

NETWORKING SESSIONS

NEW in 2009!

NACCHO is pleased to introduce networking sessions to the 2009 conference program! Networking sessions are facilitated and highly interactive discussion groups designed to provide conference attendees sharing similar interests and concerns with an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas and information. Groups are currently being planned to address the following 13 topics.

Thursday, July 30

3:45 PM – 5:15 PM

Accreditation & Certification

This session will provide an opportunity to explore two public health initiatives: national accreditation and certification. National accreditation is the program under development by the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) that will validate performance of public health departments. Certification applies to individual public health practitioners and is managed by the National Board of Public Health Examiners (NBPHE). This session will provide a brief overview of both concepts, and discussion will focus on participant thoughts and reactions, including the impacts of each to local public health practice.

Big Cities Networking Session

Our nation's largest urban cities face challenges that may be unique to their situations due to the economic downturn and possible pandemic. Don't miss this opportunity to come to a lively, provocative discussion with peers about issues, innovative techniques to overcome challenges, and recent successes. We'll also discuss a possible agenda for a NACCHO-sponsored big cities meeting.

Building Disaster Mental Health Capacity in Local Public Health Departments

The goal of this session is to explore opportunities for local health departments to collaborate with community-based organizations to build and sustain a robust disaster mental health program. We will look at what is needed to respond to critical incidents and other public health emergencies and comply with local, state, and federal performance standards.

Health Equity and Social Justice: Future Directions for Practice

Participants in this session will strategize about the best way to advance the issue of health equity and social justice at NACCHO and among local health departments (LHDs), given the success of the PBS documentary series, *Unnatural Causes*, the formation of the LHD National Coalition for Health Equity, new and potential initiatives, the economic crisis, lessons from developing strategies in LHDs across the country, and political opportunities. How does local public health tackle the root causes of inequity in the distribution of disease?

Health Reform: Initiatives and Innovations Resulting from State Level Health Reform

This session will focus on how local health departments have functioned and modified their programming and services in states that have initiated state wide health care reform. In addition, this session will provide participants with the opportunity to talk about what is going on in their state and what reform efforts are underway.

NACCHO's Advisory Groups

Did you know that NACCHO has nearly 40 advisory groups? From preparedness to chronic disease to workforce development, members are actively involved in directing the association's work. Come mingle with peers – new and old – and learn about the benefits of engaging in NACCHO's leadership through service on advisory groups.

Policy and Advocacy: Organizing and Activating the Local Health Department Congressional Action Network (LHD-CAN)

The goal of this session is to introduce the LHD-CAN, to give examples of successful advocacy by NACCHO members, and give NACCHO members the opportunity to get involved in LHD-CAN. During this year when health reform and other issues affecting the future of public health are being debated, a unified voice for local health departments is more critical than ever.

Sharing One Great Local Health Department Story: Improving Outcomes

One story can resonate and be more memorable than mountains of data, and telling your LHD's story well can be an effective way to reach policymakers and the public. Join us for an hour of facilitated and open discussions with your peers on the importance of storytelling. How has it made an impact at your department? Share your story, hear your peers' and walk away with a new take on this old form of communication.

Small Cities Networking Session

Join the Small Cities Networking session for a lively and engaging discuss of issues that may be unique to small cities. Share successes, challenges and network with colleagues from across the nation.

The Business Model for Health Informatics and How It Can Support Quality and Performance Improvement

There is increasing interest in, and impetus for, the use of informatics in local public health. Informatics can be defined as leveraging information technology to improve the use and processing of information. When you are faced with shrinking budgets, such expenditure may seem like an unaffordable luxury. This session is a chance to discuss these challenges with your colleagues and discover that informatics means more than simply spending money on IT. It is a fundamental shift in the way you manage your information and carry out business processes, which can then support public health decision making. The opportunity to see how other local health departments have made the change may lead you to see that, not only is this a necessary investment, it is also one that can lead to dramatic quality and performance improvement and lowered costs in all areas of your work.

The Local Public Health Workforce in Rural Communities

Retaining and recruiting qualified public health professionals in rural communities have posed significant challenges to building the rural public health workforce. In July 2004, NACCHO hosted a rural dialogue that focused on workforce development, specifically recruitment and retention. The selection of the workforce topic in 2004 relates back to a December 2003 meeting where workforce was one of the top concerns of persons and organizations engaged in rural public health activities. This challenge of the public health workforce shortage is greater in rural areas as location, local educational opportunities, and a shortage of financial resources make recruitment and retention very difficult. This session will continue the discussion on challenges and solutions identified to address the workforce needs in rural communities.

Quality Improvement

Quality improvement (QI) is the cornerstone of the Public Health Accreditation Board's voluntary accreditation program. This session is designed for those who have engaged in QI, as well as for those who are beginning to "test the waters." Join this session to discuss what it takes to move toward a culture of quality improvement in local health departments, for example:

- What tools, strategies, resources and other factors have led to successful QI efforts?
- What challenges have been encountered and how were they overcome?
- What advice or guidance can be offered to those who are new to QI?
- What are the key elements of instituting a QI culture?

The connection between national voluntary accreditation and quality improvement also will be discussed.

The Effects of the Economic Recession on Public Health Workforce

This session is an opportunity for local health departments to share their stories of how the recession has impacted their workforce, particularly around staff retention, hiring, and trainings and exercises conducted.