

# The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Assessment Initiative

One of the core functions in public health, **assessment** is the systematic collection, assembly, analysis, and dissemination of information about the health of a community.



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The 2002 Institute of Medicine Report: The Future of the Public's Health in the 21st Century identified six areas of action needed to address present and future challenges faced by the nation's public health system, one of which is the ongoing need to strengthen the public health infrastructure.

- “Assessment is one of the core functions of public health and is, therefore, a key factor associated with public health infrastructure development.”

# The CDC *Assessment Initiative (AI)*

- 5-year funding cycle
- The assessment Initiative is a cooperative program between the CDC and state health departments that supports the development of innovative systems and methods to improve the way data is used to provide information for public health decisions and policy.

# *The CDC's Assessment Initiative Supports Two Focus Areas:*

- Community Health Assessment Practice
- Data Dissemination Systems

# In the real-life of public health practice

- Assessment encompasses the use of surveillance and statistical data together with information on health assets, resources, needs, and health perceptions of a community.

# Assessment Includes:

1. Determining the health needs of the community by establishing a systematic process that periodically provides pertinent health information.
2. Investigating adverse health events and health hazards by conducting timely investigations that identify the magnitude of health problems, including their duration, trends, location, and at-risk populations.
3. Analyzing the determinants of identified health problems to determine the reasons why certain populations are at risk for adverse health outcomes.

# Three core functions are tied to assessment:

- Monitor
- Policy Development
- Assurance



## Assessment Practices

- Assess the health needs of the community
- Investigate the occurrence of health hazards in the community
- Analyze the determinants of identified health needs

## Assessment Activities

- Lead the community assessment process
- Collect and utilize information to enhance the investigation
- Integrate data with decision making

## Policy Development

- Advocate for public health , build constituencies, and identify resources in the community.
- Set priorities among health needs
- Develop plans and policies to address the priority health needs

## PD Activities

- Build Coalitions; empower others; engage in public health advocacy; recognize community assets
- Clarify values; create a vision; tie vision to mission; use partners to set priorities
- Organize goals and objectives; translate goals into action

## Assurance

- Manage resources and develop organizational structure
- Implement programs
- Evaluate programs and provide quality assurance
- Inform and educate the public

## Assurance Activities

- Search for new resources ; make organizational changes to better address community needs
- Stress innovation; delegate programmatic responsibility to others; oversee programs
- Support program evaluation; evaluate data collected; monitor performance
- Use mentoring and training to educate work force; use social marketing and health communication to educate public

# Funded States

## 1992-1996

- Iowa
- Maine
- North Carolina
- Ohio
- Oregon
- Texas
- Utah
- Kansas\*

## 1997

- Massachusetts
- Minnesota
- Missouri
- New York
- North Carolina
- Oregon
- Kansas\*

## 2007

- Arkansas
- Florida
- Illinois
- Missouri
- New Hampshire
- New Mexico
- North Carolina
- Rhode Island
- Virginia

# Arkansas Assessment Initiative (AR-AI)



# Arkansas' Focus Area is Community Health Assessment

Development, implementation, and evaluation of tools, strategies, and approaches to improve the capacity of local public health agencies and communities to conduct effective community health assessments, and demonstrate how the resulting data have been used to affect public health programs and policies.

# Where we are in Arkansas

- Hometown Health has initiated the idea of community involvement
- Some Local Health Units have developed very good coalitions in their areas
- We are currently working with them to see what was done right to engage their communities

- Funded states work together with local health jurisdictions and communities to improve:
  - Access to data
  - Skills to accurately interpret and understand data
  - Use of the data so that assessment findings ultimately drive public health programs

# In Development

- Conducting training programs to improve workforce skills in epidemiology and statistics, so that staff in local health jurisdictions (LHJs) understand how to accurately interpret community health data and translate data into action;
- Organizing and implementing peer mentoring programs to support capacity development in weaker LHJs;
- Developing and implementing practical tools to assist LHJs in completing the components of a community health assessment; and
- Developing and pilot-testing new methodologies to link disparate data sets and expand their utility.

# County Adult Health Surveys

- Many counties have Participated in a survey of either an Adult or Youth health survey
- Surveys Conducted by UALR
- Health Statistics uses the data to produce county health profiles

# Challenges in Arkansas

- Surveys only done sporadically
- Funds unavailable to do every county on a regular basis
- Data becomes stale
- Survey is only representative of one point in time
- LHU staff and community members not versed in looking at data

# Challenges Cont:

- Budget Restrictions
- Staffing Shortages
- Training of staff
- Turnover of staff
- Competing Priorities
- Not enough community involvement yet

# Hard to Reach Populations

- One of our focus areas are the hard to reach populations in Arkansas
- Importance of more correct counts
- Specifically:
  - Delta Black population
  - Hispanic population
  - Marshallese population

# Survey of Marshallese

- Never been a good survey to get a more accurate count of the Marshallese people in Northwest Arkansas.
- Contracting with two agencies in the area to conduct a survey of the Marshallese by Marshallese

# Black Population in Delta Area

- Working with Christine Patterson and others in the minority health commission to develop a strategy to survey people in these areas

# Hispanic Population

- Working with Dr. Ochoa to develop a strategy to address this population and to find a method that will allow illegal aliens to be comfortable participating.

## IOM

“Without dedicated staff, leadership support, and adequate resources to support and customize assessment-related training and development, addressing this key public health function in a comprehensive and systematic way is difficult.”