NACCHO’s 2016 Profile Study: Leadership Characteristics by LHD Type

**Key Findings**

**SMALL & RURAL LHDs**
- Serve populations of less than 25,000 in rural areas*
- 4% Non-white leaders
- 8:10 Leaders are female
- Most common highest degree: Bachelor's
- Public Health, 13%
- Nursing, 54%

**MEDIUM & SUBURBAN LHDs**
- Serve populations of 50,000-100,000 in metropolitan areas*
- 5% Non-white leaders
- 6:10 Leaders are female
- Most common highest degree: Master's
- Public Health, 28%
- Nursing, 26%

**LARGE & URBAN LHDs**
- Serve populations of at least 500,000 in urban areas*
- 34% Non-white leaders
- 5:10 Leaders are female
- Most common highest degree: Doctorate
- Public Health, 41%
- Nursing, 9%

**NACCHO Recommendations**

- Explore ways to support LHDs in recruiting leaders that are diverse in age, race, and gender
- Ensure LHD leadership tools and resources are appropriate for varying education levels
- Develop resources on LHD leadership core competencies tailored to a broad range of public health expertise

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**Background and Methods**

NACCHO conducts the Profile study every three years to develop a comprehensive description of local health department (LHD) infrastructure and practice. The 2016 Profile study included a total of 2,533 LHDs in the United States, of which 76% completed the survey.

In the Profile study, NACCHO assesses various characteristics of LHDs’ top executives. *The three groups presented here are NOT inclusive of all LHDs in the U.S. For example, some LHDs in urban areas serve small populations. These narrowly defined categories illustrate how characteristics may vary based on the LHD setting.*

For more information about the Profile study, email profileteam@naccho.org.