

Section 3: Determining the Development Process

This section outlines a recommended process for developing the epidemiologic profile. It presents a logical and ideal flow. You may find that the process you use to develop your profile is different and that you need to revisit some steps as you go along. The key is to incorporate the principles of the process to ensure that your profile is comprehensive and the presentation is of high quality.

Development Process

There is a 7-step process recommended for developing the epidemiologic profile (see box below). One of the keys to a comprehensive and user-friendly profile is to ensure that the development process is a collaboration between you, as the writer(s), and the planning group. This process may be different for planning groups that have merged.

At the beginning of the development process, it would be useful for the writer(s) to meet with the planning group to

- get to know the dynamics of the group and the challenges they face
- introduce the new guidelines and why HRSA and CDC developed them
- determine the planning group's experience with past profiles and where improvement is needed
- determine whether the group has special requests for data or interpretation

Recommended Development Process

1. In collaboration with state and local surveillance staff and prevention and care planning groups, determine the specific and unique needs of the planning group. Determine the boundaries and the scope of the profile. Establish mechanisms to ensure collaboration throughout the process.
2. Obtain core and supplemental data. Determine which of these data to include in the analysis.
3. Analyze and interpret data.
4. Present data in user-friendly formats.
5. Draw overall conclusions and write an effective, useful narrative.
6. Write remaining sections and compile complete epidemiologic profile.
7. Prepare clear presentations for appropriate audiences.

Here are some additional tips to help ensure a successful profile development process:

- realize that the process is a group effort; it cannot be done by one person
- expect that a full-time equivalent staff person will need at least several months to complete the profile
- have a knowledgeable person with technical expertise on local data sources review and proofread the document
- create a dissemination plan well before your profile is complete and ready for distribution