Public Health Accreditation Board Seeks Evaluators for Three Studies

August 2023

BACKGROUND
The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) is the national non-profit organization that administers the voluntary accreditation process for state, Tribal, local and territorial public health departments. PHAB was incorporated in 2007 and is located in Alexandria, VA. As of July 2023, a total of 41 state, 321 local, 6 Tribal, 1 statewide integrated local public health department system (Florida), 5 Army Installation Departments of Public Health, 5 Vital Records and Health Statistics units, and 1 international health department have achieved five-year initial accreditation or reaccreditation through PHAB, bringing the benefits of PHAB accreditation to over 95 percent of the United States population. PHAB continually works to improve the accreditation process, including by encouraging research. PHAB’s research is guided by our logic model and research agenda, which was revised in 2021.

PHAB seeks evaluators for the following three studies. Interested parties can apply for one, two, or all three studies. For all three studies, PHAB will assist in providing accreditation data as well as connect evaluators with stakeholders/contacts, as needed.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Study 1 - Impact of Accreditation on COVID Response

Purpose of this Evaluation
To better understand the impact of accreditation on COVID response, PHAB is engaging an evaluator to analyze secondary data of accredited and unaccredited health departments. This special evaluative assessment seeks to compare jurisdictions with accredited health departments with non-accredited health departments to determine if there are differences in terms of vaccination rates, policy actions, hospitalizations, and other variables of interest. We encourage you to thoroughly consider any methodological pitfalls and how your analysis would avoid them.

Evaluation Activities
We request the following deliverables:
  • A document outlining your methodology for conducting your evaluation including relevant datasets and timelines for analysis. This document will be reviewed and
approved by both PHAB and PHAB’s Research Advisory Council prior to commencement of your evaluation.
- A stand-alone document focused on the impact of accreditation on COVID response. This document is intended for use as part of public communications efforts and should be formatted accordingly.
- A manuscript suitable for publication that addresses the purpose of the evaluation as outlined above illustrating your findings.

Study 2 - Telling the Story of Accreditation in Ohio

Purpose of this Evaluation
Ohio is the only state that requires all local health departments to be PHAB accredited. This evaluation will focus on answering the following questions:
1. What impact has accreditation had on individual health departments within Ohio?
2. How has the public health system, as a whole, transformed as a growing proportion of local health departments in the state have achieved accreditation? How have accreditation and participation in 21st Century Learning Community worked together to support that transformation?
3. What lessons can be learned from the Ohio experience that could be applied to other states considering strategies to incentivize accreditation within the state?
4. What have health departments experienced regarding return on investment from accreditation?

For this evaluation, we seek a mixed-method approach that would entail an analysis of secondary data to compare either Ohio to other states or to compare the early vs the late adopters of accreditation within Ohio. In addition, we request a series of interviews with representatives from local health departments, the state health department, and partner organizations (e.g., the state association of local health departments, Ohio State University) to provide additional insights on the impact of accreditation and lessons learned.

Evaluation Activities
We request the following deliverables:
- A document outlining your methodology for conducting your evaluation including timelines for analysis. This document will be reviewed and approved by both PHAB and PHAB’s Research Advisory Council prior to commencement of your evaluation.
- A stand-alone document that tells the story of accreditation in Ohio. This document is intended for use as part of public communications efforts and should be formatted accordingly.
- A manuscript suitable for publication that addresses the purpose of the evaluation as outlined above illustrating your findings.
Study 3 - Highlighting the Experiences of Small, Tribal, and Territory/Freely Associated State Health Departments with Accreditation

Purpose of this Evaluation
In developing Version 2022 of the Standards & Measures and the Pathways program, PHAB was very attentive to the feedback of small, rural, Tribal, and territorial health departments. To better capture the experiences of those health departments, as well as territories and freely associated states that may be seeking accreditation or Pathways, this evaluation will comprise of a series of 4-5 case studies to highlight their experiences going through Pathways, Initial Accreditation v2022, or Reaccreditation v2022. These case studies would focus on how health departments overcame challenges (specifically cost and capacity), how they gained buy-in among their staff and governing entities, and what advice they would provide to other small, rural, Tribal, territory/freely associated state health departments.

Evaluation Activities
We request the following deliverables:

- A document outlining your proposed sampling strategy and sample questions. This document will be reviewed and approved by both PHAB and PHAB’s Research Advisory Council prior to commencement of your evaluation.
- 4-5 case studies. These documents are intended for use as part of public communications efforts and should be formatted accordingly.

ELIGIBILITY
- If selected, the contractor must be able to execute a contract with PHAB by October 20, 2023 (the start date for the period of performance). A template of the contract is provided here.
- Interested parties can apply for one, two, or all three studies.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS
- Contractors interested in any of the 3 evaluations must provide a brief proposal by 5:00 p.m., eastern time, September 15, 2023.
- Please submit a full proposal for each study you are interested in conducting.
- Proposals should be submitted by email to research@phaboard.org.
- The body of each proposal should be no more than four pages and should include a description of the contractor’s prior experience in conducting similar evaluations and producing requested deliverables.
- Proposals should also describe the approach to this project including a specific, detailed analysis plan and a demonstration of your understanding of PHAB accreditation. Please note that if you are conducting data collection, you are required to stay within the OMB threshold – you cannot ask identical questions to more than nine individuals per study.
- The contractor should also send a budget and bios/CVs of the staff involved (not counted in the page limit). The allotted budget for Study 1 is up to $55,000, for Study 2 is up to $85,000, and for Study 3 is up to $56,000.
Proposals will be reviewed based on team qualifications and prior experience conducting similar evaluations; ability to produce deliverables; project approach; budget.

PHAB is committed to diversity, equity, inclusion, and antiracism (IDEA) and is engaged in intentional efforts to advance IDEA as an organization. We are committed to creating inclusive and equitable spaces that reflect our values and culture as an organization. You are encouraged to integrate an IDEA framework into your proposal.

**KEY DATES**

- Proposal deadline: September 15, 2023 at 5 PM ET
- Selection notification: October 9, 2023
- Contract executed no later than: October 20, 2023
- Period of performance: October 20, 2023 – May 31, 2024
  - The methodology plans for Study 1 and Study 2 are due November 6, 2023. The sampling strategy and proposed questions for Study 3 are due November 6, 2023.

**QUESTIONS**

For more information or any questions, please contact Amy Belflower Thomas (abelflowerthomas@phaboard.org). We look forward to receiving your proposal!