

## OVERVIEW OF COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS

The Florida Department of Health (FDOH) has a long history of utilizing performance management and quality improvement practices. In the late 1980's, the FDOH reorganized its quality assurance review system for county health departments (CHDs) to a more comprehensive performance improvement system, which was led by Central Office Program staff who conducted reviews for CHDs every three to five years. In 2000, the FDOH included the use of Peer Reviewers who have become an essential part of the Quality Improvement (QI) teams that review Florida's 67 CHDs. Some major steps in the Performance Improvement process included:

- Local CHD conducts a self-assessment.
- FDOH Central Office Programs conducts a desk audit and, at times, follows with a CHD on-site visit.
- QI Central Office staff extensively review the CHD, submitted information and conduct on-site reviews over a period of 3-5 days.
- The QI Central Office staff complete a report for the CHD documenting performance improvement issues and agreements.
- CHDs provide a six-month follow-up progress report.

A Quality Improvement Advisory Council was assembled that consisted of CHD representatives including business managers, administrators/ directors, nurses, and peer reviewers; central office program staff; and public health experts familiar with FDOH standards and processes. This Council was organized to establish strategic goals for the new CHD Performance Improvement Process, and create the CHD reporting tool and surveys.

Similar to the Malcolm Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence, the Results Category of the Sterling Criteria for Organizational Performance Excellence was used as the framework for standards adopted by FDOH. The standards and measures in the reporting tool, called the *County Performance Snapshot*, were also aligned with the ten Essential Public Health Services, the Operational Definition of Functional Local Health Department Standards, and National Accreditation Domains.

The County Performance Snapshot (see Figure 1) consists of key indicators related to health, financial status, customer service, workforce, process and leadership. The information provides a "big picture" of the CHD. Having a standardized set of measures allows the CHDs to gauge performance over time and compare themselves with other CHDs.

## PARTICIPATION IN THE MULTI-STATE LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

Florida joined the MLC in its second phase where they educated CHDs and Central Office Programs on performance improvement and strategic planning methods.

Figure 1

SUNSHINE COUNTY PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT	Data Point 3	Data Point 2	Data Point 1	TREND	Target
(7.1) Products and Services Outcomes				Alert	
(7.1a) Assess, monitor and understand health issues facing the community					
(7.1a.1) Number of Births to Mothers Ages 15-17, Rate Per 1,000 Females, 3-Year Rate for All Races	57.3	56.8	42.9	+	21.0
(7.1a.2) Live Births Under 2500 Grams to All Mothers, Percent of Total Births, 3-Year Rates for All Races	10.3	9.2	7.9	+	5.0
(7.1a.3) % of WIC infants who are initially breastfed	62.8	68.6	60.0	ALERT	75.0
(7.1a.4) HIV cases per 100,000 population among non-Hispanic blacks	7.0	6.8	11.1	ALERT	120.0
(7.1a.5) % of active TB patients completing therapy within 12 months of initiation of treatment	0.0	50.0	66.7	+	90.0
(7.1a.6) Enteric Diseases Total, Rate Per 100,000 Population, 3-Year Rates for All Races All Sexes	49.9	55.5	54.8	ALERT	28.5
(7.1a.7) Chlamydia, Rate Per 100,000 Total Population, 3-Year Rates for All Races All Sexes	108.7	262.4	361.4	-	233.0

In addition, Florida developed a multi-county collaborative learning group for 10 CHDs consisting of small, medium, and large counties utilizing the *Institute for Health Improvement's (IHI) Breakthrough Series* model. Because results from the 2005 NPHPS assessment conducted by sixty-seven (67) indicated that Florida only partially met the standard for *Evaluation of Population's Health Services* (56.8%), this collaborative focused on evaluating community health improvement activities targeting physical activity to reduce rates of cardiovascular disease. The collaborative learning groups utilized evidence-based, decision-making approaches to address common opportunities for improvement, analyze processes, define measurement and reporting strategies, and prepare action plans. Conference calls and web meetings were held to assure on-going technical assistance to the CHDs and to provide opportunities to share lessons learned as well as practices that have been effective to improve performance.

Through participation in *Lead States in Public Health Quality Improvement*, the third phase of the MLC (which will run from 2008-2011), Florida will prepare for national accreditation and advance quality improvement in public health through the following work.

