



PLAN
Identify an opportunity and Plan for Improvement

1. Getting Started

SCDPH recognized a gap in its capacity to carry out the first of the three essential functions of public health as defined by the Institute of Medicine: *assessment*, assurance and policy development. Michigan's funding cuts in Community Health Assessment Initiative the mid-nineties resulted in the loss of all SCDPH funding and staff positions to support this fundamental process. The current vision and goal of SCDPH leadership is to implement the MAPP process¹ to help accomplish the new vision of achieving their prioritized health outcomes for Saginaw County. SCDPH leadership was supportive of the planned improvement and committed resources to this project.

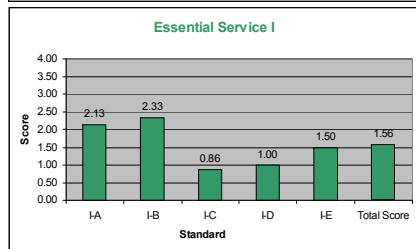
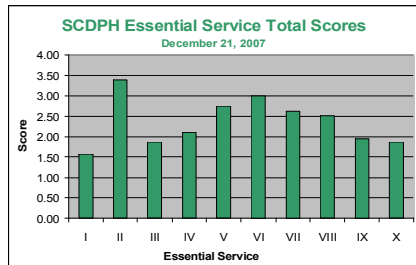
2. Assemble the Team

A Continuous quality improvement (CQI) Core Team was assembled with individuals based on the expertise and experience related to CQI and strategic planning. The selected team members: Health Officer, SCDPH strategic planning (a process that is referred to as MOD quad) co-facilitators, the Emergency Preparedness Director and the former Community Health Assessor.

Original AIM Statement: To conduct a Community Health Assessment utilizing the MAPP model.

3. Examine the Current Approach

Executive Management and the Core CQI team gathered to complete the NACCHO LHD self-assessment utilizing an online version. Results confirmed that Essential Service I had the lowest score, and that this standard has the greatest potential impact on the LHD. Essential Service I, Standard I-C: *conduct or contribute expertise to periodic community health assessments* was selected as the QI project. SCDPH was focused on performing a Community Health Assessment.



After working through brainstorming activities to identify opportunities and challenges associated with performing periodic community health assessments, as well as developing affinity and fishbone diagrams to help examine the current approach, the team determined this goal was too large of a task to complete within the time constraints of the pilot project. The scope for Standard I-C was narrowed to fit the needs of the department and grant timeline.

Revised AIM Statement: By May 15, 2008 conduct staff training on assessment methods to increase appropriate knowledge of standards and processes for conducting a community health assessment.

4. Identify Potential Solutions

Based on the CQI tools used in evaluating the results from the survey, the group identified a shortage of staff with knowledge of community health assessment

as a significant barrier. Four action steps were identified as potential solutions to achieve the AIM statement:

1. Develop training module (curriculum) and guide
2. Conduct training with knowledgeable instructor
3. Measure training conducted through pre- and post-test scores
4. Identify the PDCA cycle to be used as the basis for report

The CQI Core Team scheduled a 2 day training session for the Executive Team, key staff members, and selected community partners on May 1 – 2, 2008.

5. Develop an Improvement Theory

- If SCDPH could train staff to conduct a Community Health Assessment, **then** capacity could be built to better provide Essential Service 1, Standard 1-C.
- If a curriculum was developed to train staff on conducting a Community Health Assessment, **then** the process could be sustained if key staff members left the agency.
- If a pre- and post-test were administered, **then** success of the training could be measured.

