

Introducing the Local Health Department

Activity Worksheet

Purpose

Healthcare facility staff may not fully understand the role of local health departments (LHDs) in supporting infection prevention and control (IPC). This worksheet is designed to help you think through how your LHD engages with healthcare facilities and what information is most useful to share, including **your LHD's role in healthcare IPC** and a **broadier introduction to your health department**.

Use the reflection questions and notes to capture ideas you want to carry forward as you develop your materials at home. A fillable template and example are at the end of this packet.

Use Cases

The resulting one-pager (front and back) can be used in these key situations:

- When a new staff member joins a healthcare facility partner
- When you're building a relationship with a new facility
- When you want to refresh or strengthen an existing partnership

Part 1: The Role of the Local Health Department in Healthcare IPC

Before introducing your health department more broadly, it helps to ground the relationship in the specific work you will do together.

What are the most important ways your health department supports healthcare IPC?

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Disease surveillance | ☐ Health Alert Network (HAN) communications |
| ☐ Reportable disease response | ☐ Emergency preparedness planning |
| ☐ Outbreak investigation | ☐ Healthcare coalition engagement |
| ☐ IPC consultation | ☐ Education and training |
| ☐ Healthcare-associated infection (HAI) prevention | ☐ Data sharing and situational awareness |
| ☐ Antimicrobial resistance (AR) activities | ☐ Resource coordination |
| ☐ Immunization and vaccine coordination | ☐ Other: _____ |

Reflection Questions *(use the symbol to indicate which of the above these apply to)*

- ★ Which of these roles are healthcare partners most familiar with?
- ✓ Which roles are least understood or most often overlooked?
- Are there services your LHD provides that healthcare facilities may not know about?

How does your LHD currently engage healthcare partners?

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Regular meetings or calls | ☐ Site visits |
| ☐ Healthcare coalition participation | ☐ Newsletters or email updates |
| ☐ Outbreak response activities | ☐ Technical assistance requests |
| ☐ Trainings and webinars | ☐ Other: _____ |

Reflection Questions (use the symbol to indicate which of the above these apply to)

- ⊗ What has been most effective for building trust with healthcare partners?
- ◇ What activities could be scaled up or made more robust?
- ▶ Are there any activities the LHD wants to pass to the facility to be responsible for?

Information and resources to share with healthcare partners

Consider whether your LHD would want to share information on any of the following.

Reporting & Surveillance	IPC Resources	Vaccination	Preparedness & Communications
☐ Reportable conditions list	☐ IPC consultation services	☐ Vaccine registry information	☐ HAN enrollment information
☐ Disease reporting procedures	☐ Outbreak response support	☐ Immunization program contacts	☐ Emergency preparedness contacts
☐ Online reporting system information & instructions	☐ Contact/isolation guidance	☐ Vaccine-preventable disease resources	☐ Healthcare coalition information
☐ Reporting timelines & contacts	☐ HAI/AR resources		☐ Resource request procedures
☐ After-hours reporting contacts	☐ Educational materials		☐ Training opportunities
☐ Syndromic surveillance information	☐ Support for required or routine facility trainings		☐ Seasonal and timely public health messaging

Reflection Questions (use the symbol to indicate which of the above these apply to)

- △ Which resources do healthcare partners request most often?
- ♥ Which resources are available but underutilized?
- ★ Are there resources you wish existed but currently do not?

Key messages about your LHD's role in healthcare IPC

If a healthcare partner remembered only three things about your LHD's role in healthcare IPC, what would you want them to be?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Part 2: Introducing Your LHD as a Whole

Beyond IPC, healthcare partners may benefit from a broader understanding of your local health department: what it is, what it does, and what makes it distinct in your community. This context helps partners understand the full scope of your agency and may open the door to collaboration they haven't considered.

What is an LHD?

A local health department (LHD) is a governmental public health agency serving a defined geographic area — typically a county, city, or district. LHDs are the front line of public health. They are distinct from state health departments and from hospital or clinical health systems, and are funded through a mix of federal, state, and local sources.

What services does your LHD provide?

Check the services your LHD offers that would be relevant to share with healthcare facility partners.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Communicable disease surveillance | ☐ Environmental health (food, water, vectors) |
| ☐ Food safety inspections and ServSafe® training | ☐ Emergency preparedness and response |
| ☐ Immunization clinics / vaccine distribution | |
| ☐ STI/HIV testing and partner services | ☐ Healthcare coalition participation |
| ☐ TB screening and case management | ☐ Vital records (birth and death certificates) |
| ☐ Women's health records | ☐ Harm reduction services |
| ☐ Maternal, infant, and early childhood health | ☐ Community health assessment and planning |
| ☐ Behavioral health services | |
| ☐ Chronic disease prevention | ☐ Other: _____ |

What makes your LHD distinct?

