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JUL-DEC 2012

PUBLIC HEALTH
ALWAYS WORKING FOR A SAFER AND
HEALTHIER WASHINGTON

AGENDA FOR CHANGE ACTION PLAN

The landscape for health is changing across the nation. Thanks to successes in public health, communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and influenza are no longer the leading causes of death. People now become ill and die early from preventable chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease that result from tobacco use, poor nutrition and lack of physical activity. Public health approaches will help solve this new challenge if we align our resources and competencies to match.

Implementation of the Affordable Care Act brings new opportunities for expanding insurance coverage and access to care for some of our most vulnerable populations. It provides states the ability to define essential health benefits. Ultimately, it allows the health care system to reform its business practices while ensuring better collaboration with partners — as a means to slowing the increase in health care costs, improving the experience of care and improving the health of populations.

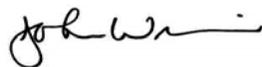
We are also living in a time when resources are scarce and competitive. Public health agencies have seen major cutbacks over the past several years, compromising our ability to protect and improve the health of our communities.

With the **Agenda for Change**, our state can be at the forefront of responding to this changing landscape by transforming our public health network through three approaches:

- **Foundational public health services** ensure every resident in Washington can access a foundational set of public health services supported by adequate and predictable funding, no matter where he or she lives. These foundational services are necessary but not sufficient. Just like the foundations of buildings support the larger structure, the public health foundational programs support other standalone federal or fee supported programs, like WIC, emergency preparedness and response, food safety inspections, and diabetes prevention.
- **Strategically prioritize** our work so the public health network is working together to confront emerging challenges. The *Agenda for Change* helps us focus on the most important elements of preventing communicable disease and other health threats, fostering healthy communities and environments, and partnering with the health care system.
- **Transform Business Processes.** Reform how we do business. Take steps to ensure our workforce has the necessary skills and competencies to address new challenges, adopting the best of both private and public sector management into our operations, and developing a long-term strategy for predictable and appropriate levels of financing.
- **Commit to health equity and eliminating health disparities.** All Washingtonians should have the opportunity to live long, healthy lives regardless of geography; education; income level; race; ethnicity; sexual orientation; or physical, mental, or emotional abilities. Achieving health equity is a public health priority as local public health agencies, tribes, and the state work to identify health disparities and implement strategies to eliminate them.

To view the Agenda for Change Action Plan, visit

www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1200/A4C-APsummary.pdf



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ACTIVITIES & SERVICES

A recent activities and services data are used revealed the following:

- Half of the respondents (17 local health agencies) have used the activities and services data and shared it with their local boards of health or other boards.
- They have also used the data in grant applications, educational sessions, meeting with elected officials, in community settings, and to help prepare reports and budgets.
- Half of the responding agencies have used the data to compare activities and services across agencies.
- Suggestions were made to provide additional tools to share information with interest groups, templates to display data comparisons, sample stories using the data, and more options for data trends.

To view the complete survey results, visit

www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1200/PHAS-2011useSurvey.pdf

In addition to preparing for the 2012 inventory, in 2013 the Public Health Activities and Services Workgroup will:

- Discuss capturing the public health activities and services provided by Washington's 29 tribes
- Identify performance measures for these activities and services

To view the public health activities and services database, visit

<https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/philp/PHIP/>

INDICATORS

A recent survey assessing how local public health indicators data are used revealed the following:

- Local health agencies have used the indicators to share data with local boards of health, health care organizations, and others.
- The indicators were primarily used to assist with priority setting, address health disparities, identify health status in community assessments, assist with the creation of community health improvement plans, create awareness about health issues, and obtain resources to address health issues.
- About one-third of the local health agencies use the local public health indicators as their primary set of health indicators; the rest use the [University of Wisconsin County Health Rankings](#), locally selected indicators and other indicator sets.

To view the complete survey results, visit

www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1200/PHI-2012UseResults.pdf

In addition to preparing for the 2013 update, the Public Health Indicators Workgroup will:

- Look at what other national indicator data are available and how these can add value to local public health indicators efforts
- Boost up activities around communication and promotion of indicator use

To view the local public indicator database, visit

www.doh.wa.gov/lphi

STANDARDS

Three Public Health Standards Subgroups are working on the following:

- **Limited Set of Public Health Standards**
This subgroup is developing an initial draft of a limited set of standards based on the [PHAB Version 1 standards](#) for local health agencies who are not applying for PHAB accreditation. The group continues to develop the set.
- **Standards/Accreditation Coordinators**
This subgroup is in the process of finalizing dates and programs for its 2013 quarterly trainings.
- **Exemplary Practices**
This subgroup is continuing to align the 2010-2011 exemplary practices with the PHAB version 1.0 standards.

To view the most current PHAB Version 1.0 standards, visit www.phaboard.org/wp-content/uploads/PHAB-Standards-and-Measures-Version-1_0.pdf

To view the 2011 Public Health Exemplary Practices Compendium, visit www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1200/Phs-EPcompendium.pdf