

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.

The Flathead City-County Health Department is located in Northwest Montana and provides medical and public health services primarily to the residents of Flathead County; however, services are also provided to residents of neighboring counties and to neighboring Indian Reservations. According to the 2011 U.S. Census estimate, Flathead County has a total population of 91,301 making it the fourth largest county in Montana and one of the fastest growing counties in the state, with a population increase of 22.1% from 2000 to 2010. Flathead County is predominately Caucasian (95.5%), and the population is evenly split between males and females (50.2% female and 49.8% male). In Flathead County, 11.7% of the residents live at or below 100% of federal poverty levels. The median household income is approximately \$45,000. The Flathead City-County Health Department is governed by a 7-member Board of Health composed of a County Commissioner, a City of Kalispell representative, and five additional members appointed by the Flathead County Commissioners. The Board of Health is responsible for setting policies and for appointing the Health Officer. The Health Department employs 90 staff in five divisions. These divisions include Community Health Services, Environmental Health Services, Family Planning and HIV Services, Flathead Community Health Center, and Health Promotion.

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.

The Flathead City-County Health Department utilized the funding to complete a performance management self-assessment, develop program specific performance standards and measures, and to produce a performance management policy. The work began with the completion of the Public Health Foundation Public Health Performance Management Self-Assessment Tool. The self-assessment provided a starting point for the development of a performance management system. The self-assessment was also completed at the end of the grant period to accurately display the current status of the performance management system following all the work completed. The performance management system was modeled after the system created by the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (a methodology built around logic models). Utilizing this methodology staff participated in meetings to develop performance standards and measures. This information was summarized in logic models and a performance management

system policy was written to detail the role of staff and leadership, and describe the procedures for monitoring, tracking and reporting on the performance measures.

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 biggest challenge faced during the development of the performance management system was lack of time. As with the development of any system it requires extensive input from leadership and staff. The number of meetings required was extensive and logistically challenging to plan.

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.

Two main factors helped to facilitate completion of this work. The first factor was leadership engagement and commitment. This project required extensive staff time across the entire Health Department. Leadership made it clear that this project was a priority and this helped to facilitate the engagement of all staff. The second factor was grant deadlines. Having set deadlines was essential to keeping the project moving forward at the times it would have been easier to set it on the back burner.

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.

The Flathead City-County Health Department utilized the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) performance management system as a model. The methodology (built around logic models) used by DPHHS has been presented, at a national level, as a model performance management system. This model provides step-by-step process for walking staff through the process of choosing core activities, describing the desired outcome of these core activities (performance standards) and determining how to measure if the desired outcomes are achieved (performance measures). The process worked very well and resulted in highly engaged staff members. This model is recommended for use by other health departments.

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?

The biggest impact of the funding is that it allowed for designated staff time to work on the development of a performance management system. This work took a great deal of staff time and would have been difficult to complete without the designated project leadership the funding provided. In addition, grant deadlines helped to keep the project on task and ensured that it remained a priority project.

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?

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Flathead City-County Health Department plans to apply for accreditation in September 2014. In preparation for the application a detailed timeline of activities have been created to guide the preparation process. The focus of the preparation period is to complete the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) prerequisites, conduct a comprehensive document review and to develop a functional performance management system. The work completed as a part of the ASI has allowed for the development of the performance management system. The performance management system is slated for implementation on July 1, 2014 (the beginning of the next fiscal year). The performance management policy developed as a result of this project describes the process that will be followed to implement this system.