of public health entities. Both programs are designed to promote continuous quality improvement of the delivery of public health services. Participation in these assessments will provide state health agencies and systems with an understanding of their strengths and identify areas where improvements can be made.

**The National Public Health Performance Standards Program (NPHPSP)** enhances public health through implementation of a set of national performance standards for state and local public health systems.

**Mission:** To improve the quality of public health practice and performance of public health systems.

**Target audience:** State and local public health systems and boards of health.

**Standards Framework:** Ten Essential Services of Public Health and the contributions of all entities in the system.

As of June 2009, 26 states and the District of Columbia had undertaken the NPHPSP State Public Health System Assessment. The NPHPSP is designed to assess the overall public health system (all public, private, and voluntary entities that contribute to public health activities within a given area). The program's standards are based on the 10 Essential Services (E.S.) and describe the public health activities that should be provided in all communities. Focusing on the public health system, assures that the contributions of all entities are recognized in assessing the provision of the 10 E.S. The standards are set at an optimal level to assure that they can be used on an ongoing quality improvement basis.

The focus of NPHPSP on the public health system can serve as an excellent complement to the accreditation program's attention to the public health agency.

The **Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB)** is dedicated to promoting and implementing a national accreditation program for state, territorial, tribal, and local health departments.

**Mission:** To advance the continuous quality improvement of state, local, tribal and territorial health departments.

**Target Audience:** State, local, territorial, and tribal public health departments.

**Standards Framework:** Eleven domains that measure the agency performance for the ten Essential Services, plus an eleventh domain about management and governance.

Whereas the NPHPSP instruments are designed to assess the public health system, the focus of PHAB's national accreditation program is on the performance of public health departments. PHAB accreditation will include an assessment process and site visit geared to promoting quality improvement and eligibility will be flexible to accommodate the various configurations of governmental public health. The development of the PHAB standards involved a review and consideration of several existing standards and measures, including those of the NPHPSP's state and local instruments. PHAB's standards have been developed for 11 domains, the 10 E.S. and an additional domain focusing on management and governance. The standards and assessment process have been developed in a manner intended to advance the pursuit of excellence, continuous quality improvement, and accountability for the public's health.

While conducting the NPHPSP state assessment will not automatically lead to accreditation, these performance improvement activities are not mutually exclusive. Working together, agencies and systems will be better able to improve their performance and have a greater impact on health outcomes. The NPSPP instrument is an excellent tool that can be used to prepare for or sustain national accreditation.



For more information about the national accreditation program please visit PHAB at [www.phaboard.org](http://www.phaboard.org).



To learn more about the NPHPSP, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at [www.cdc.gov/od/ocphp/nphpsp](http://www.cdc.gov/od/ocphp/nphpsp) and the ASTHO website at [www.astho.org](http://www.astho.org).

## How is the NPHPSP Linked to PHAB?

- Both are based on the 10 Essential Services.
- The NPHPSP's state and local instruments informed the development of the PHAB standards.
- The NPHPSP focus on the public health system complements the PHAB focus on the public health agency.
- The NPHPSP state instrument can be used to prepare for or sustain national accreditation by:
  - Developing a culture of performance improvement
  - Understanding strengths and weaknesses
  - Building public health systems partnerships
  - Strengthening the public health system by addressing identified weaknesses