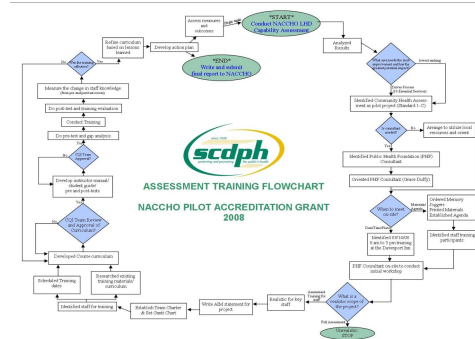
DO
Test the Theory for Improvement

6. Test the Theory

The Core Team developed a flow chart for the Assessment Training process. A flowchart process was used during development of the Community Assessment workshop. The flowchart was improved as the pilot progressed. The final flowchart was formatted in an innovative circular fashion to reflect the iterative nature of the training process. The E-Team identified key staff to receive assessment training. Training dates and facilities were selected. Funding was secured to supplement NACCHO grant monies to complete the training in tandem with a strengths based assessment related to a specific SCDPH program. The only SCDPH manager with practical experience in conducting community health assessment developed the pre- and post-test to measure success of the training, and worked closely with the QI consultant to formulate the curriculum.

A review of the training curriculum at a Core Team meeting identified that the training did not follow the MAPP assessment process. The curriculum was revised to align with MAPP, which in turn aligns with the current SCDPH strategic plan regarding community public health assessment.

On May 1 and 2, 2008, the E-Team, key staff, and community partners participated in the training to learn about assessment methods. Participants were asked to identify important community issues as well as community strengths. An introduction to the Ten Essential Public Health Services, the four MAPP assessments, and the PDCA improvement cycle was presented. The group was divided into groups to participate in a "World Café" discussion to share ideas and develop common themes and possible plans for action. Post tests were administered to all.

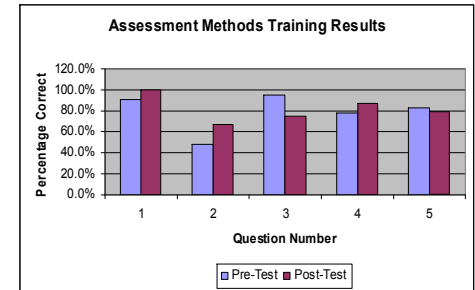


STUDY
Use Data to Study Results of the Test

7. Study the Results

By participating in the NACCHO pilot, SCDPH has taken a closer, more comprehensive look at the organization in reference to a standardized definition of services. The assessment as a whole is an exhaustive exercise. Having experienced the process once, the department now better understands how to maximize the effectiveness of the dialog initiated as a result of the questions presented in the survey.

Results from pre- and post-tests of the 2 day training generally showed an increase in knowledge:



One major finding of engaging in the assessment process is the frustration arising from the issue of funded versus mandated programs. The assessment is non-judgmental when posing questions for comparison at the local level. There is no consideration whether characteristics or programs in question are funded or even supported by the economic or political environment of the local health department. Some questions refer to operational definitions which are unfamiliar to some service areas. SCDPH is confident that continued use of this tool will encourage a common glossary of definitions and a closer coordination of services throughout the national public health community.

ACT
Standardize the Improvement and Establish Future Plans

8. Standardize the Improvement or Develop a New Theory

The Community Wide Public Health Assessment training process has increased the awareness of SCDPH in general about the need for closer involvement with community partners, data and information sources available for research and analysis, and the importance of sharing information beyond the local community. The MAPP Roadmap is an excellent format for visualizing, planning and implementing a comprehensive community assessment. The language used to describe the 4 phases of the MAPP assessment process is clear. It ties together the internal needs of the health department with the strengths and needs of the community served. The data, both qualitative and quantitative, coming from conducting a MAPP based assessment will provide a solid foundation for improvement efforts at the local and national level.

9. Establish Future Plans

SCDPH will continue the PDCA cycle to improve the curriculum and engage more staff in assessment methods. An additional survey will be administered approximately 6 weeks after the initial training to test the retention and comprehension of the material. This capacity building opportunity will be used to help align SCDPH and community partners with the MAPP process. That process will provide the tools to achieve the newest vision priority, "We will achieve our prioritized health outcomes for Saginaw County"

For more information about the Saginaw County Department of Public Health, please visit www.saginawpublichealth.org.

¹ For more information on Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP), please visit www.naccho.org/mapp.