

National Public Health Improvement Initiative (NPHII)

- performance methods to optimize the value of America's investment in public health

Why it's important

Public health added 25 years to the average lifespan of persons in the United States during the 20th century through a portfolio of strategic investments including programs focused on safe food, safe water, and timely detection and response to emerging health threats. ⁽¹⁾ In addition to extending lifespan, public health has improved America's quality of life and has helped keep workers on the job and more productive. Jurisdictions that routinely engage their health officials in planning and policy-making create the safer, healthier communities, schools and workforce that attract businesses and families critical to sustained economic development. These important achievements and programs are highly dependent on our health departments — the backbone for protecting the public's health.

"... we will continue to help our nation's public health departments work more effectively and efficiently to detect and respond to public health problems. This initiative will strengthen the nation's public health system and our ability to improve the health and well being of all Americans."

Dr. Thomas R. Frieden
Director CDC,
Administrator /ATSDR

Our health departments are currently facing unprecedented financial challenges that threaten their ability to prevent disease and promote health in their communities. As funding for public health has declined over the last decade, staffing has been cut by >15% ⁽²⁾, delivery of essential services hampered by >120,000 collective furlough days ⁽³⁾, programs and services slashed, and it's poorly understood infrastructure neglected. ⁽⁴⁾

How it works

The 5-year initiative provides US state, tribal, local and territorial health departments with resources to adopt and institutionalize cross cutting performance management and quality improvement methods and approaches to improve accountability, efficiency, and effectiveness of public health programs and services. Specifically, NPHII will strengthen our health departments' by providing staff, training, tools, and technical/capacity building assistance dedicated to establishing performance management and evidence-based practices that drive improved service delivery and better health outcomes. As these health departments catalyze improvement throughout the public health system and strong performance management practices and standards are identified and widely adopted, public health departments will be able to share information, assets, programs and services across organizations and jurisdictions - resulting not only in a more efficient and effective system, but one that is agile, resilient, and well positioned to protect and serve the people.

CDC commitment

CDC firmly believes that helping health departments develop methods and tools for data driven decision making and effective program management is critically important to an informed response to the current fiscal crisis and to improving the health, quality of life and productivity of our nation and our communities. In addition to the Affordable Care Act funds dedicated to this initiative, CDC is investing more than \$5 million of its core funding to provide guidance, training, technical assistance and subject matter expertise to support these health departments as they strive to optimize the value of America's investment in public health.

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What defines success

Increase the number of NPHII grantees meeting voluntary national accreditation standards

Significance	Accreditation will help public health departments to strategically invest in the quality services essential to protecting the public's health and that create improved health outcomes in communities.
Program assistance	Promotion of accreditation readiness, provision of technical assistance, and sharing of lessons learned.
Data source/method	Interim and end of year progress reports and other data collections that monitor which grantees are a) preparing for accreditation as evidenced by a self assessment, strategic plan, state/community improvement plan, and/or community health assessment or b) have achieved accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB).

Increase the number of NPHII grantees that have implemented evidence-based policies and practices

Significance	Health departments can make informed decisions in selecting interventions that best use scarce resources to improve the effectiveness of public health programs and services.
Program assistance	Tools, training, and technical assistance to help grantees achieve outcomes.
Data source/method	Interim and end of year reports, grantee evaluation findings, and other assessments will be used to monitor progress.

Increase the number of NPHII grantees that have implemented performance improvement initiatives that increase business and program efficiency and effectiveness

Significance	Implementation of performance improvement initiatives is a necessary early step in developing the knowledge and commitment to adopt the evidence-based practices and policies that drive improved service delivery and better health outcomes.
Program assistance	Targeted training, technical assistance, and capacity building assistance for performance improvement initiatives and implementation of the National Performance Improvement Managers Network.
Data source/method	Interim and end of year progress reports and other assessments will be used to monitor and evaluate the number of grantee projects that yield reduced costs, improved efficiencies, and/or increased effectiveness of programs and services.

- (1) [JAMA, Ten Great Public Health Achievements—United States, 1900-1999 April 28, 1999—Vol 281, No. 16](#)
- (2) [NACCHO. Research Brief: Local Health Department Job Losses and Program Cuts: Findings from 2010 Survey](#)
- (3) [ASTHO, Budget Cuts Survey Results \(December 2010\)](#)
- (4) [Institute of Medicine \(IOM\), The Future of the Public's Health in the 21st Century. November 2002](#)