**Preparation for Accreditation:** Florida will implement the following activities in preparation for national accreditation:

- Continue to advance the CHD Performance Improvement Process including the County Performance Snapshot in alignment with the national accreditation standards and measures.
- Develop and implement a communication plan to promote national accreditation among Florida's 67 County Health Departments, including presentations at the following:
  - Executive Leadership meetings

- CHD director's conference calls
  - Florida Association of County Health Officials (FACHO)
  - PHN, EH, and Administration meetings
  - 2009 orientations for CHD Performance Improvement Process
- Develop and implement a Central Office Performance Improvement Process among the agencies' twenty-five (25) divisions (which includes approximately 56 bureaus and offices). Similar to the County Performance Snapshot, the standards and measures developed in the Central Office reporting tool will align with national accreditation standards and measures.

**Quality Improvement Collaboratives:** All states participating in the third phase of the MLC are forming collaboratives to collectively implement quality improvement activities focused on specific target areas. States were asked to choose at least two targets from a menu of five capacity/process target areas and five health outcome target areas. Florida will implement 1 collaborative with 10 counties over the course of the project. The collaborative will run over the entire 3 year MLC-3 cycle. In order to identify CHDs that will participate, Florida will review statewide opportunities for improvement including data generated from the 2008 County Performance Snapshot, NPHPSP, an Employee Satisfaction Survey and other data sources. In addition, they will identify CHDs with unfavorable trends and who have set priorities to improve the selected target areas (accomplished during the Review and Analysis phase of the CHD Performance Improvement Process). A total of ten (10) CHDs have been selected to participate in the collaborative, and each county will receive a \$5,000 award to assist in their performance improvement efforts.

**Target Areas:** All states participating in the third phase of the MLC are focusing their quality improvement efforts on at least two specific target areas. States chose from a menu of five capacity/process target areas and five health outcome target areas. The quality improvement efforts of the collaboratives in Florida will be focused on the following target areas:

*Capacity/Process Target Area:*

**Customer Service**

Sub-target: To be determined

*Health Outcome Target Area:*

**Reduce preventable risk factors that predispose the population to chronic disease**

Sub-target: Reduce the percentage of overweight or obese children and adolescents aged 6-19.

**Project Lead and Partners:** The Florida Department of Health's (FDOH) is demonstrating its commitment to continuous performance improvement by establishing the Office of Performance Improvement. This office works

closely with leaders and staff at all levels of the FDOH to improve both organizational and individual performance. The office plans and coordinates the organization's processes that support performance improvement and provides staff and public health partners with the training, tools and technical assistance necessary to build and sustain systematic improvement approaches. FDOH is the lead agency for the MLC grant and is responsible for coordinating and reporting on all aspects of the grant.

- **Florida State University's College of Medicine and College of Nursing** participate on the QI Advisory Council and assist with the development of the process, standards and measures of the reporting tool. The College of Nursing also provided an intern to research resources and evidenced-based practices linked to standards and measures in the reporting tool.
- **Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU)** provides student interns to assist with development of the process and evaluation.
- **Florida Association of Public Health Nursing (FAPHN) and Florida Association of County Health Officials (FACHO)** provides opportunities at statewide meetings for educating CHD administrators and nurses on the performance improvement process and outcomes as well as offering feedback for improvements.
- **Florida Public Health Institute (FPHI)** to assists the Office of Performance Improvement in the coordination of Multi-County Collaborative meetings; registration and marketing of upcoming satellite broadcasts on national accreditation; communicate information to public health leaders and members of the Florida Public Health Association about National Accreditation; and will serve as consultants to County Health Departments preparing for National Accreditation.
- **University of South Florida, College of Public Health (USF)** is conducting an analysis of data obtained from CHDs in the County Performance Snapshot and, using criteria, identifying statewide and regional strengths and opportunities for improvement.

---

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information about Florida's Office of Performance Improvement including best and promising practices and efforts targeting national accreditation, please visit <http://www.floridashealth.com/hpi/>.

To see related work produced by Florida, please visit [www.nnphi.org/ecatalog](http://www.nnphi.org/ecatalog). Under *Programs* select "The Multi-State Learning Collaborative." Under *States* select "Florida." Then click the Search button.