

What is an Assessment?

Assessment is one of the core functions of public health and refers to the systematic collection, assembly, analysis and dissemination of information about the health of a community. It is the foundation of public health practice at the local level.

Why Do We Need Assessments?

Without accurate information on the health status of a community and a clear understanding of the available resources, informed decisions about which area should have priority, which policies might be effective, or which interventions might be possible to implement cannot be made.

Arkansas Assessment Initiative (AR-AI)

AR-AI is a cooperative agreement funded by the Center for Disease Control and driven by communities. With the assistance of the Department of Health, communities are guided to successfully assess, interpret, and communicate information for public health decision making.



“Addressing the challenge of health improvement is a shared responsibility that requires the active participation and leadership of the Federal Government, States, local governments, policymakers, health care providers, professionals, business executives, educators, community leaders, and the American public itself. Regardless of your age, gender, education level, income, race, ethnicity, cultural customs, language, religious beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, geographic location, or occupation YOU can impact the health of the community.” --- Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health

For more Information
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Arkansas Assessment Initiative



“Data-driven decision making to ensure the health of ALL Arkansans”

Hometown Health Initiative

A community driven initiative created to improve the health and quality of life in Arkansas.

Vision:

The vision is to empower local communities to take ownership of their health problems, identify means of addressing these problems and to implement programs aimed at the risk factors which contribute to poor health.

Mission:

The mission is to provide leadership, guidance, and technical assistance to HHI coalitions.

Arkansas Department of Health's Role:

- Data collection, interpretation and use
- Coalition Building
- Dissemination of Information
- Brokering
- Training
- Evaluation

Using a combination of data from multiple sources the Department of Health creates County Health Profiles which illustrate the health of Arkansas communities.

BRFSS

A state-based survey which collects and analyzes and publishes information on the prevalence of risk behaviors among Americans and their perceptions of a variety of health issues. BRFSS data can be analyzed by a variety of demographic variables, including age, education, income, and racial and ethnic background. For more information contact LaTonya Bynum at latonya.bynum@arkansas.gov. Data for your community can be found at <http://www.brfss.arkansas.gov>.

County Health Surveys

A questionnaire used to collect and evaluate personal risk behaviors that may affect the health of Arkansans. The County Health Survey may focus on adults – County Adult Health Survey- or on youth- County Youth Health Survey. County health data can be viewed at <http://www.healthyarkansas.com/data/data.html#data>.

The community plays the most important role in the assessment process. The community is responsible for prioritizing health issues and determining programming needs with the assistance of the Department of Health.

Use of Data Collected

- Develop and sustain broad-based community partnerships.
- Assess the health of the community and identify the risk factors that could threaten health
- Collect and interpret data that reflects the health of community
- Decide which challenges to address and how
- Link needs to resources
- Carry out plans to address challenges

Resources

Understanding Assessments

<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/nvrnmnt/css/ppt/chap2.htm>

MAPP

<http://www.naccho.org/topics/infrastructure/mapp/index.cfm>

Community Assessment Tool Kit

http://www.activelivingresources.org/assets/community_assessment_tool.pdf

Census Data

<http://factfinder.census.gov>

Healthy People 2010

<http://www.healthypeople.gov/>

