

# VERSION 2.0 WORK IN PROGRESS: Public Health Workforce – What Have We Learned from Accredited Health Departments? November 2019



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 summarizes what PHAB has learned about how health departments (HDs) participating in accreditation are addressing public health workforce-related activities. In particular, it focuses on the reasons that HDs struggled with measures that relate to workforce. It also includes findings from Section II of accredited HDs' Annual Reports.

Below is a summary of the distribution of assessments for related measures. These data are for 179 HDs assessed under Version 1.0 and 146 HDs assessed under Version 1.5.

Measure	%Fully Demonstrated	%Largely Demonstrated	%Slightly Demonstrated	%Not Demonstrated	N
8.1.1	86.5%	9.5%	2.2%	1.8%	325
8.2.1 (ver 1.0)	59.2%	26.3%	11.2%	3.4%	179
8.2.1 (ver 1.5)	36.3%	45.2%	17.1%	1.4%	146
8.2.2 (ver 1.5)	38.4%	57.5%	4.1%	0.0%	146
8.2.2 (ver 1.0)	83.8%	11.2%	5.0%	0.0%	179
8.2.3 (ver 1.5)	74.0%	25.3%	0.7%	0.0%	146
8.2.4 (ver 1.5)	67.8%	26.7%	5.5%	0.0%	146
8.2.5 S	60.5%	13.2%	23.7%	2.6%	38
11.1.4 (ver 1.0)	76.0%	21.2%	2.8%	0.0%	179
11.1.5 (ver 1.0)	61.5%	36.3%	2.2%	0.0%	179
11.1.5 (ver 1.5)	47.9%	51.4%	0.7%	0.0%	146

Data are presented separately for health departments assessed under Version 1.0 and Version 1.5 of the Standards & Measures if there was a substantive change in the requirements. If the two versions are substantively the same, the aggregate data are presented. The numbering of some of the measures changed between Version 1.0 and Version 1.5. (For example, Measures 11.1.4 and 11.1.5 in Version 1.0 were consolidated into Measure 11.1.5 in Version 1.5.)

To better understand HDs' performance on these Measures, PHAB conducted an analysis of the conformity comments of HDs that were assessed as Slightly or Not Demonstrated (SD/ND) in at least 5% of the Site Visit Reports. The results of those analyses are shown below. For each Measure, the most common reasons for the assessment are listed, including the number of HDs for which that reason was indicated. One HD could have multiple reasons listed. The reasons are linked to specific required documentation (RD) listed in the PHAB Standards and Measures. For reference, please see: [https://www.phaboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/PHABSM\\_WEB\\_LR1.pdf](https://www.phaboard.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/PHABSM_WEB_LR1.pdf).

**Measure 8.2.1: Workforce development strategies**

Of the 52 HDs assessed as SD/ND, the most common challenges were deficiencies in documentation that demonstrated:

- RD1 (ver 1.5): Responsiveness to the changing environment & consideration of areas where technology advances quickly (17 HDs)
- RD1: A formal workforce development plan (15 HDs)
- RD1: Inclusion of adopted core competencies, against which staff are assessed (14 HDs)
- RD1 (ver 1.5): Description of barriers/inhibitors to the achievement of closing gaps (14 HDs)
- RD1: Training schedules & description of the material or topics to be addressed (13 HDs)

**Measure 8.2.4: Work environment that is supportive to the workforce**

This is a new Measure in Version 1.5. Of the 8 HDs assessed as SD/ND, the most common challenges with documentation were:

- RD2: A process for employee recognition (5 HDs)
- RD1: A comprehensive set of policies to provide a supportive environment for employees (4 HDs)

**Measure 8.2.5 S: Consultation and/or technical assistance provided to Tribal and local health departments regarding evidence-based and/or promising practices in the development of workforce capacity, training, and continuing education**

Measure 8.2.5 is a state-only requirement. Of the 11 HDs assessed as SD/ND, the most common challenge with documentation was:

- Training or TA provided did not address gaps in public health workforce or workforce development (3 HDs)

**Annual Reports**

Annual Reports (AR) were also reviewed to identify activities that HDs selected to report on in the “Emerging Issues” section. Of the Annual Reports submitted in 2018, more than 80% said they had conducted activities related to workforce. 12 of them provided more details about what they had done in this area, including:

- Multi-jurisdictional workgroup on workforce development;
- Core competencies assessments;
- Staff training (on such topics as management, leadership, Public Health 3.0, chief health strategist, systems thinking, applied marketing, employee engagement/retention, health equity, climate change);
- Individual development plans and the creation of a professional development catalog;
- Staff recognition activities; and
- Academic health department/internship programs.