



2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

BEST PRACTICES SUPPLEMENT

Local Health Departments across North Carolina are implementing innovative strategies to support quality public health in their communities. This report is a compilation of best practices identified by Site Visitors during North Carolina Local Health Department Accreditation (NCLHDA) site visits conducted between August-October 2022 and January-March 2023. These site visits were conducted with the [HDSA Interpretation Document 2022](#) in effect. A summary of each best practice is provided. To learn more about a county’s efforts, reach out to the county’s [Agency Accreditation Coordinator](#)

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ASSESSMENT STANDARD (BENCHMARKS 1-8)

ACTIVITY 7.6 – RESPONSE PLAN TESTING

DURHAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the format for a 2017 After Action Report/Improvement Plan, specifically the section on 'Handling Instructions' as a best practice. This section clearly communicated that the contents of the document should not be disclosed and should be safeguarded, handled, transmitted, and stored in accordance with appropriate security directives. Furthermore, approval was required from the Durham County Department of Public Health for any reproduction of the report, in whole or in part.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT STANDARD (BENCHMARKS 9-15)

ACTIVITY 10.1 – HEALTH PROMOTION/DISEASE PREVENTION FOR GENERAL PUBLIC

DAVIE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the development of a coordinated opioid response to address the opioid crisis as a best practice. The coordinated efforts include a community response team, community paramedic program, jail diversion program, child welfare services for substance involved families, naloxone distribution and medication-assisted therapy treatment (MAT) for pregnant women.

ACTIVITY 10.2 – HEALTH PROMOTION/DISEASE PREVENTION FOR AT-RISK GROUPS

PAMLICO COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

Outstanding project work with the Duke University Intern students for demonstrating required documentation for activity 10.2 – 'The Current Status of Healthcare in Pamlico County: Gaps and Proposed Solutions' included required component through multiple methods and data collection such as: literature reviews, local health and community leader interviews, interviews with providers /staff across all major health parties in Pamlico County, and administrative data with insurance and zip code breakdowns. Critical survey data was utilized: 1. 2020 American Community Survey 5-year data, 2. PCDRC Risk and Vulnerability Assessment & 3. Community Health Needs Assessment. Interviews with the Health Director and Nursing Director confirmed the project information was being utilized to govern their strategic work plans and prioritization to identify at-risk groups for program development.

HOKE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the health department's planning and implementation of the AADE Diabetes Program as a best practice. Two fully trained staff members is commendable. Evaluation evidence indicated it was an excellent program which met the community's needs.

ACTIVITY 10.3 – EVIDENCE-BASED PROMOTION AND PREVENTION STRATEGIES

PENDER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team identified the implementation of the Matter of Balance program by the health department as a best practice.

ACTIVITY 10.4 – COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR EVIDENCE BASED STRATEGIES

YADKIN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

Excellent example of evidence-based strategy that promoted health education and resulted in positive impact for the participants receiving child health clinical services.

ACTIVITY 11.2 – COMMUNITY MEMBER INVOLVEMENT IN PRIORITY SETTING & OUTCOME GOALS

CARTERET COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team felt the Sticker Shock program developed through the Coastal Coalition Substance Abuse Prevention (CCSAP) Community Team was a best practice displaying community input and assessing, prioritizing and establishing desired outcomes for underage age drinking and purchasing of juice look alike alcoholic beverages by those under 21 years old. The CCSAP involved youth/students in the development of the program and recorded photos of students in local Jim Dandy stores to place stickers on offending beverages as a warning they contain alcohol. The Site Visit team thought this was innovative way to engage the community and a specific population (youth) to address the identified health issue (underage drinking of alcoholic beverages) with the immediate desired outcomes of stickers being placed on the beverages by the students themselves and long-term outcome of decreasing the purchase of juice look alike alcoholic beverages by youth thus decreasing underage drinking.

ORANGE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the Gateway Collaborative as a best practice. The public health and social services departments jointly rent an apartment at the Gateway Village housing community to serve as a community resource center. In addition to these departments, the schools, law enforcement and housing are members of the collaborative. The collaborative works with the residents to identify priority issues and garner resources for these priority areas.

ACTIVITY 12.1 – COLLABORATION TO IDENTIFY STRATEGIES

CHATHAM COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team commends the department's active participation with multiple organizations to identify strategies for addressing community health problems, as well as demonstrating the department's active participation in the collaborative process.

