

Standards and Measures Documentation: Tips for Success: The Meaning and Requirements for Initial Accreditation Measures 2.1.4 and 2.3.4

In this column, PHAB staff share tips for successfully demonstrating conformity with various PHAB Standards and Measures. Here, PHAB Chief Program Officer Robin Wilcox discusses initial accreditation Measures 2.1.4 and 2.3.4. The meaning and requirements for these two measures are sometimes confused.

Measure 2.1.4 is “Collaborative work through established governmental and community partnerships on investigations of reportable diseases, disease outbreaks, and environmental health issues.” Measure 2.1.4 is a measure under Standard 2.1, “Conduct timely investigations of health problems and environmental health issues.”

Measure 2.3.4 is “Collaboration among Tribal, state, and local health departments to build capacity and share resources to address Tribal, state, and local efforts to provide for rapid detection, investigation, and containment/mitigation of public health problems and environmental public health hazards.” This measure (2.3.4) is under Standard 2.3, “Ensure access to laboratory and epidemiological/ environmental public health expertise and capacity to investigate and contain/mitigate public health problems and environmental public health hazards.”

Both of these measures relate to the health department’s capacity to respond to public health problems and environmental public health hazards. Measure 2.1.4 addresses the health department’s work on the ground, collaborating with community partners and other local governmental units to ensure that they have the capacity to respond in a coordinated manner. This might mean, for example, the health department working with the department of public works, if the safety of the water supply is suspected of being compromised. It might mean working with the school system if a case of Norovirus is suspected among school children.

Measure 2.3.4 addresses the health department’s capacity to investigate and contain/mitigate issues by working collaboratively with other health departments. If there is an outbreak at the local level, the Tribal, local, and state health departments need to work together for combined resources, shared knowledge of the situation, and access to special expertise. If exposure to a communicable disease is suspected to have occurred in a large community venue, for example, the Tribal and local health departments will need to work together (and perhaps also with the state health department) to ensure a rapid response and containment.

As with all measures that may, on the surface, appear to be similar, it will be helpful to look at the Standards to which they relate and also read the *Purpose and Significance* statements for each measure. The measure’s *Guidance* will also help you understand the intent of the measure. If you are still confused, do not hesitate to contact your Accreditation Specialist or Robin Wilcox, PHAB’s Chief Program Officer at rwilcox@phaboard.org.

