



INSTITUTE FOR WISCONSIN'S HEALTH INC.

Current & Planned Shared Service Arrangements Among Wisconsin's Local & Tribal Health Departments

Brief Project Summary

Prepared for: Public Health Practice-Based Research Networks National Coordinating Center, University of Kentucky

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October 2012

Background

The Institute for Wisconsin's Health, Incorporated (IWHI) was awarded a QSRF grant for the period April 15, 2012 to October 15, 2012 to complete an analysis of current and planned shared service arrangements among local and tribal health departments located in Wisconsin. IWHI is Wisconsin's independent public health institute, and exists to strengthen Wisconsin's public health system through capacity building and innovation.

Project purpose

To gain a more complete understanding of current and future use of shared service arrangements as a management strategy to increase capacity to provide public health essential services in Wisconsin

Approach

Online cross-sectional survey of 99 local and tribal health departments in Wisconsin. 91 of 99 Wisconsin local and tribal health departments participated – 92% response rate.

Definition of service sharing used in this study

The definition of service sharing used in the survey instrument was, "Sharing of resources (such as staffing or equipment or funds) on an ongoing basis. The resources could be shared to support programs (like a joint WIC or environmental health program) or organizational functions (such as human resources or information technology)."

Selected highlights

- 71% of respondents currently share services
- Most frequently cited motivations for current shared services arrangements - better use of resources, provide better services, respond to program requirements
- 43% of LHDs governing bodies are currently discussing, or have discussed in the past 2 years, the creation of a shared service arrangement(s)
- Most frequently cited motivations for discussing creation of an arrangement - better use of resources, save money, provide better services, respond to program requirements
- Several positive comments that shared service accomplished what the LHD hoped it would - reported gains in efficiency and effectiveness

Current progress

- Continuing analysis of focus group and tribal health department-specific findings
- Link to archived statewide webinar and slide set on IWHI website under Research blog at www.instituteforwihealth.org/connect/

Dissemination

- Drafting manuscript for peer reviewed journal
- Submit abstract for Keeneland Conference
- Consider Frontiers online publication, NCC monthly call, and dissemination through the University of Wisconsin Institute for Clinical and Translational Research newsletter
- Share project summary with NACCHO, the Network for Public Health Law, and the Center for Sharing Public Health Services at the Kansas Health Institute

Future research and practice-based application

- The database from this study is rich and more insights could be gained from further analysis. e.g. analysis of the content of written agreements, tribal-specific findings
- Explore with the Public Health Practice-Based Research Networks, NACCHO and the Wisconsin Division of Public Health ways in which findings might inform future survey and/or research efforts (e.g. multi-state research approach)
- Consideration of repeating survey (perhaps every two years) to identify trends and/or integrating selected questions into existing state or national surveys
- Further explore specific research questions and options for student involvement in analysis

On behalf of the project team and the Institute for Wisconsin's Health, thank you for the opportunity to conduct this important research.



Nancy Young, Executive Director

Project Team:

- Terry Brandenburg, MPH, Medical College of Wisconsin (and Ema Uko-Abasi, MD, Medical College of Wisconsin MPH student)
- Lieske Giese, MPH, WI Division of Public Health Western Region Director
- Aleena Hernandez, MPH, Red Star Innovations, LLC
- Kusuma Madamala, PhD, MPH
- Dan Stier, JD, Director, Network for Public Health Law
- Dustin Young, BA, Project Specialist, IWHI
- Nancy Young, MPA, Executive Director, IWHI
- Susan Zahner, DrPH, RN, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Attachment: Slide set from 10.19.12 webinar for Wisconsin local and Tribal health departments