

Key Assets for Implementing Local Health Department Health in All Policies Initiatives



Overview

This fact sheet provides tips for local health departments (LHDs) to identify key assets to implement Health in All Policies (HiAP), strategically identify and develop partnerships, and measure the impact of their HiAP initiatives.

Background

In February 2017, the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) released the report [Health in All Policies: Experiences from Local Health Departments](#).¹

This report contains insights from health department staff, community partners, and funders regarding challenges and opportunities in implementing HiAP initiatives. The importance of building partnerships emerged as a key strategy to begin implementing a HiAP approach.

Health in All Policies:

*A change in the systems that determine how decisions are made and implemented by local, state, and federal government to ensure that policy decisions have neutral or beneficial impacts on the determinants of health. HiAP emphasizes the need to collaborate across sectors to achieve common health goals, and is an innovative approach to the processes through which policies are created and implemented.*²

Partnerships empower health departments to promote routine integration of health into policies and institutionalization of practices that benefit public health.

Implementation

1 Identify key assets.

Health departments benefit from investing in partnerships in multiple sectors, including stewards of health data sources, community stakeholders, funders, and legislators with control over local ordinances and resolutions. Local ordinances and resolutions can provide political support and direction for HiAP, and informational resources, such as data and measurement tools, can aid in evaluating the impacts of policy changes on health determinants and outcomes. Partnerships and collaboration build the foundation for HiAP, while dedicated staff, resources, and funding sustain joint efforts in the long term.



Table 1. Considerations for Identifying Key Assets in HiAP Implementation

Asset	Question
People	What skills can people contribute (i.e., professional, technical, advocacy)? Are staff available to support cross-sector efforts?
Resources and data	What types of technologies or data are available and can they be shared? What other types of resources can be leveraged?
Cross-sector partnership and community engagement	What are potential opportunities to work across sectors? What are potential co-benefits of cross-sector collaborations? What types of opportunities can be used to inform, educate, and exchange knowledge with community stakeholders (i.e., workshops, curriculum development, and technical assistance)?
Funding	Are there grants or other funding opportunities to support multi-sector collaboration?
Legislative and/or Executive Branch options	Are there opportunities to adopt local policies, resolutions, or ordinances that are supportive of HiAP? Are there opportunities to issue an executive order?

2 Develop partnerships.

Partnerships inform health departments of how the community prioritizes its concerns and how governmental actions impact the community's health:

- Community organizations and residents can ensure that policy or program initiatives are responsive and accountable to community needs. Community relationships can also increase civic engagement of residents who would face the greatest impact from policy and planning decisions.
- Health facilities staff have the diverse clinical and administrative perspectives that may inform unique insights into opportunities for policy intervention in individual localities.
- Local and regional governmental agencies, even ones that are not traditionally health-oriented, are key partners for LHDs looking to influence policy change. Each agency focuses on individual aspects of community well-being and exerts political influence in its own way to further the contribution to the public good.
- Academic researchers can provide critical technical and high-level support to LHDs. They can also lend credibility to HiAP efforts through data analysis and systematic reviews of emerging fields of study.
- Funders can help to grow and sustain HiAP efforts by allocating resources to support HiAP consultants and full-time staff.

Table 2. Potential Partners for LHDs to Engage through their HiAP Initiative

Partner Type	Examples
Community organizations and residents	Neighborhood associations, schools, faith- and community-based organizations and other community groups, local businesses
Health facilities	Community clinics, hospitals and health systems
Local government agencies and departments	Housing, public safety, public health, economic and community development, urban and regional planning, criminal justice system, school districts, transportation, parks and recreation, social services
Regional government agencies	Regional transportation and planning organizations
Academic researchers	University researchers, undergraduate and graduate students, community colleges
Funders	Foundations, federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations, national associations

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“[Community Engagement] is an enormous step—to have people that don’t normally engage in community design policy come forward and read the policies, give recommendations, and support things that really are a shift in the way of thinking.”

– Local health official

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3 Measure the impact.

Developing an evaluation plan before implementing a HiAP initiative can help ensure robust data collection and a comprehensive evaluation. Without an evaluation plan, data or time constraints can limit measurement, resulting in an incomplete evaluation that is less likely to convince funders and stakeholders of the impact.³

In evaluating the progress, looking at how partnerships affect health outcomes is essential. Practitioners have used local rating systems, healthy community checklists, community health assessments, and other tools listed below to enhance their evaluations.

Table 3. Evaluation Strategies and Tools for Measuring Outcomes of HiAP Efforts

Measurement Strategy	Description
Rating systems and indicators	Developing healthy community design indicators; developing health indicators of short-, intermediate-, and longer-term measures.
Community health assessment	Developing a snapshot of baseline existing health conditions of the community, including health outcomes and neighborhood conditions by geography and race/ethnicity and socioeconomic factors.
Process evaluation	Tracking and measuring processes, including identifying number of partners engaged and number of participants in a project.
Outcome evaluation	Monitoring changes in health determinants and health outcomes; examples include changes in healthy community infrastructure investments and changes in chronic disease rates due to increases in physical activity. ⁴⁻⁶

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“You have to become a data-driven community where people are willing to share and are okay talking about real data outcomes. We sometimes stray away from measuring things because if we don’t succeed and the data shows that, people freak out. Being data-driven has to become part of the community culture or else it becomes a punishment tool. 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.”

– Listening session participant

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[FACT SHEET]

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References

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Resources

- NACCHO's Environmental Health in All Policies Toolkit. Retrieved February 1, 2018 from <http://toolbox.naccho.org/pages/index.html>
- NACCHO's Health in All Policies Fact Sheet Retrieved February 1, 2018 from <https://www.naccho.org/programs/community-health/healthy-community-design/health-in-all-policies>
- NACCHO's Health in All Policies Meeting in A Box Slides. Retrieved February 1, 2018 from <https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/HiAP-Toolkit-Meeting-in-a-Box-FINAL.pptx>
- NACCHO's Health in All Policies Meeting in A Box Notes Retrieved from February 1, 2018 from <https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/Programs/Community-Health/HiAPMeeting-in-a-BoxNotesFINAL.pdf>

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For more information and to read NACCHO's *Health in All Policies: Experiences from Local Health Departments* report, visit <http://bit.ly/2iwaUAV>.

For general information, please contact NACCHO's Healthy Community Design Team: healthycommdesign@naccho.org

NACCHO

National Association of County & City Health Officials

The National Connection for Local Public Health



The mission of the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is to be a leader, partner, catalyst, and voice with local health departments.

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