

# Oregon Quality Connection

Quality and accreditation news for the Oregon public health system



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The *Oregon Quality Connection* newsletter aims to support a culture of continuous improvement across the public health system by sharing success stories and best practices related to quality improvement, performance management and accreditation initiatives. The newsletter is published by the Performance Management Program of the Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Division.

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## State Health Profile and Strategic Plan 2012–2017 released

Mel Kohn, MD, MPH, Public Health Director and State Health Officer,  
Oregon Health Authority Public Health Division

I'm pleased to announce release of the Oregon Public Health Division's *State Health Profile and Strategic Plan 2012–2017*. Because these documents will be important guides for our work in the coming years, I encourage you to become familiar with them. Both are available at [www.healthoregon.org/about](http://www.healthoregon.org/about).

The *State Health Profile* paints a picture of where Oregon ranks on important health indicators. We are proud Oregon stands as the 14th healthiest state overall in the United States, but we still have room for improvement in many areas:

- Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death in Oregon, killing more than 7,000 people each year.
- Oregon's rate of suicide has remained substantially higher than other states in the U.S. for more than 30 years, and has been rising.
- Diabetes rates have nearly doubled in the past 15 years.
- With more than 60 percent of all Oregonians overweight or obese, and no comprehensive state obesity prevention program, we are losing the war on overweight and obesity.
- We rank in the lowest tier of states for access to fluoridated water.
- Oregon has the highest rate of kindergarteners in the country who go to school without all their needed vaccines.

With focus and the political will to address them, these problems can be prevented. The Public Health Division's *Strategic Plan* will help us do that by laying out a high-level map to use as we help communities and policymakers create environments that support and promote health and health equity across the lifespans of all Oregonians.

The *Strategic Plan* identifies 11 focal areas for the Division's work. While we will continue to work on issues outside of these areas, I encourage all of us to think about how the work we do at the Division can contribute to moving the needle in these areas. Six of the areas

## Oregon Accreditation Readiness Grantees

Benton County Health Department

Central Oregon Consortium of Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson counties

Clackamas County Public Health

The Public Health Foundation of Columbia County

Curry County Health and Human Services, Public Health Division

Klamath County Department of Public Health

Lake County Public Health

Lincoln County Health and Human Services Department, Public Health Division

Linn County Department of Health Services

Marion County Health Department

Multnomah County Health Department

North Central Public Health District

Polk County Public Health

Center for Human Development, Inc., Union County

Yamhill County Public Health

relate to specific health issues:

- Tobacco use,
- Obesity/overweight,
- Suicide,
- Heart disease and stroke,
- Family violence,
- Community resilience to emergencies.

The remaining focal areas relate to making our public health system a national model of excellence by:

- Supporting CCOs' community health goals related to prevention,
- Transforming the public health system through accreditation,
- Increasing the use of health impact assessments,
- Ensuring excellence in surveillance and epidemiology, and
- Including health considerations in all policymaking.

I hope you will agree that this is a bold and exciting agenda. Many of you have worked in a variety of ways during the past 10 months to create the *Profile* and the *Strategic Plan*, and I thank you for that good work. Now it's time to take the next step and implement our plan. Each of you has a role to play in that effort. I'm proud to have you on my team, and look forward to working together to make Oregon one of the healthiest states in the nation, and making our public health system a national model of excellence.

### CLHO visits support local accreditation efforts



*Erin Mowlds, Local Accreditation Manager, Coalition of Local Health Officials*

The Coalition of Local Health Officials (CLHO) continues to support local health departments (LHDs) as they progress toward accreditation.

During the past months, as CLHO program manager, I have traveled through parts of Eastern Oregon, Southern Oregon and the Coast to visit LHDs, meet with administrators, accreditation coordinators and LHD staff.

These meetings offer each health department individualized attention while sharing lessons learned from other LHDs. I am happy to work with all staff members to provide context about the benefits of the accreditation process, and how quality improvement fits in with those efforts. Health departments have found touching base helps identify specific questions and issues, and address unique needs. For more information or if your LHD wants to schedule a visit, email Erin Mowlds at [erin@oregonclho.org](mailto:erin@oregonclho.org).

