

# COLORADO PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE-BASED RESEARCH NETWORK

## PROJECT OVERVIEW

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### **A Comparison of State Dissemination and Implementation Strategies on Local Health Department Accreditation Readiness and Quality Improvement Maturity**

Across states, local health departments (LHDs) are engaging in quality improvement (QI) and preparing for accreditation with varied and sometimes limited support from state-level partners such as state health departments, public health institutes, state affiliates of the National Association of County and City Health Officials, schools of public health, and public health training centers. The support from state-level partners are often based on the state involvement in D&I movements including the Turning Point initiative, the National Public Health Performance Standards Program, the Public Health Foundation Quality Improvement Program, and numerous programs supported and funded by the RWJF and the CDC, including the Multi State Learning Collaboratives (MLC), the National Public Health Improvement Initiative (NPHII), and the Gaining Ground Initiative. These partners implement system-level initiatives such as training, technical assistance, funding, learning community facilitation and other activities to help LHDs learn and implement QI methods and prepare for accreditation. When studied and evaluated on their own, these movements, investments and initiatives have demonstrated success in increasing QI maturity within LHDs and preparing state and local agencies for accreditation through the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). However, research has not been done comparing these system-level D&I initiatives and investments to each other and understanding how these investments might lead to difference in QI maturity, QI activities and accreditation readiness throughout LHDs across states.

**Project Summary:** The purpose of this project is to understand the links between system-level D&I initiatives and investments and QI and accreditation activities at the LHD level. It seeks to examine and compare the interactions and differences in LHD measures of accreditation readiness and QI in three states (Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska), based on varying system-level D&I support initiatives and the resulting social/ professional network of LHDs and state-level partners. In addition, the project will examine differences in financial investment in the system-level D&I initiatives and the cost of discrete QI projects at the local level. Finally, the project will examine the connection between LHD's QI project topics, QI maturity and accreditation readiness with related service measures and health outcomes.

**Relevance to Practice:** The areas of quality improvement and accreditation readiness are two intertwined movements of the ongoing evolution and improvement of public health practice in the United States. QI and AR are relevant to all local governmental public health departments, regardless of the intent to apply for voluntary accreditation through the PHAB as we seek to create a culture of ongoing performance measurement and QI, and increase the use of evidence-based programming and decision making.

**Project Advisory Committee:** The Project Advisory Committee (PAC) will be made up of practice and research professionals including, but not limited to, representatives from Colorado, Kansas and Nebraska local health departments; representatives from state-wide partners including state health departments, public health institutes, state affiliates of the National Association of County and City Health Officials, schools of public health, and public health training centers; and national experts who are familiar with QI and accreditation readiness.

**Research Team:** Colorado Public Health Practice-Based Research Network, housed at the Colorado Association for Local Public Health Officials (CALPHO) with collaborators at the Colorado School of Public Health and the University of Colorado School of Public Affairs; Kansas Public Health Practice-Based Research Network, housed at the Kansas Health Institute; and Nebraska Public Health Practice-Based Research Network, housed at the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

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