

2015-2016 Accreditation Support Initiative (ASI) for Local Health Departments

FINAL REPORT

1. **Community Description:** Briefly characterize the community(ies) served by your agency (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.

St. Mary's County is situated on a peninsula in Southern Maryland with over 500 miles of shoreline on the Patuxent River, Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay. The Naval Air Station, Patuxent River, employing 22,400 military, civilians and defense contractors, is home to the U.S. Naval Air Systems Command (NAVAIR), including the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division (NAWCAD). With over 200 high-tech aerospace and defense contractors, the county has emerged as a world-class center for maritime aviation research, development, testing, evaluation, and acquisition. St. Mary's County is governed by the Commissioners of St. Mary's County. The board is a five member group elected for four-year terms. It is also home to an Amish Community of approximately 350 families. The Health Department serves approximately 105,000 individuals and is considered a rural/micropolitan area. The department is staffed by 80 FTE and 20 contractual employees.

2. **Project Overview:** Provide an overview of the work your agency conducted with or because of this funding, including the significant accomplishments/deliverables completed during the ASI project period and the key activities 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.

The St. Mary's County Health Department had initially planned to hire a consultant to spearhead our QI Plan; however, the turnover of key positions at the time the grant was awarded and the inability to hire a contractor, lead to the agency to decide to take on the project from within. The initial QI team was comprised of the existing Implementation Committee (IC); invitations to join the process were solicited from within the HD. Numerous completed QI plans from other agencies were reviewed and discussed. The basic draft of SMCHD's QI was developed using these models.

3. **Challenges:** Describe any challenges or barriers encountered as your agency worked to complete the selected deliverables. These can be challenges your agency may have anticipated at the start of the initiative or unexpected challenges that emerged during the course of implementing your proposed activities and completing your deliverables. If challenges were noted in your interim report, please **do** include them here as well. Please include both tangible (e.g., natural disaster, leadership change) and intangible (e.g., lack of staff engagement) challenges.

The major challenges to the completion of the plan have been staff shortages in key positions, staff vacations and the lack of staff other than the IC committee members participating.

4. **Facilitators of Success:** Describe factors or strategies that helped to facilitate completion of your agency's work. These can be conditions at your agency that contributed to your successes or specific actions you took that helped make your project successful or mitigated challenges described above. **Please include both tangible (e.g., influx of funds from another source) and intangible (e.g., staff or leadership engagement) facilitators.**

SMCHD's QI Plan continues to be a work in progress. As the agency works towards filling key staff positions our leadership engagement is expected to increase thus leading to a completed QI Plan.

5. **Impact of ASI:** To what extent do you feel your health department was more prepared for accreditation at the end of the ASI5 project as compared to the beginning? What specifically changed during that time that made your agency more prepared for accreditation? How did the ASI5 contribute to your health department's progress?

The QI Plan is a critical step necessary for Accreditation and will drive SMCHD in the Accreditation process. It has been extremely beneficial in that the entire staff has begun to think about their role in the agency QI process.

6. **Lessons Learned:** Please describe your agency's overall lessons learned from participating in the ASI. 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 who are pursuing similar accreditation-related funding opportunities or technical assistance activities.

The lack of some key positions being filled with-in the agency was a hindrance to our efforts and significantly cut down on the participation in developing the QI plan.

7. **Funding Impact:** Describe the impact that this funding has had on your agency. How has this funding advanced your agency's accreditation readiness or quality improvement efforts?

This funding has allowed the agencies AC to attend trainings and begin the QI process for the agency. The funding has helped with the cost of trainings and equipment as well as off-set some of the AC's salary to focus on the area of QI with-in the agency.

8. **Next Steps and Sustainability:** What are your agency's general plans for the next 12-24 months in terms of accreditation preparation and quality improvement? How will the work completed as part of the ASI be sustained moving forward?

The SMCHD expects to complete the QI Plan by Fall 2016 and apply for Accreditation shortly thereafter.