ACTIVITY 14.2 – SUPPORTING POLICYMAKERS IN PRIORITIES AND PROGRAMS

HOKE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the Board of Health meeting minutes as detailed and clearly identified the people involved in the meeting.

ORANGE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the Board of Health's supportive relationship with the health director and the department, as evidenced through detailed Board of Health meeting minutes, as a best practice.

ACTIVITY 15.1 – AGENCY STRATEGIC PLAN

BUNCOMBE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team found Buncombe County's Strategic Plan and Community Health Assessment to be very comprehensive, utilizing the CHIP process and developed based on their values of respect, honesty, integrity, collaboration, and equity. The Community Health Assessment engaged more than 50 partners to include a large physician network, MAHEC and 18 counties, followed results-based accountability and 'smart shot' for reporting progress. Additionally, the Site Visit Team identified the department's approach to equity to be very specific, beginning with a very thorough definition of equity. Efforts to reach populations that were considered historically marginalized, low income and rural during COVID vaccine distribution resulted in higher proportions of the Latinx population receiving vaccines as compared to the non-Hispanic population. Similar outreach efforts to provide Monkey Pox vaccines are currently underway.

HOKE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the format of the Hoke County's strategic plan as a best practice. The Site Visitors found the document easy to comprehend, informative, and visually appealing. Incorporating the CHA results and obtaining community feedback on the strategic planning process through the survey was also highlighted as a best practice.

JONES COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified Jones County's participation in the FDA Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards as a best practice for addressing the prevention of foodborne illnesses. Participation in the voluntary program affords the department opportunities to apply for grants from the National Environmental Health Association. Jones County has received grant funding to improve the food inspection software currently used and employ a part-time data entry position, as well as funds to provide continuing education. Equally notable, Jones County only employs a part-time Environmental Health Program Coordinator.

ACTIVITY 15.5 – STAFF ORIENTATION ON POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

CHATHAM COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team identified the department's orientation form as an excellent tool for facilitating and documenting orientation requirements. The Site Visit Team identified the practice of requiring all new staff to attend a board of health meeting as part of their orientation as a best practice.

ASSURANCE STANDARD (BENCHMARKS 16-29)

ACTIVITY 18.1 – LEGAL ENFORCEMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

HOKE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the maintenance and accessibility of the department's policy manuals to be a best practice. In addition to current policies, the manuals provided easy access to archived policies.

ACTIVITY 19.1 – AT-RISK POPULATION ACCESS

CUMBERLAND COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, *Winter 2023*

The SVT was impressed with the Navigator/Connector Cumberland County Department of Public Health has positioned at the library once a week to assist the homeless population with obtaining resources needed such as Medicaid application assistance and scheduling appointments at the health department for needed services. They decided to do this because there was a growing number of homeless populations around the library, and they believed this would be the best location to reach these individuals. The Site Visit Team identified the positioning of a navigator/connector at the local library once per week to assist the homeless population with obtaining resources such as Medicaid application assistance and scheduling appointments for needed services as a best practice. The library was identified as an ideal location due to the number of homeless individuals congregating near the library.

DAVIE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the relationship between Davie County Health and Human Services and Kintegra Family Medicine, an FQHC, as a best practice. Kintegra Family Medicine is conveniently located in the same building as Davie County Health and Human Services - Division of Public Health and provides adult primary care, diabetes and chronic disease management, and behavioral health counseling. Most recently, Kintegra has agreed to provide medication-assisted treatment (MAT) to pregnant women who are referred by the health department for this service.

DURHAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified Durham County Department of Public Health's (DCODPH) collaborative efforts to develop evidenced-based interventions to address priorities within the Community Health Assessment for identified populations at risk. Programs identified include: DINE Durham's Innovative Nutrition Education provided in neighborhood and schools; Complete Streets and Streetscape design initiatives; Bull City Strong, an initiative using evidence-based health literacy interventions to improve health outcomes, and the Partnership for a Healthy Durham.

ACTIVITY 20.1 – HEALTH SERVICES COLLABORATION

CUMBERLAND COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified several collaborative processes that Cumberland County Department of Public Health has developed/facilitated as best practices. The health department has convened a large number of community partners to work on the opioid crisis, including locating a Narcan vending machine at the jail. The department is also developing a new division within the health department to work on homelessness, jail health and substance abuse issues. Additionally, the health department provides space within its facility and other resources to Stedman-Wade Health Services (FQHC).

DURHAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the agreement between Durham County Department of Public Health (DCoDPH) and Lincoln Community Health Center, Inc (an FQHC) as a best practice for collaborating with community health care providers. DCoDPH provides clinic space and medical support such as phlebotomy and lab services, pharmacy access, etc., within the DCoDPH facility to the FQHC.

ACTIVITY 21.1 – COMMUNITY RESOURCE LIST

CHATHAM COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team identified the Comprehensive Resource List as a best practice. The user-friendly list identified organizations, locations, and services, including racial equity and Hispanic resources.

ACTIVITY 21.3 – USE OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

DARE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team recognized the exceptional outreach efforts during COVID with a Spanish video release on you tube to educate community members on current concerns

ORANGE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the Family Success Alliance as a best practice. The program employs navigators to work with families of children from 'cradle to college/career'. Families are identified within targeted areas of the county.

ACTIVITY 22.1 – COMMUNITY HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PLANS

HYDE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified HCHD's use of a strategic map to plan and document implementation and results of its community health improvement plans (CHIPs) as a best practice. The HCHD's Strategic Map exhibited the tracking and monitoring of outcomes of strategies identified in the 2019 - 2022 CHIP. The document identifies priority goals and measurable objectives for each responsible staff/collaborator, indicators for success, baseline data, actual outcomes, and progress notes. The format of the strategic map is user-friendly and serves as a communication tool with staff, partners and community members at large regarding accountability for priority areas and progress toward reaching objectives.

ACTIVITY 22.3 – HEALTH SERVICES LOCAL PROGRAM REVIEW

CARTERET COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team felt the Mobile Dental Clinic quantitative analysis performed by the dentists and a consultant was a unique monitoring oversight activity for a program not monitored by the NCDPH. The analysis resulted in a number of recommendations for quality improvement for the mobile dental clinic and the dental team reviewed each recommendation for implementation and the feasibility of implementation.

PENDER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team identified the comprehensive services of the dental clinic as a best practice. The provision of services for adults to include root canals and dentures is to be commended given the limited health care resources in the county.

ACTIVITY 24.2 – STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLAN

HENDERSON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team identified the COVID response debriefing for public health staff as a best practice. The management of the department realized the need to provide staff with the opportunity to discuss the impact that COVID has had and hired a consultant to engage staff in this process.

CABARRUS HEALTH ALLIANCE, *Winter 2023*

The site visit team recognizes as a best practice CHA's Workforce Development Plan that is very comprehensive using the ADDIE model from the military to include employee satisfaction, salary studies, promotion of mental health, diversity of the staff that mirrors the population and identifying training needs and opportunities, assigning responsibility for all aspects of the plan and developing relationships with universities and research facilities to assist with implementation of the plan. Due to the unique governance of CHA as an authority board, CHA is able to offer competitive salaries competing with other

organizations in the community. CHA has the ability to recruit and employ a diverse population that mirrors the community. A culture of employee satisfaction is pervasive within the organization.

ACTIVITY 24.3 – STAFF ORIENTATION AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

JONES COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the format of the training log as exceptional. The log facilitated the tracking and reviewing of each employee's participation in orientation, on-going required training and continuing education activities.

ACTIVITY 25.2 – ACADEMIC RESEARCH AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMS

JONES COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The 'Strategies to Improve Breastfeeding Outcomes in Jones County' (and why it matters in the infant mortality conversation) clearly demonstrates evidenced based research. Jones County was the recipient of the Mother-Baby Award for Outpatient Clinics by the North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition. The site visit team highlighted their insight to establish a breastfeeding room in the DSS section of the building to expand and promote and the benefits of breast feeding beyond the clinical area that includes the target population.

ACTIVITY 26.2 – MANAGEMENT TEAM RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION POLICY

CHATHAM COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team commends the department for their collaborations in the community and commitment towards moving systems upstream to address health inequities by hiring a Health Equity, Inclusion and Diversity full-time position that is fully supported by the county. Additionally, the department's requirement for all employees to complete four of equity training annually is recognized as a best practice.

PENDER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team identified the increase in the starting salary of nurses as a best practice for recruitment and retention. The health director worked closely with the governing body to offer salaries that were competitive with those offered by larger surrounding counties.

HOKE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the Diversity in the Workforce plan/policy as very detailed and complete with data to support efforts to recruit and retain a diverse workforce.

