Thirteen Health Departments Achieve National Accreditation Through the Public Health Accreditation Board

Reinforcing the Long-Term Value of Accreditation, Four Health Departments Successfully Achieve Reaccreditation Through PHAB

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (PRWEB) March 28, 2019 -- Every day, communities around the nation trust and rely on health departments to keep them safe from diseases and injuries, promote good health, and protect them from hazards. To uphold that trust, more and more health departments are seeking and obtaining national accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). National accreditation assures people and communities that their health department has the capacity to provide the highest quality of services. This week, 13 health departments achieved national initial accreditation through PHAB, bringing the benefits of accreditation to nearly 80 percent of the U.S. population.

PHAB, the nonprofit, nongovernmental organization that administers the national public health accreditation program, aims to improve and protect the health of the public by advancing and ultimately transforming the quality and performance of the nation’s state, Tribal, local, and territorial public health departments. To receive national accreditation through PHAB, a health department must undergo a rigorous, multi-faceted, peer-reviewed assessment process to ensure it meets or exceeds a set of public health quality standards and measures.

Included in this week’s accreditation decisions are nine local health departments, three state health departments, and one Tribal health department. Marking yet another major milestone for PHAB’s national accreditation program, four health departments this week became the first to successfully achieve national reaccreditation through PHAB, thereby extending their accreditation status for another five years.

“We are so proud of these 17 health departments for wanting to be the best organizations they can be,” said PHAB President and CEO Kaye Bender, PhD, RN, FAAN. “And we are extremely excited to be at a point in the accreditation program where some of the first health departments to achieve initial accreditation through PHAB are now achieving reaccreditation. In doing so, they are ensuring their communities that the value of accreditation is long-term – not a one-time recognition -- and that continual improvement is the hallmark of a 21st century organization.”

The four health departments to successfully achieve national reaccreditation through PHAB are Franklin County Health Department in Frankfort, Kentucky; Northern Kentucky Independent District Health Department in Florence, Kentucky; Washington State Department of Health in Olympia, Washington; and West Allis Health Department in West Allis, Wisconsin. The four were among the first to achieve national initial accreditation through PHAB in 2013.

“The West Allis Health Department is excited to be one of the first four health departments to complete this new milestone in the public health accreditation process,” said West Allis Health Commissioner Sally Nusslock. “We have been an early adopter and promoter of public health accreditation and look forward to continuing this journey with PHAB. The PHAB Accreditation Standards and Measures have provided us with a framework to assess, build and showcase our work to our residents and peers. Accreditation has been an awesome way to show our officials and residents we are meeting high quality public health practice standards and are providing services that are responsive to the needs in our community.”
PHAB’s national accreditation program, which launched in 2011 with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, has become the national standard for public health in the United States. The credential has now been achieved by 36 state health departments, 217 local health departments, three Tribal health departments, and one statewide integrated local public health department system. Among the local health departments to achieve initial accreditation this week is the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health in San Bernardino, California. For both the department and the community, pride in the achievement runs deep.

“As a public health department, we strive to create a healthier community by strengthening our partnerships, stimulating quality and performance improvement opportunities, improving accountability and transparency with all our stakeholders, and celebrating and supporting our amazingly diverse workforce,” Director Trudy Raymundo said. “Achieving national accreditation confirms our ongoing promise to all of these efforts. But our accreditation journey should never stop at that point. Our commitment to the community to strive for constant improvement should never be one more thing we do – it should simply be who we are.”

On the other side of the country this week, that same pride and ongoing promise resonated through the halls of the newly accredited Pennsylvania Department of Health in Harrisburg, where Secretary of Health Rachel Levine, MD, is unceasingly committed to working toward a healthy Pennsylvania.

“This is a very important milestone in our continued efforts to promote healthy lifestyles, prevent injury and disease, and to assure the safe delivery of quality health care to Pennsylvanians,” Dr. Levine said. “Each day, we are working to address health issues in a wide range of areas, including ensuring Pennsylvania has healthy moms and healthy kids, protecting seniors in nursing homes, and addressing the opioid crisis. We are committed to working toward a healthy Pennsylvania. Public health is an ever-changing landscape, with potential threats including Ebola, pandemic influenza and the misinformation regarding vaccinations. We are committed to preparing for each of these concerns and also being aware of new potential issues that could affect the health of Pennsylvanians each day.”

National initial accreditation was awarded March 21, 2019 to:
- Albany County Department of Health, Albany, New York
- Allen County Public Health, Lima, Ohio
- Cabell-Huntington Health Department, Huntington, West Virginia
- Forest County Potawatomi Health & Wellness Center Community Health Department, Crandon, Wisconsin
- Georgia Department of Public Health, Atlanta, Georgia
- Jefferson County Public Health, Lakewood, Colorado
- Johnson County Public Health, Iowa City, Iowa
- Louisiana Office of Public Health, Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Panhandle Health District, Hayden, Idaho
- Pennsylvania Department of Health, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
- Putnam County Health Department, Ottawa, Ohio
- Rockland County Department of Health, Pomona, New York
- San Bernardino County Department of Public Health, San Bernardino, California

National reaccreditation was awarded March 21, 2019 to:
- Franklin County Health Department, Frankfort, Kentucky
- Northern Kentucky Independent District Health Department, Florence, Kentucky
- Washington State Department of Health, Olympia, Washington
- West Allis Health Department, West Allis, Wisconsin

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About the Public Health Accreditation Board

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) was created to serve as the national public health accrediting body and is jointly funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The development of national public health accreditation has involved, and is supported by, public health leaders and practitioners from the national, tribal, state, local, and territorial levels. Learn more about PHAB or sign up for the PHAB e-newsletter by visiting www.phaboard.org.
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