

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.

Bloomington Public Health serves three communities in the southern suburbs of Hennepin County, MN: the cities of Bloomington, Edina and Richfield with a total population served of more than 167,000 (The cities of Edina and Richfield are served through contract with the City of Bloomington). The Division of Health is headed by the Public Health Administrator and Reports to the City Council acting as the Community Health Board. The division has 62 total employees.

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 agency used Accreditation Support Initiative funding to complete a workforce development plan consisting of a plan to adopt a set of public health core competencies, an individual core competency assessment, a written policy requiring annual core competency assessment and revision of the workforce development plan, a competency gaps analysis, and a staff training plan. Funds were also used to cover 50% of the application fees for accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board.

The first step taken was to write a workforce development policy, outlining methods, timelines and responsible parties for developing, implementing assessing and revising the workforce development plan and core competency assessment process. This detailed plan should help to ensure ongoing efforts toward workforce development.

All staff at the agency were asked to complete the core competency assessment for public health professionals from the Council on Linkages. This tool, along with the prioritization of the competency domains, was combined to form a list of gaps and strengths, and guide the training plan. The assessment and prioritization were done with technical assistance from the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Office of Performance Improvement. The results of this analysis were summarized for staff and future planning needs in a Staff Training Needs Assessments, which details the process and results.

The results of the assessment and prioritization were used to develop a staff training plan that

outlines optional, required, program specific, occupation specific and agency-wide trainings. Trainings were chosen from a variety of sources including MNTRAIN and MDH.

The final step was the completion of a workforce development plan which outlines the workforce needs of the agency as well as provides a detailed plan for developing the workforce through targeted training priorities.

In May, Bloomington Public Health applied to the Public Health Accreditation Board under Standards 1.0.

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 most significant challenge we encountered was determining appropriate trainings for staff. While it is not difficult to find available trainings in the appropriate domains, determining if those trainings are appropriate and effective is time consuming and will likely require an evolving evaluation process during the first implementation of the workforce development 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.

Leadership support of both accreditation and workforce development were integral factors in the success of this project. A commitment to prioritizing agency needs and facilitating assessment of staff competencies at the leadership and management level worked in favor of a complete workforce development plan. Special commitment by management in the face of a transition and absence of an Administrator was an especially necessary asset throughout the process. Clear and continued communication with the entire management team (through regular updates at management team meetings) worked well to maintain support. For these reasons, a leadership change was not considered a "challenge" in this process.

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.

It is important to consider all major plans needed for accreditation when developing any individual plan. Connecting the workforce development plan to the strategic goals and objectives in the agency gave our agency a clear and consistent directional message. This step requires additional planning in order to build a thread through all planning initiatives in the agency. Beginning again, it may have been beneficial to review and consider the agencies strategic plan prior to selecting and administering the individual assessments, as some changes to the competency language may have helped make such linkages.

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 the pre-requisites for accreditation complete, the agencies next steps where to develop the additional plans required for accreditation and submit an application to PHAB. Timeliness in regards to the application was especially important to maintain relevance of existing documentation within the PHAB timeline. This funding made it possible to meet that timeline and expedite progress toward completeness of agency wide planning documents.

This funding also made it possible to spend more time working towards completion of the workforce development plan. This additional time moved the agency workforce development planning along faster than would have been otherwise possible.

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?

Bloomington Public Health has applied for accreditation in May, 2014. Documentation will continue to be collected to meet PHAB standards and measures and the accreditation coordinator will attend the in-person training as assigned. The workforce development plan is to be reviewed annually and revised based on annual staff core competency assessments. Quality Improvement Planning is in process at the agency and a QI plan is in development. Management recently conducted a performance management self-assessment and the agency will soon set goals and objectives related to performance, which will then be used to guide QI projects and planning.