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## ■ Oregon counties accreditation update

Local health departments (LHDs) across Oregon are moving forward with accreditation preparation and quality improvement (QI) efforts. More than twenty LHDs have received grants to work on accreditation readiness activities. Six LHDs have submitted their Statement of Intent (SOI) to apply for Accreditation, and of those health departments, four have submitted applications and prerequisite documents.

Across the state, many of the LHDs that have not yet applied are working on their prerequisites for accreditation with their local community partners. More than ten LHDs have started collaborative Community Health Assessment processes, ten others have completed assessments, seven have completed Community Health Improvement Plans and nine have agency-wide Strategic Plans.

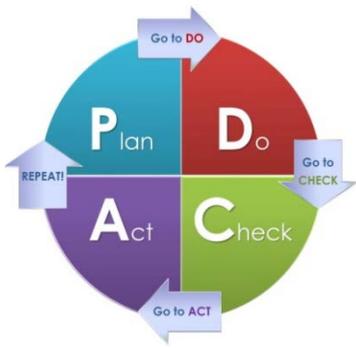
Local health departments are also focusing efforts on QI and performance management, including developing QI plans and integrating QI into the health department's work. More than twenty-four LHDs have attended or hosted QI trainings in the last year and more than twenty-two LHDs have active QI activities. Improving the overall efficiency of the health departments is an integral to accreditation.

Accreditation will position local health departments well to meet the challenges of the current economic environment and engage with emerging Health Care Reform and Coordinated Care Organizations to improve the public's health. Looking to the future for local public health accreditation, ten LHDs have applied or plan to apply for accreditation within the next year, and many more in 2014. For more information, email Erin Mowlds at [erin@oregonclho.org](mailto:erin@oregonclho.org).

## Quality improvement (QI) success stories

### *Local spotlight:* Committee strengthens QI activities in Linn County

At Linn County Public Health, members recently formed a quality improvement committee, which learned to use a defined improvement process to achieve measurable improvement in efficacy and performance for our public health services. A QI handbook was developed for each member, and the state's Performance Management Program provided technical assistance and training. Linn County Public Health also completed a planning process that coordinated with the QI committee on strategies and activities.



Our clinic flow and communications process was our low-hanging-fruit improvement of choice. As a result, we added a section to our encounter form to help with follow-up communication between clerical and clinical staff, which is now being piloted. Our next step was the development of a QI plan and strategies for the coming year.

Currently, each program is selecting a measure to follow and report back to the committee. The Strategic Plan and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) also will provide QI measures to track. The committee is committed to meeting once a month.

An important lesson learned is that it is tricky to coordinate pieces from the annual public health, strategic, and community action plans. Also, looking at QI as a piece of the performance management puzzle has been extremely important. With the help of former NACCHO staff and QI expert, Grace Gorenflo, our QI committee continues to move toward that integration. For more information, email Pat Crozier at [pcrozier@co.linn.or.us](mailto:pcrozier@co.linn.or.us).

### ***State spotlight:* Performance Management Program awarded QI demonstration initiative grant**

In 2012 the Performance Management Program was awarded the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation *National Quality Improvement Demonstration Initiative for State Public Health Programs* grant administered by the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers (ASTHO). Since that time, three teams from the Public Health Division (PHD) have been collaborating with teams from Arizona, Connecticut, Maryland, and Minnesota, to use QI methodology and tools to improve health impact, service delivery, and program operations in maternal and child health, environmental health, and chronic disease programs.

These teams have been working to improve processes around administration of the Oregon MothersCare (OMC) program, the Oregon State Cancer Registry (OSCaR), and the Drinking Water Program. To date, the teams have created AIM Statements and Performance Measures, performed Root Cause Analyses, created Process Maps of their current processes, and begun developing improvement theories. Examples of potential improvements include increased rate of abstracts being actively reported by providers to OSCaR, increased number of women receiving early access to prenatal care, and movement from a drinking water contracting-based system to one that leverages the program element design that already exists in many other public health programs. For more information, email



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