

2013-2014 Accreditation Support Initiative (ASI) for Local Health Departments

FINAL REPORT

1. **Community Description**

Briefly characterize the community(ies) served by your agency (location, population served, jurisdiction type, organization structure, etc.). The purpose of this section is to provide context to a reader who may be unfamiliar with your agency.

Washington County is one of three counties making up the Portland metropolitan area, located west of Portland. The county spans 727 square miles and is the second largest county by population in Oregon. The population has grown by approximately 70% since 1990, reaching nearly 533,000 in 2010. Washington County residents range from rural and migrant farm workers to high tech industry employees living in urban and suburban settings. It is home to the fifth and sixth largest cities in the state, while approximately half of county residents live in unincorporated areas and 7% of the population lives in a census-designated rural area. The population is one of the most diverse in the state with 30% of residents identifying as non-white. Washington County has a relatively young population with 35% of the population under age 24, 64% of the population between 18 – 64 years of age and 10% 65 years of age or older. Poverty rates in Washington County have steadily increased since the year 2000 with disparities in poverty and disability status by age, race and ethnicity.

The Washington County Public Health Division (WCPH) employs over 100 staff and encompasses several different programs that provide services and activities related to prevention, protection and support so that all people in Washington County can be healthy, well, self-sufficient and safe. These programs include: Health Promotion; Environmental Health; Women Infants and Children; Maternal Child Health; Public Health Clinics; Communicable Disease/Epidemiology; Emergency Medical Services; Emergency Preparedness.

2. **Project Overview**

Provide an overview of the work your agency conducted with or because of this funding, including the significant accomplishments/deliverables completed between January 2014-May 2014 and the key activities engaged in to achieve these accomplishments. This should result in a narrative summary of the chart you completed in Part 1, in a format that is easily understandable by others.

Washington County Public Health Division (WCPH) is committed to public health accreditation and submitted a Statement of Intent to apply for accreditation on January 15th, 2014. During the NACCHO ASI project period, WCPH focused on developing a performance management and quality improvement (PMQI) system. Prior to the ASI funding, WCPH had developed infrastructure to support a PMQI system and identified “a culture of quality improvement” as an agency-wide goal; the grant period lined up well to support continuation of this work. The focus of this grant was on staff training and development in performance management, development of the PMQI system, and development of a written PMQI plan.

WCPH worked with a performance management consultant, Cindan Gizzy from Tacoma-Pierce

County Health Department in Washington State to provide training to staff and leadership on developing effective performance measures and an effective performance management system. Prior to the trainings, each program developed a program roadmap, similar to a logic model, which outlined the program's primary activities and outcomes to assist in determining meaningful performance measures. The trainings were in a workshop format and staff had the opportunity for hands-on practice developing performance measures. The first training was focused on developing effective program-specific measures and was attended by the performance measurement teams from each public health program (made up of the supervisor and 2-3 staff per program). The second training was for the WCPH leadership team and the content focused on the role of leadership in developing and maintaining an effective performance management system and developing effective, meaningful division-level measures.

The second key activity was the overall development of the performance management system. Each program across WCPH designated a team made up of the supervisor and key staff to go through a three step process: (1) develop a roadmap or logic model of their program's primary activities and outcomes; (2) use the roadmap to identify important goals and focus areas for the program that are aligned with WCPH strategic goals; and (3) develop 1-3 performance measures (for year one) to start the performance measurement process. The leadership team used the program performance measures, along with WCPH's updated Strategic Plan objectives to draft division-level measures. The process involved developing goals, objectives, performance measures, and targets. In addition, each program identified a reporting schedule and data analysis plan. All identified performance measures are described fully in individual measurement description forms and are summarized in an excel spreadsheet. The measures will be tracked using an online dashboard system called Klipfolio. WCPH's PMQI Council adopted the PMQI system that outlines all these components and how they align.

The third focus area was development of a written PMQI Plan that acts as a guide for the PMQI system. The plan includes comprehensive explanation of the mission and vision, methods and tools, the process for developing performance measures and determining quality improvement priorities, the evaluation and reporting structure, and the alignment between other plans and priorities for WCPH. The primary purpose of the PMQI plan is to outline goals and activities for moving toward a culture of quality across WCPH.

3. **Challenges**

*Describe any challenges or barriers encountered as your agency worked to complete the selected deliverables. These can be challenges your agency may have anticipated at the start of the initiative or unexpected challenges that emerged during the course of implementing your proposed activities and completing your deliverables. If challenges were noted in your interim report, please **do** include them here as well. Please include both tangible (e.g., natural disaster, leadership change) and intangible (e.g., lack of staff engagement) challenges.*

The challenges that were experienced during the ASI project period were not unexpected, but a result of performance management being new territory for WCPH. Significant time was needed in order to develop a meaningful performance management system that aligned well with WCPH culture and WCPH strategic goals and priorities.

