

# Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant

## SUCCESS STORY 2019

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### Public Health Accreditation

## *Accelerating Accreditation*

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**Public Health Issue:** California is making gains as its public health departments strive to “advance the quality and performance of public health” across the State. This is evidenced by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) awarding national accreditation to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and 16 local health departments (LHD) in Ventura, Long Beach, Santa Clara, Orange, San Diego, Pasadena, Humboldt, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Butte, Yolo, Monterey, Plumas, San Bernardino, Merced, and Riverside<sup>1</sup>.

While these accredited departments have met national standards of excellence, many LHDs throughout California continue to cite rigorous accreditation requirements and variable resources (staffing and funding) as factors inhibiting PHAB participation<sup>2</sup>. These barriers influence a department’s decision to either pursue accreditation as an evidence-based framework to critically evaluate its services or become a missed opportunity to highlight areas of strength and opportunities for improvement that may impact population health outcomes.

**Intervention:** A collective 45 of 61 California LHDs, CDPH, a Tribal health center, and two counties in the state of Nevada, formed a grassroots organization known as the California Accreditation Coordinators Collaborative (CACC). This statewide cross-jurisdictional organization provides a supportive network of Accreditation Coordinators (AC) who gather (via monthly virtual meetings, annual convenings, and electronic platform) on a regular basis to share resources, collaborate, and support each other while preparing for, applying for or maintaining national public health accreditation.

The CACC is governed by a Management Team and two Co-Chairs who ensure meetings and activities are inclusive of the accreditation needs of its members. The CDPH-AC participates on the Management Team and ensures Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant (PHHSBG) funds support the development and implementation of accreditation-related activities to further the CACC mission and address identified technical assistance needs.

PHHSBG funding supports the procurement of specialized vendors and subject matter experts to deliver education opportunities identified by CACC sub-committees such as the Quality Improvement Ad-Hoc Committee and Tribal Engagement Workgroup. Plans are underway to continue providing learning sessions to address the interrelationship of strategic planning, performance management, and quality improvement as well as deepening understanding of Tribal cultural competency to increase LHD engagement

with Tribes in the accreditation and community health assessment/ improvement plan process.

**Impact:** The CACC, with support from CDPH, has become a viable resource providing a forum for California's ACs to network, share best practices, and strategically derive solutions to address shared accreditation-related issues and concerns. CDPH-PHHSBG funding will continue supporting the CACC by bridging the gap between lack of resources and opportunities to build local and Tribal capacity to apply for and achieve national public health accreditation.

**Footnotes:**

1. Public Health Accreditation Board. Available at <https://phaboard.org/who-is-accredited/>
2. County Health Executives Association of California, Accreditation Status Survey, November 2018