The shared mission of state, tribal, local, and territorial health departments is to protect the health of people and communities. Being accredited means that a health department meets national public health standards and ensures essential public health services are provided to the communities within its service area. Health department accreditation is voluntary and granted by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). Achieving accreditation is a significant accomplishment, reflecting hard work and dedication by all those involved in the multistep process. In 2014, the Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division (OHA/PHD) used a portion of its Preventive Health and Health Services (PHHS) Block Grant funding to bring people together to prepare and apply for accreditation.

When applying for accreditation from PHAB, a health department must prepare many documents that illustrate how it meets the 32 national standards. These documents include a state or community health assessment—an analysis of state residents’ health and greatest health needs. This assessment helps the state or community create a health improvement plan. These plans describe the area’s most impactful and disconcerting health problems and the organizations that will work together to address them. The health department’s strategic plan highlights internal priorities, including how state and local health departments need to respond collectively to their respective priorities.

As part of the accreditation process, OHA/PHD received a site visit from a PHAB team to see how it operates. The accreditation committee then reviewed the site visit report and determined that OHA/PHD’s high-quality public health services and performance earned the “accredited” status.

As of September 2016, OHD/PHD and four local health departments had been accredited in recognition of their high level of performance and commitment to serving the citizens of Oregon. These health departments—and the people they serve—now benefit from having increased accountability, better communication and coordination between other health agencies and the community, and additional opportunities to obtain resources.
Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant

What is the PHHS Block Grant?

The Preventive Health and Health Services (PHHS) Block Grant provides flexible federal funding to 61 states, tribes, and US territories. These grantees use the funding to meet vital public health needs within their jurisdictions that align with national priorities—the Healthy People (HP) 2020 objectives.

Block Grant Investment Across the Nation

In fiscal year 2015, the 61 grantees received about $126 million from the PHHS Block Grant to support critical programs and services. Most funds (85%) supported HP 2020 objectives in 10 key areas: 1) Public Health Infrastructure, 2) Education and Community-Based Programs, 3) Injury and Violence Prevention, 4) Nutrition and Weight Status, 5) Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention, 6) Environmental Health, 7) Immunization and Infectious Diseases, 8) Emergency Medical Services, 9) Oral Health, and 10) Physical Activity.

Public Health Infrastructure was the most funded area (26% of total funding); 43 grantees directed funds toward public health systems assessment, health improvement planning, accreditation, quality improvement, laboratory services, and other infrastructure activities. Education and Community-Based Programs was the second-most funded area (21% of total funding); 29 grantees directed funds toward community-based primary prevention services, worksite health promotion programs, and culturally appropriate community health programs.

Grantees also directed funds toward supporting local organizations working to improve community health (27% of total funding) and reduce health disparities (23% of total funding).

Please visit www.cdc.gov/phhsblockgrant for more information.