Think about what information would help a new healthcare partner understand your specific health department — your jurisdiction, population served, organizational structure, and current priorities.

Your LHD's jurisdiction / geographic area served:

Approximate population served:

Organizational structure (e.g., county agency, independent district):

What is your LHD currently doing in the community?

What current initiatives, priorities, or activities would be helpful for healthcare facility partners to know about?

Reflection Questions

What context about your LHD would be most useful for a new healthcare partner?

Are there programs or activities your LHD does that healthcare partners might not expect?

How does your LHD's work connect to broader community health priorities?

Part 3: Action Planning

Based on your work in Parts 1 and 2, use this section to identify next steps for strengthening how you communicate and share information with healthcare facility partners.

One thing our LHD communicates well to healthcare partners:

One gap in how we communicate our IPC role:

One resource or tool we should develop or update:

One action we will take after completing this worksheet:

Team Discussion

As a team, discuss the following questions. Be prepared to highlight big takeaways.

- What aspect of the LHD role in healthcare IPC is most misunderstood by our healthcare partners?
- What information is most important to communicate early in a new partnership?
- What strategies have been effective for building relationships with healthcare facilities?
- What would help healthcare partners better understand and engage with our LHD?

Our team's key takeaway(s):

Role of LHD in Healthcare IPC — Page 1

IPC Partnership Reference Sheet Template

[Health Department Name]

[Tagline or jurisdiction — optional]

Address: [Street, City, State, ZIP]

Main phone: [xxx-xxx-xxxx]

After-hours: [xxx-xxx-xxxx]

Website: [URL]

Hours: [Business hours]

Our Role in Healthcare IPC

[Describe your LHD's role in 2–3 sentences: what you do in partnership with healthcare facilities, and why that relationship matters. Example: We partner with healthcare facilities to support communicable disease surveillance, outbreak response, and infection prevention. We serve as a resource for reportable disease guidance, IPC consultation, and emergency preparedness coordination.]

Key Contacts

Epidemiology / Disease Reporting	Emergency Preparedness	IPC / Outbreak Response
Name: _____	Name: _____	Name: _____
Phone: _____	Phone: _____	Phone: _____
Email: _____	Email: _____	Email: _____

Core IPC Activities We Provide

Highlight the activities most relevant to your healthcare facility partners.

Surveillance & Response

- Disease surveillance and reporting support
- Reportable disease investigation
- Outbreak response coordination
- Health Alert Network (HAN) communications

IPC Support

- IPC consultation and guidance
- HAI/AR prevention activities
- Contact/isolation guidance
- Educational materials and trainings

Immunization

- Vaccine coordination and distribution
- Immunization program contacts
- Vaccine registry information

Preparedness & Coordination

- Emergency preparedness planning
- Healthcare coalition participation
- Resource request procedures
- Medical countermeasure coordination

Tip: Add, remove, or rename any section above to reflect what your LHD actually provides. You may also include a QR code linking to your disease reporting portal, HAN enrollment, or coalition page.

Broader LHD Introduction — Page 2

About Our Health Department Template

About Our Health Department

Who We Are

[Describe your LHD in 3–4 sentences. Include jurisdiction, population served, number of staff or program areas, and governance structure. Example: We are the governmental public health agency for [County], serving [X] residents across [X] square miles. Our department includes [X] program areas and is funded through a combination of county general funds, state allocations, and federal grants.]

Quick Facts

Jurisdiction: _____

Population served: _____

Year established: _____

Governance: _____

No. of staff / FTEs: _____

Our Programs and Services

List the programs and services most relevant to your healthcare facility partners. Add, remove, or rename columns as needed.

[Program Area 1]	[Program Area 2]	[Program Area 3]
_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____	_____ _____ _____ _____

What We're Currently Doing in Our Community

Highlight current priorities, initiatives, or activities your healthcare partners should be aware of. Update this section regularly.

Additional Resources and Links

Include links, QR codes, or references that would be useful for a healthcare facility partner.

Suggested Links

- Reportable disease list / reporting portal
- HAN enrollment
- Healthcare coalition information
- Community health assessment / CHIP

Add your own
