

Talking Points

Achieving Healthy Communities Through Performance Management Systems



Why should public health departments be concerned with performance management systems?

- **Better systems lead to better outcomes.** Performance management processes have produced measurable improvements in the quality, outputs, and outcomes of public health services.
 - In a survey of state health agencies, 76% reported that their performance management efforts resulted in improved performance.¹
- **Performance management can positively influence a public health agency in multiple ways:²**
 - Better return on dollars invested in public health, and better data for illustrating that value.
 - Better alignment of strategic objectives with relevant measures of success.
 - Greater accountability for funding and increases in the public's trust.
 - Reduced duplication of efforts.
 - Better understanding of public health accomplishments and priorities among employees, partners, and the public.
 - Increased cooperation and teamwork.
 - Refocused emphasis on quality, rather than quantity.
 - Improved problem solving.



How do I get started with performance management systems?

- **Review the [Public Health Performance Management Framework](#) and complete the [Performance Management Self-Assessment](#).** These resources will help you and your organization identify the extent to which you have the components of a performance management system in place.
- **Dedicate resources.** Getting started will take resource dollars to build and maintain a performance tracking system and support a performance management coordinator.
 - An outcome of the [National Public Health Improvement Initiative](#) has been an increase in dedicated staff time, system capabilities, and routine performance tracking and reporting.³
- **Inform leadership.** Use talking points to engage leadership and gain buy-in. Ask leaders to designate authority and enable staff to implement changes related to performance management within the organization.



What does it take to effectively institutionalize performance management in an organization?

- **Multiple factors contribute to effective institutionalization:**
 - Training, leadership support and understanding, time and practice, data systems technology, dedicated staff, common language and terminology, infrastructure, leveraged political interest in accountability, related requirements (e.g., accreditation), outside support and networks (e.g., The Multi-State Learning Collaborative(MLC)).⁴

¹ [Performance Management Practices in States: Results of a Baseline Assessment of State Health Agencies.](#)

² Adapted from: [From Silos to Systems: Using Performance Management to Improve the Public's Health](#) (page 17).

³ [Accreditation and Performance and Quality Improvement: "The Latest" from CDC](#) March 2011 (slide 6).

⁴ This list is an output of a Performance Management Think Tank meeting hosted by the Public Health Foundation on March 14, 2012.

- **An effective performance management system is completely integrated into the health department's daily practice at all levels:**⁵
 - Setting organizational objectives across all levels of the department.
 - Identifying indicators to measure progress towards achieving objectives on a regular basis.
 - Identifying responsibility for monitoring progress and reporting.
 - Identifying areas where achieving objectives requires focused quality improvement processes.



How does performance management relate to public health accreditation, community health assessment planning (e.g., SHA/CHA), and community health improvement planning (e.g., SHIP/CHIP)?

- The [Public Health Accreditation Board](#) (PHAB) launched its voluntary national accreditation program for public health departments in September 2011. This program requires health departments to submit three prerequisites, developed within five years prior, as part of the application process: 1) a community health assessment (SHA/CHA), 2) a community health improvement plan (SHIP/CHIP), and 3) an agency strategic plan. The PHAB Standards and Measures Version 1.0 (Domain 9, Standard 9.1) states that a health department must use a performance management system to monitor achievement of organizational objectives.
- Quality Improvement is a central element of an effective performance management system, and also a requirement for accreditation (again, Domain 9), through completion of both programmatic and administrative quality improvement initiatives. Completing these requirements will ensure that health departments are well-positioned to implement performance management broadly in their organizations.



What investments are being made in performance management?

- [The National Public Health Improvement Initiative](#) through the CDC supports state and local public health departments improve their performance management, training and collaboration through awarding them \$42.5 million in grants, distributed to 94 projects in 49 states, 16 tribes and territories and nine local jurisdictions. The five-year cooperative agreement awards are being funded by the health care reform law.

Related Resource Links

- PHF's introductory slide presentation [Performance Management Framework: Introduction and Application to Public Health](#)
- Michigan Public Health Institute's [Embracing Quality in Public Health: A Practitioner's Performance Management Primer](#)
- PHF's [Turning Point: Performance Management Project and Publications](#) resource page.
- MLC Topical Brief on [Improving the Public's Health Systematically: Public Health and Performance Management Systems](#) – Examples from Florida, Oklahoma, and South Carolina.
- [CDC's National Public Health Improvement Initiative.](#)

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⁵ [Public Health Accreditation Board Standards and Measures Version 1.0 May 2011.](#)