

Assessing Local Health Department Capacity to Address Health Inequities

Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII)

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What is BARHII?

- Alameda
- Berkeley
- Contra Costa
- Marin
- Napa
- San Francisco
- San Mateo
- Santa Clara
- Santa Cruz
- Solano
- Sonoma

BARHII's Mission

“Transform Public Health practice for the purpose of eliminating health inequities using a broad spectrum of approaches that create healthy communities”

Organizational Approach

- Identify *Social Justice* as a core Public Health value
- *Build alliances with key institutions* that influence the health of communities
- *Inform policy makers and the general public* about the underlying social causes of Health Inequities
- *Build the capacity* of Public Health workforce and agencies

Mission of Internal Capacity Committee

Enhance the **capacity** and **collaboration** of multiple health departments to effectively eliminate health inequities.

Key Questions addressed by ICC

- What are the skills and abilities needed by public health department staff to effectively address health inequities?
- What are the characteristics of a public health department that can effectively address health inequities?

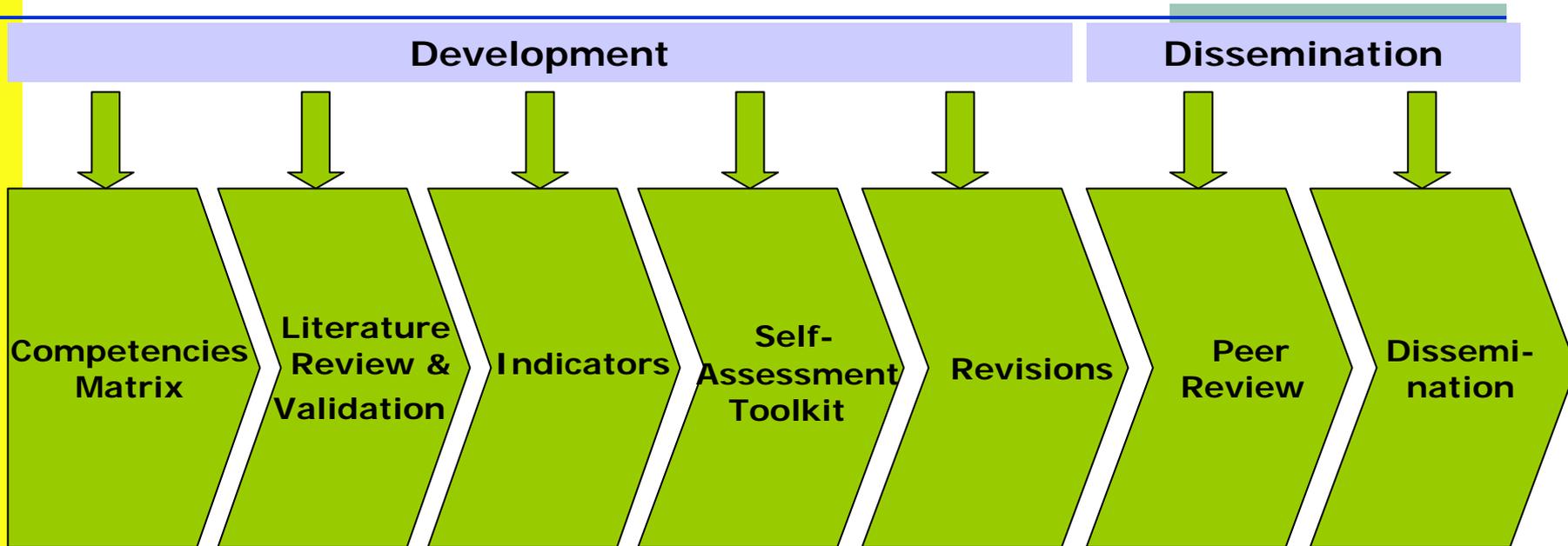
Workforce Attributes

- Specific personal attributes
- Knowledge of public health framework
- Understand the social, environmental and structural determinants of health
- Community knowledge
- Leadership skills
- Collaboration skills
- Community organizing skills
- Problem solving ability
- Cultural competency/ cultural humility

