

PUBLIC HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP

PUBLIC HEALTH STANDARDS

Summary for discussion at PHIP

SEPTEMBER 5, 2013

BACKGROUND

Washington State has been working to measure and improve performance across the public health system through the development and application of standards since 1998. These standards define public health processes and responsibilities that communities need. There have been four reviews of standards; 2002 (baseline), 2005, 2008 and 2011, with each review cycle showing improved performance across the system. In 2009, the National Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) developed a set of standards for voluntary accreditation for public health agencies. State laws require that we set basic standards for public health as a part of the biennial Public Health Improvement Plan, a process designed to strengthen the public health system in order to improve the health of people. (RCW 43.70.520 and 580)

PURPOSE AND GOAL

The Public Health Standards Workgroup under the Public Health Improvement Partnership's direction works to assure that every resident of Washington has access to a predictable level of public health protection, through quality improvement initiatives and encouraging national accreditation. The reviews of the system statewide have also provided opportunities for targeted improvement.

UPDATE ON ACTIONS

Recommendations from 2011 Standards Performance Review

Following the 2011 Standards Performance Review, the Partnership recommended that the system focus on three areas for improvement—strategic plans, community health improvement plans and further implementation of quality improvement. They also adopted the most current PHAB standards in place of the Washington standards, a second set of standards similar to the *2011 Basic set* with a sunset clause, and moved to a five year cycle.

Since then...

- Two public health agencies (Department of Health and Spokane Regional Health District) have received national accreditation and 10 additional local health agencies plan to apply within the next two years
- Washington received CDC (NNPHI) funds to develop three Performance Management Centers for Excellence and have provided extensive training in quality improvement and preparation for accreditation, including the 3 prerequisites (community health assessments, community health improvement plans and strategic plans)

- Local Capacity Development Funds were directed to quality improvement across local health agencies in the areas of community health assessments, improvement plans and strategic plans
- Subgroup of the Public Health Standards Workgroup is working on a *Foundational Performance Set* to align the foundational public health services with PHAB standards, and other measures including the public health activities and services, local public health indicators and other program performance measures. It will replace the *Basic Set* used in 2011. This option is early in its design phase and shows promise of providing application beyond quality improvement and begin to answer across the system what each local health agency provides in terms of the foundational services, how much of these they do, and how well they are done.

QUESTIONS FOR THE PARTNERSHIP

Impacting the future direction of public health standards in Washington

1. PHAB was established to provide accreditation. Do we need to duplicate this process in Washington?
2. How do we offset the review costs to local health agencies and how to increase capacity at the Department of Health to conduct the reviews? (2011 consultants costs were \$125K)
3. How do we develop incentives for all local health agencies to participate in PHAB or a *Foundational Performance Set* review?
4. How do we provide a system wide look if the sets (PHAB and *Foundational Performance Set*) are very different and PHAB results are confidential?
5. Since standards are a part of the Public Health Improvement Plan legislation, do we need to perform periodic system wide reviews in some other way?