ACTIVITY 27.2 – SATISFACTION DATA EVALUATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

CUMBERLAND COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, *Winter 2023*

As a result of community and client surveys, as well as increased 'no-shows' for appointments, Cumberland County Department of Public Health implemented a pilot transportation program where they utilize Uber to transport patients to and from the health department for scheduled appointments. This project has been ongoing for approximately 3 months, so they do not have a lot of data at this time, but they do have several patients utilizing the program for their appointments.

ACTIVITY 28.1 – PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW

YADKIN COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team identified a best practice to assure the implementation of the new clinical practice guideline by establishing a contract to provide ambulatory blood pressure monitoring equipment to child health patients. This example exemplifies assuring standard of care is met for the underinsured, uninsured and underserved children 13 and over in Yadkin County.

In January 2018, Dr. Gerri Mattson, Pediatric Medical Consultant, with the NC Children and Youth Branch, presented a webinar on the 2017 AAP Guidelines for Childhood Hypertension. The webinar detailed current evidence-based guidelines for the screening and management of blood pressure in children and adolescents. It also discussed the changes that would impact the care delivered to pediatric clients.

Instead of guidelines that come from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, new clinical guidelines are based on a thorough literature review. A subcommittee was formed to develop an updated clinical practice guideline. New changes included rigorous based methodology, new definitions in line with the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology guidelines, new normative tables, and a simplified screening table. Now there is emphasis on 24-hour ambulatory blood pressure monitoring to confirm the diagnosis of hypertension.

Prior to this presentation and a review of the in-depth article Clinical Practice Guideline for Screening and Management of High Blood Pressure in Children and Adolescents by the American Academy of Pediatrics, Yadkin County Health Department only checked the blood pressure by auscultation in the arm three times and on multiple visits. If elevated at 95% or greater, they referred to pediatric cardiology. About a year ago, they requested referral be made to pediatric nephrology. The majority of referrals were confirmed as stage I hypertension and either recommended diet changes and/or medication.

After listening to the webinar and reviewing the literature, the agency approved ambulatory blood pressure monitoring when a child returns for a third visit with elevated blood pressure or stage I hypertension. LabCorp provides the device via mail, the agency applies the device to monitor, and the child returns 24 hours later. The device is then mailed back to LabCorp for an interpretation. The blood pressure is then auscultated in the right and left arms and one leg per recommendations. This was implemented in February 2018 and reduces the risk of referring "white coat hypertension" as well as evaluate Circadian BP patterns. It also sets parameters for easier diagnosis of hypertension in children ages 13 and older, reduces the risk of inaccuracies, and is cost effective in evaluating hypertension.

ACTIVITY 29.1 – ETHICAL RESEARCH BY HOST RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

CABARRUS HEALTH ALLIANCE, *Winter 2023*

The site visit team recognizes the Substance Use Network (SUN) Clinic at Cabarrus Health Alliance as a best practice. The clinic aids substance-using mothers to ensure safe and healthy outcomes for both the expecting mother and child by providing suboxone therapy to drug addicted mothers. Teshanee Williams, PhD at UNC Chapel Hill is the Principle Investigator and host research organization of this project and to date 57 of 58 term healthy babies have delivered.

FACILITIES AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES STANDARD (BENCHMARKS 30-33)

ACTIVITY 30.5 – OSHA REGULATION COMPLIANCE

BUNCOMBE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Fall 2022*

The Site Visit Team identified the department's development of on-going competency reviews to meet OSHA and HIPAA requirements as a best practice. To further strengthen staff training and compliance with these laws, select staff are required to demonstrate competencies, such as proper handwashing procedures for infection control.

HOKE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the development of the safety policies as a best practice. The policies were detailed, thorough, and easy to understand.

ACTIVITY 30.6 – CLEANING/DISINFECTION/MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT

HOKE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the cleaning logs used in the health department's clinics as thorough, clearly defining what needs to be cleaned and the frequency for cleaning.

ACTIVITY 33.5 – COST OF SERVICES IN SETTING FEES

HOKE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the use of cost setting workbooks to be an effective strategy for setting fees.

BOARD OF HEALTH/GOVERNANCE STANDARD (BENCHMARKS 34-41)

ACTIVITY 40.2 – BOH SUPPORT OF PUBLIC HEALTH LAWS AND RULES

DURHAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH, *Winter 2023*

The Site Visit Team identified the depth of experience and knowledge of the Board of Health membership as a best practice. The ability to recruit membership with this depth of knowledge, experience and commitment to public health is commendable and should serve as the gold standard for other departments as public health looks to develop processes to protect the health of the communities served.