

VERSION 2.0 WORK IN PROGRESS: Evidence Related to Behavioral Health August 2018



The Public Health Accreditation Board is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to improving and protecting the health of the public by advancing and ultimately transforming the quality and performance of state, local, tribal, and territorial public health departments.



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This document lists several articles related to health departments' engagement in population-focused behavioral health, including ones referenced during PHAB's May 2018 think tank. It is not meant to be an exhaustive list. If there are other resources on this topic of which you think PHAB should be aware, please contact Jessica Kronstadt at jkronstadt@phaboard.org.

At the think tank, Jonathan Purtle, Assistant Professor at Drexel University School of Public Health, shared findings from two studies:

- In the 2013 NACCHO Profile of Local Health Departments, more than half indicated that they perform at least one mental health activity. The most common activities were assessing gaps in access to mental health services (39%) and implementing strategies to increase access to mental health services (33%).¹
- Interviews with local health officials revealed that mental health is seen as a public health issue and often a priority identified in community health assessments. However, when tackling this issue, health departments report obstacles related to resources, knowledge, and data. In addition, local health departments and local behavioral health agencies face some difficulties collaborating given their different perspectives and financing.²

In addition, a 2018 essay by Bommersbach et al. emphasizes the need for stronger collaboration between public health and behavioral health.³ It describes the potential for accountable care organizations, requirements related to community health assessments and community health needs assessments, and accreditation to help foster that collaboration. The article includes examples of behavioral health activities that correspond with the accreditation domains.

¹ Purtle J, Klassen AC, Kolker J, Buehler JW. Prevalence and correlates of local health department activities to address mental health in the United States. *Prev Med.* 2016;82:20-27.

² Purtle J, Petres R, Kolker J, Klassen AC. Factors perceived as influencing local health department involvement in mental health. *Am J Prev Med.* 2017;52(1):64-73.

³ Bommersbach T, Borger K, Steverman S, Manderscheid RW, Sarfstein J, Everett A. Behavioral health, local health department accreditation, and Public Health 3.0: leveraging opportunities for collaboration. *Am J Public Health.* Published Online: August 23, 2018.

Additional references include:

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- Chen J, Bloodworth R, Novak P, Cook BL, Goldman HH, Rendall MS, Thomas SB, Reynolds CF 3rd. Reducing preventable hospitalization and disparity: association with local health department mental health promotion activities. *Am J Prev Med*. 2018;54(1):103-112.
- Goldman-Mellor S, Jia Y, Kwan K, Rutledge J. Syndromic surveillance of mental and substance use disorders: a validation study using emergency department chief complaints. *Psychiatr Serv*. 2017;69(1):55-60.
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https://www.ncchpp.ca/docs/2017_SMP_PMH_ArticleSMQ_En.pdf. Accessed September 4, 2018.
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