

Illinois Certification Process

HISTORY

The Illinois Department of Public Health convened an inclusive strategic planning process in the late 1980s that resulted in the 1990 report, *The Road to Better Health for All of Illinois*, a plan that called for implementation of a number of initiatives to build local health department capacity. Key among those recommendations was the need to conduct needs assessments describing public health needs and to develop standards enabling local health jurisdictions to be responsive to identified community health needs. In 1993, under the auspices of the Project Health implementation plan, a new local health department certification program was launched, the purpose of which was "to assure quality public health services are delivered to Illinois citizens."¹ Established in the Illinois Administrative Code, the program requires that certified local health departments carry out the core public health functions of assessment, policy development and assurance by meeting specified practice standards. The adoption of the core functions and practice standards in 1993 represented a groundbreaking shift away from the traditional model of requiring that LHDs implement specific categorical programs to a focus on the functional role of a health department in the community.

PROCESS

- Local Health Departments (LHD) conduct Illinois Project for Local Health Assessment of Needs (IPLAN) process
- IDPH reviews IPLAN submission for substantial compliance with Code
- LHD submits Certification Application
- If Certification Application provides self-affirmation of compliance with all practice standards, then IDPH director grants a 5-year certification to the LHD

GOVERNANCE

The Illinois Department of Health governs the certification process via the following activities:

- Develops, enhances and maintains IPLAN data system
- Conducts training and provides technical assistance
- Reviews submitted assessments and plans for substantial compliance with the administrative rules (every 5 years) and provides follow-up technical assistance

STANDARDS

LHDs must assert that they meet the following set of 10 public health practice standards that are set in Illinois code:

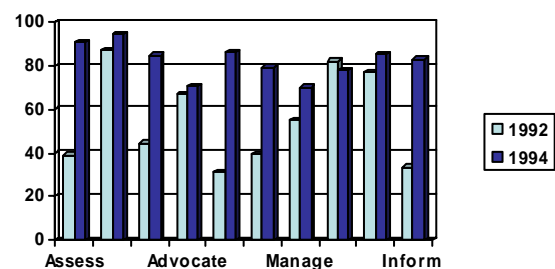
- Assess community health needs
- Investigate hazards within the community
- Analyze identified health needs for their determinants
- Advocate and build constituencies for public health
- Prioritize among identified community health needs
- Develop policies and plans to respond to priority needs
- Manage resources and organizational structures
- Implement programs and services to respond to priority needs
- Evaluate programs and services
- Inform and educate the community

COSTS/FINANCES

- PHHS Block Grant for state program - - \$250,000 annually since 1993
- Local activities to maintain certification status: Local sources of funding, Local Health Protection Grant (recipients are certified local health departments) and Estimated local IPLAN costs = \$10,000-\$15,000 in 1994

EVALUATION

Research conducted at the University of Illinois at Chicago shows that the IPLAN has led to improved performance of core public health functions.



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¹ Title 77: Public Health, Chapter 1: Department of Public Health, Subchapter H: Local Health Departments. Part 600: Certified Local Health Department Code. Section 600.100: Statement of Purpose.

<http://www.ilga.gov/commission/jcar/admincode/077/07700600sections.html>