

Version 2022 Summary

Contribute to Assuring Systems for Equitable Access to Care Expert Panel Reviewers Summary Recommendations

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Background

As PHAB continues to work on Version 2022 of the accreditation Standards & Measures, attention to Domain 7 was needed to bring its requirements up to date. PHAB interviewed a sample of seasoned public health professionals very familiar with PHAB's accreditation criteria to serve as an expert panel of reviewers. They provided feedback on proposed changes based on potential alignment between PHAB's accreditation standards with the 2020 refreshed [Essential Public Health Services](#) framework; the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and Altarum Institute [Local Health Department-Community Health Center Collaboration Toolkit](#) and that related work; [Georgia Health Policy Center's work](#) on bridging health care, financing, public health, and social services, and a report developed by Georgia Southern University entitled "[The Administration and Management of COVID19 Contact Tracing Programs.](#)" A more detailed report has been provided to PHAB, but this summary provides a synopsis of the major recommendations. Simple updates or proposed minor edits in wording are not included in this summary.

Overarching Comments on Domain 7

Domain 7 focuses on the health department's role in assuring an effective system that enables equitable access to individual services and care needed to promote health. This domain does not assume the health department is responsible for providing individual services, but rather, that they have a role in ensuring their population's access to needed care and services. In order to ensure that the population has equitable access to care, health departments engage in activities to assess, develop, and improve systems that support the delivery of those services and thus meet the collective needs of many. The proposed changes reflect the three areas of health department responsibility in this space: assessment, development, and improvement. These changes include working across multiple sectors to assure access to appropriate health care and social services.

Recommendations

- Standard 7.1: Reword to “Engage with health care providers in the health department jurisdiction to assess availability of health care services” to better reflect the promotion of partnerships, as intended by the standard. Health departments partner with various stakeholders representing health care (CCOs, ACOs, FQHCs, hospitals, etc.) as they consider access for the population they serve.
- Health service availability includes the physical or remote (telehealth) presence of health care providers as well as access to those services. Assessment of health service availability should be based on timely, accurate, and credible data.
- Proposed changes merge former measures 7.1.1 and 7.1.3 to make the process of assessment more comprehensive and aligned.
- Standard 7.2: Reword to “Prioritize, implement and evaluate strategies to improve access to health care services” to better reflect the content of the measures under Standard 7.2.
- Standard 7.3 is a new standard designed to reflect the cross-sectoral work that health departments are doing to assure access to health care and social services.
- Measure 7.3.1 A is a new measure under Standard 7.3 which addresses the ways in which health departments connect with other sectors to ensure access to services in order to improve the health of its population served.
- All standards and measures have been designed to reflect the intent of the health department’s role as health strategist for its jurisdiction.

Expert Panel Virtual Reviewers

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- Jaime Dirksen, Vice-President, Community Health and Well-Being, Trinity Health, Greater Detroit Area, MI
- Peter L. Holtgrave, Senior Director, Public Health Infrastructure and Systems, National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), Washington, DC
- Kusuma Mademala, Research Evaluation Scientist, Oregon Health Authority, Public Health Division and Multnomah County Health Department, Portland, OR
- Karen Minyard, Director of the Georgia Health Policy Center (GHPC), Atlanta, GA