

Definitions of Community Health Assessments (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIPs)

Community Health Assessment

NACCHO's Definition of an Ideal Community Health Assessment, Julia Joh Elligers:

A community health assessment is a process that uses quantitative and qualitative methods to systematically collect and analyze data to understand health within a specific community.

An ideal assessment includes information on risk factors, quality of life, mortality, morbidity, community assets, forces of change, social determinants of health and health inequity, and information on how well the public health system provides essential services.

Community health assessment data inform community decision-making, the prioritization of health problems, and the development, implementation, and evaluation of community health improvement plans.

Public Health Accreditation Board's (PHAB) Definition from the PHAB Glossary of Terms Version 1.0

Community health assessment is a systematic examination of the health status indicators for a given population that is used to identify key problems and assets in a community. The ultimate goal of a community health assessment is to develop strategies to address the community's health needs and identified issues. A variety of tools and processes may be used to conduct a community health assessment; the essential ingredients are community engagement and collaborative participation. (Turnock, B. Public Health: What It Is and How It Works. Jones and Bartlett, 2009).

Institute of Medicine Definition of Assessment from The Future of Public Health, 1988

'An understanding of the determinants of health and of the nature and extent of community need is a fundamental prerequisite to sound decision-making about health... systematically collect, assemble, analyze, and make available information on the health of the community, including statistics on health status, community health needs, and epidemiologic and other studies of health problems. The extent to which information will be generated directly or collected from other sources will vary depending on the size of the agency and of the population served.'



National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health

Community Health Improvement Plan

Public Health Accreditation Board's (PHAB) Definition from the PHAB Glossary of Terms Version 1.0

A community health improvement plan is a long-term, systematic effort to address public health problems on the basis of the results of community health assessment activities and the community health improvement process. This plan is used by health and other governmental education and human service agencies, in collaboration with community partners, to set priorities and coordinate and target resources.

A community health improvement plan is critical for developing policies and defining actions to target efforts that promote health. It should define the vision for the health of the community through a collaborative process and should address the gamut of strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities that exist in the community to improve the health status of that community

(Adapted from: United States Department of Health and Human Services, Healthy People 2010. Washington, DC; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Public Health Performance Standards Program, www.cdc.gov/nphpsp/FAQ.pdf).