Overview

In February 2017, NACCHO released Health in All Policies: Experiences from Local Health Departments, developed from key informant interviews and focused discussions engaging with local health department (LHD) staff, community partners, and funders to learn more about challenges, opportunities, and the sustainability related to implementing Health in All Policies (HiAP) initiatives. The report explores five themes, promising strategies for health department practice, and recommendations for improving the field of HiAP at the local level. This fact sheet builds on NACCHO’s 2014 fact sheet, Local Health Department Strategies for Implementing Health in All Policies, and provides an overview of the report recommendations and quotes from local health officials that capture why these promising strategies/recommendations are useful based on HiAP practitioner experiences.

Opportunities for Action

NACCHO developed the following five recommendations for LHDs interested in pursuing a HiAP approach at their health department.

1. Research and evaluation.

More research is needed to evaluate changes in health determinants and outcomes from HiAP initiatives using both qualitative and quantitative data. Evaluation can help to demonstrate the impact of HiAP and its ability to improve health in the short and long term.

2. Developing the field.

Capacity building is a great need of the field. Trainings focus on why HiAP is needed and include more specific topics, such as how to engage with cross-sector partners and determine potential strategies for implementation. Case studies can be used to share information on how HiAP initiatives have been successfully implemented and how such initiatives might be tailored to different jurisdictions.

3. Health equity.

The achievement of health equity is a central tenet for HiAP practice. HiAP initiatives should elevate differential neighborhood conditions and unjust inequities in the distribution of health determinants and health outcomes.

“[Quote here]” – Local Health Official

“You have to become a data-driven community where people are willing to share and are okay talking about real data outcomes... Being data driven has to become part of the community culture... It's a political issue, and it needs to stop being seen that way. Other communities are doing this better, and it has a huge impact. When they see data that doesn’t say good things, they can use that to improve. We don’t do that here.” – Local Health Official
Expanding beyond the built environment.

Many early HiAP initiatives were focused on improving community design and built environments. Opportunities also exist across multiple policy domains to improve health. Examples of other policy domains include criminal justice, economic development, and housing.

Creating opportunities to share successes and challenges.

Around the country, interest in HiAP is growing. Despite the wide variety of HiAP efforts at the local level across the country, local health officials must share findings, successes, challenges, stories, and lessons learned to continue to grow the field. Experiences implementing HiAP can be shared through conferences, webinars, and group calls.

References


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