

Coming Back Together: Expanding California State/Local Accreditation Collaboration, Resources, and Opportunities

One of the main functions of the Public Health Accreditation (PHA) program at CDPH is to provide technical assistance, training, and support to all California local health departments seeking Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) accreditation or reaccreditation. In 2019, the PHA program and several local health department accreditation coordinators started a collaborative network (the California Accreditation Coordinators Collaborative or “CACC”) to share information and resources. However, the COVID emergency brought this fledgling network to a halt. Most local health departments paused all accreditation activities, and many local and state accreditation staff were redirected or left their positions. Monthly CACC meetings ceased and tentative plans to create an online platform for accreditation related information and resources were placed on indefinite hold.

During FY 2022-2023, funded with Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant, the PHA program began to rebuild and greatly expand the CACC network and expand assistance to local health department coordinators. The PHA program revived monthly CACC online meetings to share resources and information. The meetings are facilitated either by local health department Accreditation Coordinators or by PHA program staff and includes breakout sessions for health departments considering accreditation, pursuing accreditation, or pursuing reaccreditation. An average of 30 local health department staff have been attending CACC meetings each month. These meetings also provide an opportunity for the PHA program to share information about training and other technical support funded by the PHHSBG. Additionally, the PHA program also used PHHSBG funds to hire two interns to help develop a CDPH-Local Health Department SharePoint site as a platform to share documents and other informational materials, including those developed by local health departments for their own accreditation submissions. This new SharePoint has become a vital resource for local accreditation coordinators.

The CACC and the CDPH-LHD Accreditation SharePoint have been become a critical resource for local health departments pursuing accreditation and reaccreditation. Accreditation coordinators from Alameda, Sacramento, Los Angeles, and San Joaquin counties have shared with the PHA program how both have assisted them in their accreditation and reaccreditation efforts.

Testimonials

“As a newly accredited local health department, the Alameda County Public Health Department relies on learning from other local jurisdictions about their accreditation

efforts. We have been fortunate to have access to the California Department of Public Health's Accreditation/Reaccreditation Collaboration SharePoint site. We use this site frequently to search for resources and to connect with other similar jurisdictions. We have found the site to be quite effective in promoting collaboration and information exchange. We thank CDPH for developing this site and for offering so many resources to local health jurisdictions like ours! ~ Carolina Guzman, Alameda County Public Health Department

"The CDPH Accreditation and Reaccreditation Collaborative Site is a great resource for all Accreditation Coordinators to network and share tools and resources. I frequently visit the documents subfolder when searching for upcoming CACC meetings, contact information for CACC members, and shared tools and resources from past meeting. When I am stuck on an accreditation measure, I always check the SharePoint site to see what resources are available to me." ~ Colleen Hogan, Sacramento County Public Health

"The CACC has provided a community in where health departments can learn and share with each other on the importance of Quality Improvement and Accreditation. It has helped me develop as a professional and has provided me with resources and tools to help my department foster a culture of continuous improvement and continue promoting the public's health and well-being." ~ - Disly M. Juarez, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health

"CACC has played a strong unifying role for Accreditation Coordinators across California no matter where they are in their PHAB journey. I was one of the founding members of the statewide network group that met routinely before COVID and missed having this trusting sounding board to work through complicated PHAB documentation requirements. It was a true gift to have CDPH help relaunch and host meetings once again. I mentor the "Exploring but not yet Applying" CACC group and I know that the ability to cross-fertilize and develop answers to issues in common has definitely given the members of this group the confidence to proceed." ~ Barb Alberson, San Joaquin County Public Health Services

Federal Fiscal Year 2022 Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant Success Story by the Public Health Accreditation