One challenge was aligning the WCPH strategic plan, the division-wide measures, and the program-level measures. The Strategic Plan was updated during the same time period, which was challenging but also allowed the opportunity to ensure alignment. It took time to get to an understanding of how these components fit together in our PMQI model.

The process to get approval for use of the online dashboard system Klipfolio took longer than expected, but everything is now finalized.

4. **Facilitators of Success**

Describe factors or strategies that helped to facilitate completion of your agency's work. These can be conditions at your agency that contributed to your successes or specific actions you took that helped make your project successful or mitigated challenges described above. Please include both tangible (e.g., influx of funds from another source) and intangible (e.g., staff or leadership engagement) facilitators.

The NACCHO ASI grant timeline enabled WCPH to move more quickly on this work than would have been the case without the funding. The timeline helped WCPH keep momentum and focused on the targeted outcomes.

Cindan Gizzy, the consultant who provided training and technical assistance, provided invaluable feedback based on her experiences and lessons learned from real-life performance management systems. In the past, WCPH leadership and staff participated in training focused on performance management theories and concepts. Cindan's training series complimented past trainings and focused on information about how performance management looks in real life public health settings. The workshop structure allowed for some committed time to work on performance measures and get technical assistance on the process. Her feedback also helped us identify appropriate timelines and reporting schedules for the identified performance measures.

WCPH hired an intern working toward her Masters in Public Health (MPH) in Health Policy and Management. The focus of Chelsea Larsen's internship was the written PMQI Plan and development of the PMQI system. She supported the PMQI coordinator and provided focused capacity to pull together many of the components. She provided a fresh, creative perspective and a focus on evaluation methods and a customer focus throughout the development of the plan.

The third major facilitator of success was the engagement and support of WCPH leadership. The leadership team is committed to developing a culture of quality and supported each step in the process. The ASI project encouraged focused energy on determining the meaningful goals and objectives for performance management at WCPH.

5. **Lessons Learned**

Please describe your agency's overall lessons learned from participating in the ASI. These can be things you might do differently if you could repeat the process and/or the kinds of advice you might give to other health departments who are pursuing similar accreditation-related funding opportunities or technical assistance activities.

Overall, participating in the ASI helped WCPH make significant progress in performance management and quality improvement. A few lessons learned include issues related to alignment between components of the performance management plan, the timeline, and performance measure development.

In order to support alignment between the strategic plan, division-wide measures and program-specific measures, it is important to develop a specific plan for this alignment prior to starting the process. Ideally, the Strategic Plan would be completed right before developing performance measures as the second component of the strategic planning process.

In developing performance measures, WCPH found it helpful to ask the following questions that were recommended to us by other local health departments: (1) Is this a measure that I can count, quantify, and graph?; (2) Will this measure give me useful, actionable feedback?; (3) Is this a measure I can influence or affect?; (4) Will my team, boss, customers, and I care about the outcome of the measure?

In addition to going through these questions, it is important to gather specific information related to the measure including how the data is currently collected, who will be the “owner” of the performance measure, if the reporting timeline aligns with the way the data is captured, and other specific descriptive information.

Many of the steps associated with performance management take longer than expected. Developing a detailed schedule that outlines each component would be helpful, especially when working within the ASI grant project period.

6. **Funding Impact**

Describe the impact that this funding has had on your agency. How has this funding advanced your agency’s accreditation readiness or quality improvement efforts?

With this funding, WCPH was able to develop a meaningful, comprehensive performance management and quality improvement system. This The funding provided improved connectedness between all the components including the Community Health Improvement Plan, the Strategic Plan, and the PMQI system. This supported accreditation readiness and developing a culture of quality across WCPH.

7. **Next Steps and Sustainability**

What are your agency’s general plans for the next 12-24 months in terms of accreditation preparation and quality improvement? How will the work completed as part of the ASI be sustained moving forward?

WCPH submitted a Statement of Intent to apply for accreditation on January 15th, 2014 and plans to apply within the year. There has been significant progress made on the accreditation prerequisites: the Community Health Assessment is complete, the Community Health Improvement Plan is in progress and the Strategic Plan is complete, with an updated version to be complete by the end of the summer. A Workforce Development Plan was completed in the fall of 2013 and is being implemented. WCPH will continue to address other areas within the accreditation domains.

NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

The official “go live” date for tracking and reporting out on the performance measures that were developed during the ASI project period is July 1st, 2014. The WCPH Performance Management and Quality Improvement (PMQI) Council identified “developing a culture of quality” as a strategic objective and will continue to implement the PMQI system to move toward that goal.