

ON THE ROAD WITH THE MLC

Leading the Way in Quality Improvement and Accreditation



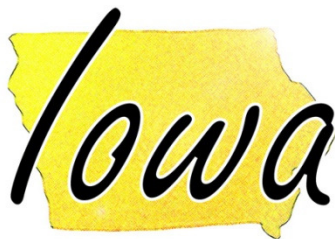
Welcome to the first of four publications highlighting the innovative work and accomplishments of the 16 states participating in the **Multi-State Learning Collaborative: Lead States in Public Health Quality Improvement (MLC)**. Over the past several months, staff from the National Network of Public Health Institutes, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and several partnering organizations (including ASTHO, CDC, Muskie School of Public Service, NACCHO, PHF, PHII and PHAB), have visited the states participating in the MLC to see firsthand the strides being made in preparing for national accreditation and making quality improvement a cultural norm in the public health community. In the last week of every month between now and September, we will highlight four states in the MLC to share with you what we learned during these great visits. This month, we highlight the work of Iowa, South Carolina, Florida and Indiana.

To learn more about the Multi-State Learning Collaborative: Lead States in Public Health Quality Improvement and to access materials provided during the site visits, please contact the National Network of Public Health Institutes.

Warm regards,
Lee Thielen, MPA

Chair,
Multi-State Learning Collaborative: Lead States in Public Health Quality Improvement

Iowa Conducts Self Assessment and Passes Key Legislation



Iowa representatives hosted their MLC site visit in Des Moines on February 3, 2009. The one day meeting highlighted the state's initiative to conduct an assessment of the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) using the Iowa Public Health Standards in January 2009. Utilizing lessons learned from a similar process conducted in North Carolina, external reviewers were invited to evaluate the extent to which the IDPH met the 218 criteria included in the state's standards based on evidence provided. As a result of this initiative, Iowa has a wealth of knowledge to share with others who are interested in learning more about how to prepare for and conduct a performance assessment of the state health department. Representatives from Iowa also presented on the "Public Health Modernization Act," a recently passed piece of legislation that establishes a state-based voluntary accreditation program for local health departments and the state health department.

South Carolina Builds Key Partnerships in Quality Improvement to Combat the Burden of Tobacco

The MLC visit to South Carolina was held in Columbia on February 10, 2009. The South Carolina project representatives presented their first of two quality improvement collaboratives, both focused on reducing the burden of tobacco related illness. The collaborative is modeled closely on the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's *Breakthrough Series Model*, and two staff attended a special training related to implementing this model. The MLC project is implemented in close partnership with the University of South Carolina's School of Public Health, that is providing guidance and training for the quality improvement collaboratives. The representatives in South Carolina have a wealth of expertise in quality improvement and are continuing to build their capacity by supporting a number of state health department staff to attend Lean Six Sigma training. Finally; South Carolina has taken steps toward demonstrating a connection between its performance measures and health outcomes and documenting improvements resulting from the implementation of continuous quality improvement cycles.



Florida Utilizing 5 Step Process for State Health Department Improvement Efforts



Florida hosted the MLC site visit on February 18th, 2009 in Tallahassee. Representatives from the Department of Health, Office of Performance Improvement as well as local health department representatives presented on county health department and central office performance improvement efforts. These included the provision of snapshots that highlight key health indicators in each county, the implementation of a new customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction process, and numerous lessons learned about teaching and

implementing quality improvement practices in public health. Florida has an extensive history of quality improvement and has adopted a 5 step process, which is applied to all performance improvement efforts within the Department of Health:

1. Gather data
2. Review and Analyze Data
3. Address Technical Assistance Needs
4. Implement Plan of Action
5. Evaluate Plan of Action.

Florida also supported representatives from local health departments visiting local health departments in North Carolina in an effort to learn from their state accreditation program. Florida representatives reported that seeing the process in action helped demystify accreditation. Each said that they now know what they have to do to prepare and feel that achieving accreditation status from the national program is achievable.

Indiana Preparing for National Accreditation and Making Key Partnership in Quality Improvement

The MLC visited Indiana on February 27, 2009 in Indianapolis. Indiana is making great strides to prepare state and local health departments for participation in the national voluntary accreditation program. With Dr. Judy Monroe at the helm of the Indiana State Department of Health, there is a broad set of activities underway to assess and improve the public health system, including assessments for public health departments. Having conducted the National Public Health Performance Standards Assessment at the state level and in many local communities, Indiana is proceeding with identifying quality improvement opportunities to strengthen the system. Dr. Monroe offers strong support for accreditation at the national level, as a member of the PHAB Board of Directors and as the President for ASTHO. In addition to the leadership and mobilization of local and state practitioners to prepare for accreditation and conduct quality improvement activities, Indiana has a valuable quality improvement resource in the Healthcare Technical Assistance Program (HTAP) at Purdue University. HTAP is offering quality improvement training and support to Indiana's MLC mini-collaboratives. The partnership between HTAP and Indiana's MLC project demonstrate a great partnership between public health practice and academia.



The Multi-State Learning Collaborative: Lead States in Public Health Quality Improvement is managed by the National Network of Public Health Institutes with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

-###-