The Impact of PHAB Accreditation on Planning and Assessment

What does Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) accreditation do?
Drives health department performance and efficiency by promoting a culture of quality.

What are health departments saying about the benefits¹ of accreditation?
95%
said that accreditation allowed their health department to better identify strengths and weaknesses.

Accreditation Success Spotlight

Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH)
Arkansas Department of Health (ADH)

"National accreditation demonstrates that the [health department] uses data to make decisions, that we analyze outcomes, and that we continually monitor and improve all of our programs to better serve Mississippians. Continuous quality improvement is the keystone of national accreditation. It involves measuring and monitoring all of our programs and discovering ways to be more effective in our mission." — Mary Currier, state health officer for the Mississippi State Department of Health

Before Accreditation
No coordinated approach to identify agency strengths and weaknesses, or assess internal processes.
Participated in the PHAB Beta Test to determine alignment with public health expectations and standards.

Pursuing Accreditation
PHAB standards and measures used as a framework for self-assessment.
Accreditation preparation revealed inconsistencies in health department practices to make improvements in data and quality activities and processes.
Updated policy manuals, led assessment and planning efforts, and created an Office of Performance Improvement to address gaps.

After Accreditation
Leaders now rely on the agency performance management system to monitor and evaluate systems and programs.
Targets and metrics from the strategic plan and the health improvement plan are used to consistently assess agency performance.

Improvements Facilitated by Accreditation
Engaged Partners in Health Improvement Planning
Organizations and community members contributed to a process to identify factors affecting the health of Mississippians.
Input from 43 focus groups and over 19,000 individuals provided insight on important health issues. This collaborative process allowed MSDH to identify significant public health needs.
Within two years, measurable improvements have been observed for:
- Long-acting reproductive healthcare services
- New employee onboarding
- Environmental Health
- Streamlined workforce development and employee onboarding

Strengthened IT Infrastructure in Environmental Health
The accreditation document review process highlighted weaknesses in ADH’s IT system for environmental health and safety inspections.
ADH used IT tools and process mapping activities to optimize IT system and web interface. Now, the system is user-friendly, and anyone can access reports and inspection results from various issues, including:
- Public pool cleanliness
- Indoor air quality
- Retail food safety

Performance Management and Quality Improvement
Leaders now rely on the agency performance management system to monitor and evaluate systems and programs.
Targets and metrics from the strategic plan and the health improvement plan are used to consistently assess agency performance.

¹These percentages are based on the results of surveys conducted by the Public Health Accreditation Board as part of their accreditation process and are not necessarily representative of the experiences of all health departments.

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