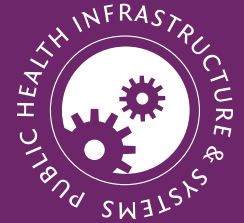


NACCHO's Informatics Needs Assessment of Local Health Departments



WHAT IS THE NACCHO INFORMATICS NEEDS ASSESSMENT?

The informatics needs assessment is a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-funded (CDC), two-stage project that aims to collect information about current informatics* capacity and needs at local health departments (LHDs). The first stage consists of an online, quantitative survey of LHDs, which will take place in November and December 2009. The second stage will use the themes identified in the quantitative component and explore them further in a series of focus groups and key informant interviews. These will occur during January and February 2010.

The needs assessment will look at the following topics:

- Workforce capacity
- Funding
- Physical infrastructure
- Electronic health records
- Health information exchange
- Stimulus funding
- Disease surveillance
- Barriers to using information systems
- Web 2.0

WHY IS NACCHO DOING THIS?

This is a critical time for health information technology (HIT) and health information exchange. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) allocates large amounts of money for HIT, and it is imperative that LHDs are able to take advantage of this opportunity.

NACCHO can better serve LHDs if they have a good understanding of what the needs are. CDC has given funding to NACCHO to collect this information and use it to give a voice to LHDs because this type of information is not currently available.

HOW WILL THE INFORMATION BE USED?

- The information will be used to influence both policy and decision-makers at federal and state levels. NACCHO is striving to ensure that its members can benefit from the large amounts of federal investment stemming from the ARRA.
- NACCHO will use the information to guide its knowledge dissemination and technical assistance. Collecting this information allows NACCHO to better serve LHDs and support them to develop their informatics capacity, for example, by providing technical assistance.

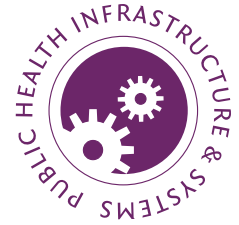
HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED?

A random sample of LHDs has been selected for the quantitative survey portion of the needs assessment. If your LHD is selected, please make sure that you or someone else in the organization completes the survey. Every single response will be an important part of the final results because only a small sample will be used. This small investment of your time could lead to large benefits for your LHD.

NACCHO will draw a separate random sample for the focus groups phase. If your LHD is selected, NACCHO strongly encourages you to participate. The focus group is an opportunity to tell the stories of your experiences, which is a key component of the narrative shared with other LHDs, federal partners, and politicians. If funding is available, NACCHO also hopes to conduct focus groups with other entities associated with HIT, such as software vendors, standards organizations, and state health departments.

[FACT SHEET]

November 2009



If your LHD is not included in either sample, or you are not an LHD, there are still ways to take part in this initiative. NACCHO is interested in documenting examples of innovation in HIT that can be shared with other LHDs. NACCHO is also seeking to develop tools and resources that can assist LHDs that are just beginning their informatics development.

Finally, no matter what your level of involvement during the data collection phase, NACCHO would appreciate your support with disseminating the findings from the project. The more people that understand the informatics needs of LHDs, the better able NACCHO and others will be to advocate on their behalf.

WHEN CAN I SEE THE RESULTS?

The survey will be fielded through to the end of December 2009 and the focus groups will be conducted in January and February 2010. NACCHO expects provisional results from the survey to be available in early 2010, and a full report to be released by May 2010. A May 2010 webinar will publicize key findings from the needs assessment.

Acknowledgments

This fact sheet was made possible through the support of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Cooperative Agreement #5U38HM000449-02. NACCHO is grateful for this support. The views expressed within do not necessarily represent those of the sponsors.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Alastair Matheson, MPH
Senior Analyst, Informatics

P (202) 507-4243

F (202) 783-1583

amatheson@naccho.org

* Informatics can include anything from syndromic surveillance and electronic health records to conducting business process analyses that improve the workflow of an LHD.

NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health



The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice for local health departments in order to ensure the conditions that promote health and equity, combat disease, and improve the quality and length of all lives.

1100 17th St, NW, 2nd Floor Washington, DC 20036
P (202) 783 5550 F (202) 783 1583

www.naccho.org