

Standards for Public Health in Washington State: 2005 Performance Assessment Report Local Health Jurisdictions Report for: Northeast Tri-County Health District

The Standards and the 2005 Performance Assessment

Thank you for participating in the performance assessment of the Standards for Public Health in Washington State. The intent of the Standards is to provide an overarching measurement framework for the many services, programs, legislation, and state and local administrative codes that affect public health. The Washington State Standards for Public Health Performance address all 10 Public Health Essential Services and crosswalk directly to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Standards for Performance.

The Washington standards and measures exemplify the national goals for public health performance measurement and development of standards—quality improvement, accountability, and science. Points to remember when looking at the reports include:

- The Standards articulate a higher level of performance, often described as stretch standards, not a description of the system as it is performing currently.
- The Standards reflect an improvement cycle; results of the performance assessment should be used to target areas for improvement.

This Report

The site reviews again demonstrated the incredible commitment, creativity and hard work of the people in the public health system. This report is specific to your local health jurisdiction and is intended to give you feedback about the materials you provided as a demonstration of how you met each measure. However, before describing the details that are in the report, we want to summarize overall observations regarding your organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement as observed during the site review.

Strengths

- The extensive LHJ involvement in community groups to address priority issues demonstrated through the Interagency Coordinating Council and other advisory group minutes is impressive.
- The assessment activities including the Infant and Toddler Early Intervention Assessment and Plan and the Tobacco Plan provide data for program evaluation and decision-making.
- The Emergency Response Plan is comprehensive and addresses the LHJ's involvement with other agencies, including the BRITE After-Action Report.
- The Food Manual for Managers provides excellent guidance and technical advice for food establishment managers.

- The commitment to implementing and using databases for EH with Decade/Envision and the current planning to implement PHIMS.

Areas for Improvement

- Establish performance measures directly linked to goals and objectives, conduct data analysis and monitoring of performance measures for outcomes or health status in addition to the currently reported productivity measures. Conduct analysis of program and health status data to provide the ability to compare outcomes to quantitative goals and measures, to identify trends and to provide information for program improvements.
- Expand BOH reports to include data and data analysis to provide basis for conclusions on priorities and other community health issues.
- Implement processes to conduct regular audits of CD investigations and EH activities to identify areas for improvement in handling of investigations and in staff compliance with procedures and regulations.
- Improve training logs to identify community training sessions versus staff training.

The Performance Assessment Approach

The performance assessment included all 35 local health jurisdictions (LHJs) in the state and 26 Department of Health (DOH) program sites selected by DOH for evaluation. Each site was asked to complete a self-assessment tool and to prepare for an on-site visit by organizing the documentation supporting the self-assessment on each measure.

For this cycle of assessment there were two new aspects that were not part of the 2002 Baseline Evaluation; the selection of specific environmental health and prevention and promotion programs for more in-depth review, and the evaluation of the new Proposed Administrative Standards and Measures. This expansion of the scope of the assessment was addressed through the training and use of internal DOH and LHJ reviewers working under the supervision of the external consultants.

During the site review, an independent consultant and an internal DOH reviewer evaluated the documents and scored each measure. When the reviewer had questions regarding the documentation, an informal interview was conducted with the appropriate manager or staff person. In addition, potential exemplary practice documentation was requested from each site. The on-site reviews concluded with an exit interview in which general strengths and opportunities for improvement were discussed, and feedback on the Standards and assessment process was obtained. All of this information has been compiled into a system-wide report, with recommendations regarding the next steps for the system.

Results of the Site Review

The attached report is organized to follow the Standards format. The Standards have five topic areas (please note that these are not necessarily synonymous with program areas, there are organization-wide measures to be found in each of them). Within each of these five topic areas, four to five standards are identified for the entire governmental public health system. For each standard, specific measures are described for local health jurisdictions. For LHJs, all measures

were applicable; however, some (for example those that required certain actions related to an outbreak) were not applicable if an event had not occurred.