Organizational Attributes

- Institutional commitment to address health inequities
- Hiring to address health inequities
- Structure that supports true community partnerships
- Supporting staff to address health inequities
- Transparent & inclusive communication
- Institutional support for innovation
- Creative use of categorical funds
- Community accessible data & planning
- Streamlined administrative process

Tool Development Process



Sources Included:

- ✓ Public Health Literature
- ✓ Org. Development Literature
- ✓ Org. and Cultural Competency Tools

Pilot Test Instruments

Organizational Self-Assessment for Addressing Health Inequities

- Baseline measure of capacity, skills and areas for improvement;
- Inventories a set of research-based organizational and individual traits;
- Informs strategic planning and organizational development activities;
- Ongoing tool to assess progress

Overview of Self-Assessment Tools

- Web-based Surveys
 - Health Department staff
 - Collaborating partners

- Interviews
 - Management staff and leadership

- Focus Groups
 - Cross-section of Health Department staff

- Review of internal documents and records

- All tools include Glossary of Key Terms

Staff Survey

- Administered online
- Administered to all staff
- Confidential
- Content spans five broad areas:
 - Health department planning and policies
 - Collaboration within public health agency
 - Collaboration with external partners & policy-makers
 - Working with communities to address health inequities
 - Supporting staff to address health inequities

Collaborating Partners Survey

- Administered online or by paper
- Select group of partners is asked to participate
- Confidential
- Content spans five broad areas:
 - LHD's role, commitment, and effectiveness in addressing health inequities
 - Staff members' commitment to and understanding of health inequities in the community
 - Collaboration with LHD: administrative processes, communication, and decision-making
 - Community input and communication
 - Efforts to build community capacity

Staff Focus Groups

- Administered by external facilitator
- All levels of the organization participate
- Confidential
- Explores:
 - LHD culture and support for staff
 - Skills and practices critical for understanding health inequities
 - Diversity and cultural competency
 - Working with the community
 - Staff members' input to organizational plan to address health inequities

Management Interviews

- Lead staff participate
- External interviewer recommended
- Confidential
- Explores:
 - Mission, vision, and values of LHD
 - Planning
 - LHD culture regarding organizational and workforce development
 - Diversity and cultural competency
 - LHD decision-making process
 - Efforts to build community capacity
 - Administrative processes

Internal Document Review

- Identify priority areas of Inquiry
- Systematic review of organization's documents
 - Human Resources data and practices
 - Budget documents
 - Program materials
- Explores institutional commitment and capacity to address health inequities

Role of Berkeley Staff in Pilot

- Communicate pilot process and purpose department-wide, create buy-in, will and excitement
- Identify appropriate personnel and create implementation team
- Prepare staff and provide adequate time and support for completion of pilot instruments
- Identify appropriate community partners to survey
- Coordinate document review and data extraction
- Participate in interviews and focus groups

Lessons learned in Piloting Phase

Considerations Prior to Conducting Assessment

- Timing – Stage of Health Department in Addressing Health Inequities
- Context – Assessment is one component of Larger Plan and Activities
- Leadership Commitment – Senior and Middle Leadership Support for Long Term Engagement

Lessons learned in Piloting Phase

- Strong Implementation Team – Motivation and “shepherding” of the Assessment
- Staff Engagement on Health Equity through Assessment
- Follow-up through broad department equity work context

Lessons learned in Piloting Phase

- Communication between all levels of organization before and during process
- Allocate staff time to participate in process
- Incentivize staff participation
- Ensure confidentiality
- Strong and knowledgeable focus group facilitation

Results at Pilot Site

- Response rate at close of survey period: 80%
- Summary results shared with pilot department with facilitated debrief
 - Discussion of results
 - Discussion of process and instruments
- Use analysis for completing action plan

After the Pilot

- Pilot process debrief and reflection
- Instrument and process refinement
 - Based on feedback from pilot participants
 - Shared with BARHII partners for additional feedback
- Develop manual to guide assessment process
- Peer review
- Dissemination

Additional Information

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Questions?

