

## 2012-2013 Accreditation Support Initiative (ASI) for Health Departments and Support Organizations

### FINAL REPORT

#### 1. **Community Description**

*Briefly characterize the community(ies) served by your health department or support organization (location, population served, jurisdiction type, organization structure, etc). The purpose of this section is to provide context to a reader who may be unfamiliar with your agency.*

The New Orleans Health Department (NOHD) serves a diverse urban population in terms of both race and socioeconomic status. The population of New Orleans is 60 percent black, 33 percent white, and 5.2 percent Hispanic with a notable Asian community (primarily Vietnamese). According to the U.S. Census, the 2012 population projection of New Orleans is 369,250, making it one of the fastest growing major U.S. cities.

In spite of strong growth, New Orleans faces significant health disparities. Twenty-four percent of the total population lives in poverty, and the child poverty rate is 35 percent. Much of the low-income population bears a disparate burden of social inequities, socioeconomically driven stressors, unhealthy environments and barriers to health care access. The disproportionate impact of these inequalities results in poor health outcomes including higher than national average rates of poor nutrition, physical inactivity, chronic disease, sexually transmitted disease, adverse pregnancy outcomes, smoking and violence.

To face these challenges, NOHD has transitioned over the past three years from a primary care model to a population health model, with the philosophy that city government should facilitate community improvement by linking and leveraging local resources. Under its new population health model, NOHD is leading efforts to foster an optimum health-related quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in New Orleans. NOHD has established strong relationships throughout the community and is making positive gains in its priority areas through collaboration and collective impact.

#### 2. **Work Plan Overview**

*Provide an overview of the work you conducted with or because of this funding, including the significant accomplishments/deliverables completed between December 2012-May 2013 under the auspices of this grant, and the key activities you engaged in to achieve these accomplishments. This should result in a narrative summary of the chart you completed in Part 1, in a format that is easily understandable by others.*

During this grant period, NOHD completed its strategic planning process and submitted its application (including the three prerequisites) to PHAB. Grant funds paid for our year 1 application fee.

Having a strong quality improvement program is important for national accreditation. While NOHD had established a Quality Council and produced its first quality improvement plan in late 2012,

there was a need for training in QI methods and tools among staff. NACCHO grant funds allowed us to bring a national QI expert to New Orleans for a one-day training for 25 of our staff, including Quality Council members. During this training, we worked on actual QI issues facing the department. The knowledge gained during this training has enabled us to more skillfully execute QI projects, grow our QI program, and be better prepared for accreditation.

NACCHO grant funds enabled us to hire support staff who helped us not only finalize our communications policies but accomplish many other tasks related to accreditation, including revising our website to meet PHAB standards, drafting program-related communications products, and providing documentation management support.

Also during this grant period, we accomplished a variety of other milestones related to accreditation, including improvement of our performance management system, holding a performance management training for program managers, and making leadership and management trainings available to program directors and managers.

### 3. **Challenges**

*Describe any challenges or barriers encountered during the implementation of your work plan. These can be challenges you may have anticipated at the start of the initiative or unexpected challenges that emerged during the course of implementing your proposed activities. If challenges were noted in your interim report, please **do** include them here as well.*

The major challenge was to accomplish a lot in a short time frame, particularly in an environment of many pressing issues and competing priorities.

### 4. **Facilitators of Success**

*Describe factors or strategies that helped to facilitate completion of your work. These can be conditions at your organization that generally contributed to your successes or specific actions you took that helped make your project successful or mitigated challenges described above.*

A high level of commitment at all levels to improving our department and achieving accreditation facilitated the completion of this work. We have made accreditation-related projects a priority and are making our best effort to adhere to the internal timeline we set for completion of accreditation milestones.

### 5. **Lessons Learned**

*Please describe your overall lessons learned from participating in the Accreditation Support Initiative. These can be things you might do differently if you could repeat the process and/or the kinds of advice you might give to other health departments or support organizations who are pursuing similar accreditation-related funding opportunities or technical assistance activities.*

While not in our NACCHO workplan, we have hired a consultant to do a preliminary review of our documentation prior to submission to PHAB. Though this process is not yet complete, initial feedback from the consultant is proving to be very useful.

## 6. **Funding Impact**

*Describe the impact that this funding has had on your health department/support organization (and/or health departments you worked with as a support organization). In other words, thinking about the work you have done over the last six months:*

- *(Health departments) How has this funding advanced your own accreditation readiness or quality improvement efforts?*
- *(Support organizations) How has this funding advanced the technical assistance you provide to health departments? How has this funding advanced the accreditation readiness of the health departments you worked with?*

The QI training we were able to host as a result of this funding has been a great help to us in building our QI program. We have benefited from the availability of funding for workforce development and technical assistance in other areas and the ability to hire staff to support our accreditation efforts. This funding has enabled us not only to better meet some of the accreditation requirements, but to meet them sooner than we would have if we had not had the funding.

## 7. **Next Steps**

*What are your organization's (and/or the health departments you worked with as a support organization) general plans for the next 12-24 months in terms of accreditation preparation and quality improvement?*

We plan to continue to engage in and document QI projects (PDSA cycles), to grow our skills in QI, and to build a culture of QI in accordance with our QI plan.

We will attend the PHAB accreditation training in May and plan to finalize and submit our documentation for accreditation within the next few months.