Program Review Results: For the measures that were assessed through program review, the scores for all programs reviewed for the individual measure were aggregated to calculate an “agency-wide” score for the measure. For these measures the LHJ detail shows only the aggregate score for the measure as the detailed comments for these measures are included in the program reports. Attached to this summary report are four program specific reports with the detailed scoring for each measure evaluated for each program, with related comments.

Administrative Standards Results: For the Administrative Standards, this evaluation cycle was to evaluate the Proposed Administrative Standards and Measures themselves and not to report site specific performance. The results of our evaluation of these standards and measures are at the system level only, therefore, this report does not contain any results for the Proposed Administrative standards.

Comparability to the 2002 Baseline results: Due to the major revisions in the environmental health topic area of standards, and to the program review method of evaluation used for numerous measures, only some of the 2005 results can be compared to the results of the 2002 Baseline. The measures that are considered comparable between the two cycles are:

- All Assessment (AS) measures, except AS 3.2 and AS 3.3, which were evaluated through program review
- All Communicable Disease (CD) measures
- Prevention and Promotion (PP) measures in standards PP1, PP2, and PP3
- All Access (AC) measures

This report provides you with the following information:

- *For all measures:* a table listing all the measures with the performance designation to serve as a quick reference tool in identifying the measures that demonstrated performance, those scored as a partial, and those that did not demonstrate performance against the measure.
- *For each measure* (we have not repeated these in the report in order to reduce the number of pages, but have grouped them under their overarching standard): the *score* assigned by the reviewer:
 - 2 = demonstrates the measure,
 - 1 = partially demonstrates the measure,
 - 0 = does not demonstrate the measure,
 - 8 = not applicable,
 - 9 = not able to rate [did not participate at a topic area level]

Comments provide clarification regarding the intent of the measure or the score assigned.

Documents lists, in abbreviated form, the documents that were the basis for the score. When multiple documents were provided and some did not demonstrate the measure or there were many more examples than needed, they are not all listed.

Exemplary documents lists documents requested for review as potential examples in the exemplary practices compendium.

- *For each topic area:* at the end of each topic area, there is a roll-up of the scores on all applicable, rated measures in the topic area (the percent of measures scored as *demonstrates*, the percent scored as *partially demonstrates*, the percent scored as *does not demonstrate*). Next to your roll-up for the topic area is a roll-up for peer counties, and then a statewide roll-up. Your peer counties are identified below, based on the DOH analysis of Dominant Rural Urban Commuting Area Codes (for detail on this methodology, please go to the DOH website <http://www.doh.wa.gov/Data/Guidelines/RuralUrban.htm>). There is no intent, in an improvement-focused effort, to compare specific organizations to one another. However, this roll-up data does provide each site reviewed with performance benchmarks.
- *For all topic areas:* the final segment of this part of the report provides you with a roll-up of all topic areas, with the same benchmark data from the peer group and statewide roll-ups.

Peer Groupings

<i>Small Town/Rural</i>	<i>Mixed Rural</i>	<i>Large Town</i>	<i>Urban</i>
Adams	Clallam	Asotin	Benton/Franklin
Columbia	Grays Harbor	Chelan/Douglas	Clark
Garfield	Island	Grant	Cowlitz
Jefferson	Mason	Kittitas	King
Klickitat	Skagit	Lewis	Kitsap
Lincoln	Skamania	Walla Walla	Pierce
NE Tri-County		Whitman	Snohomish
Okanogan			Spokane
Pacific			Thurston
San Juan			Whatcom
Wahkiakum			Yakima

Next Steps

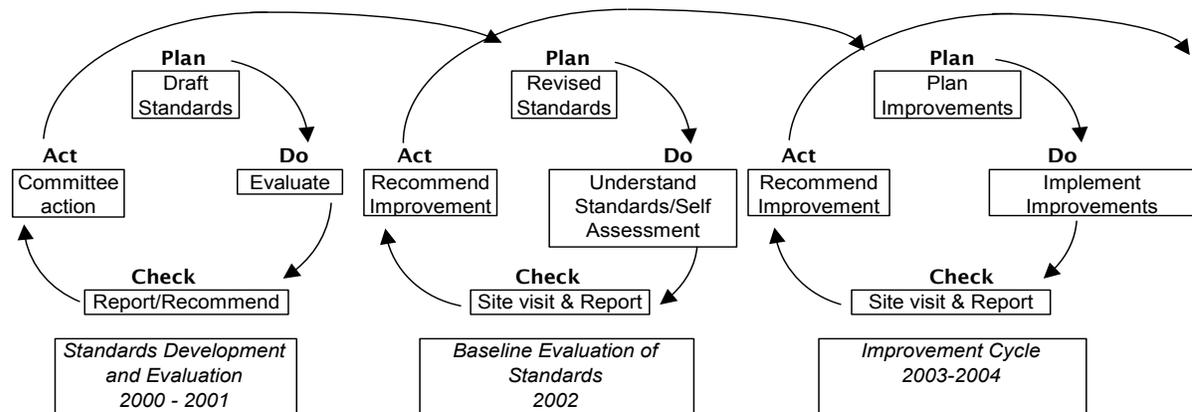
First, celebrate what you have accomplished. In the two and a half year period between the 2002 Baseline Evaluation and this performance assessment, it was clear to the site reviewers that improvements had been developed and implemented. Again, thank you for all of your hard work every day, and especially in preparing for the site reviews.

Next, select the areas where you want to improve your performance. All of the information provided in this report is intended to support improvement of your organization’s work on behalf of the citizens in your community and Washington State. After you have had a chance to digest this report and share it with staff and your Board of Health, you should review the data again to determine which areas of your work might benefit from a *focused improvement process*. Develop a brief, but specific and doable work plan—don’t try to improve everything at once!

In selecting your areas of improvement you will be able to look at your overall strengths and opportunities for improvement (summarized above), or at the scores of specific measures or topic areas. You will be assisted in this effort by several initiatives:

- **Exemplary practices:** The Exemplary Practices Compendium provides you with documentation from many of the LHJs in Washington State. Potential exemplary practice documents were gathered from each of the sites and the very best examples for each measure will be organized into an electronic tool kit. This material will be available by year-end 2005 at www.doh.wa.gov/hip/Standards/BestPractices/StandardsExemplaryPractices.htm.
- **Statewide initiatives** projects such as the implementation of the Public Health Issue Management System (PHIMS) for communicable disease and the Assessment in Action project to build assessment capacity at the local level also support improvement of practice and documentation. Based on the recommendations in the system-wide report, the PHIP process will adopt additional statewide initiatives related to the measures.

Finally, begin preparing now for the next performance assessment. The assessment process itself has been conducted using quality improvement principles and methods, including the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle. As shown below, the standards field test in 2000, the baseline in 2002, and this 2005 performance assessment are all part of the cycle of continuous quality improvement. The next cycle is planned for 2006-08, with site visits probably occurring in the spring of 2008.



Strategies for building on your current performance:

- Save the documentation you have used in this assessment as a good starting point for continuing to identify documentation for demonstrating performance.
- Establish an electronic document library for collecting documentation and facilitating the use of an electronic format for the next assessment. This cycle there were three LHJs that used an electronic format for all their documentation. These sites stated that the electronic preparation was much easier and helpful to the process than making paper copies of the documentation.
- Adopt or adapt as many exemplary practices as possible to improve your performance against the measures. There is no reason to “re-invent the wheel”, when another LHJ may have an excellent process or documentation method that you can start using with less time and effort.
- Participate in regional or state-wide improvement efforts that are identified through PHIP work, or other multi-disciplinary efforts, such as the recent Assessment in Action effort to build capacity for assessment at the local level.

- Identify methods for getting technical assistance from state programs, or from other LHJs that may have targeted the same areas for improvement. Great gains can be made through sharing ideas and resources.

Again, we thank you for all your work in preparing for this 2005 performance assessment, and especially for the terrific work you do in protecting and promoting the health of the citizens of Washington State that we were privileged to review.