



# COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT GUIDE

---

2024

# INTRODUCTION

## Community Health Assessment Overview

### What is a CHA?

A process that engages with community members and local public health system partners to systematically collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative health-related data from a variety of sources within a specific community

In other words, taking steps to understand the health status and health risk in a community using data from multiple sources

### CHA vs CHNA

Non-profit hospitals are federally required to conduct community health needs assessments (CHNAs) every three years and develop a plan to meet those needs in exchange for their tax-exempt status. CHA is a voluntary document complete every three to five years completed by local health departments.

### Why complete a CHA?

- Understand health problems to inform community decision-making.
- Development and implementation of community health improvement plans with stakeholders implementing different portions.
- Opportunity to build and/or strengthen relationships with other community and state partners.

### Working with Partners

Recruiting stakeholders is crucial for identifying CHA priorities and how to best assess your community. A non-profit hospital(s) and public health can collaborate on this plan and the Community Health Improvement Plan.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Timeline	02
CHA Process	03
CHA Steps 1 - 3	
Review previous CHA	04
Identify, organize, and recruit participants	
Organize and design assessment and planning process	
CHA Steps 4 - 6	
Identify goals	05
Identify and select measures	
Share data	
CHA Steps 7 - 11	
Select and collect indicators	06
Organize data	
Write CHA	
Share results	
Preparing your CHA document	07
Resources	14

Organize for Success/Partnership Development	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Identify, organize, and recruit participants	Light Blue	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray
Organize and design the assessment and planning process	Light Blue	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray
Community Health Assessment Process	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Identify/select measures to include in the CHA (from primary and secondary sources)	Light Blue	Yellow	Light Gray	Light Gray
Compile quantitative data from secondary sources	Light Blue	Yellow	Light Gray	Light Gray
Develop/disseminate/collect a community survey	Light Gray	Light Gray	Dark Blue	Light Gray
Collect qualitative information (focus groups, key informant interviews)	Light Gray	Light Gray	Dark Blue	Light Gray
Organize/synthesize qualitative information	Light Gray	Light Gray	Dark Blue	Dark Green
Share data/information (hold community dialogues or focus group discussions) for deeper analysis and understanding of what the data means	Light Gray	Light Gray	Dark Blue	Dark Green
Select and collect additional indicators (based on community dialogue)	Light Gray	Light Gray	Dark Blue	Dark Green
Write/revise the CHA	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Dark Green
Disseminate CHA to the community	Light Gray	Light Gray	Light Gray	Dark Green

- 1 Review previous CHA and other LHJs previously completed CHAs
- 2 Identify, organize, and recruit participants
- 3 Organize and design the assessment and planning process
- 4 Identify goals for CHA with core committee
- 5 Identify and select measures to include in the CHA
- 6 Share data for deeper analysis and understanding
- 7 Select and collect additional indicators
- 8 Collect qualitative information
- 9 Organize and synthesize data
- 10 Write and revise the CHA
- 11 Disseminate CHA to the community

1

**Review previous CHA and other LHJs previously completed CHAs**

Completed Community Health Assessments  
 Completed Community Health Needs Assessments  
 CHA/CHNA dashboard  
 State Health Assessment  
 State Health Improvement Plan  
 Create a workplan for your CHA process

2

**Identify, organize, and recruit participants**

Core Support Team — is responsible for most of the work in this phase as it prepares for the CHA/CHIP process and recruit participants.  
 Steering Committee — is recruited and selected during this phase. The committee, which will guide and oversee the CHA/CHIP process, should be broadly representative of the community and the local public health system.  
 Broad Community Involvement — participants should be recruited as invitations are extended for the Stakeholder Committee. The community should also be informed of the upcoming CHA/CHIP process and opportunities for involvement that will occur throughout the planning process. Worksheet.

3

**Organize and design the assessment and planning process**

Association for Community Health Improvement (ACHI)  
 Pros: Adaptive community resources  
 Cons: PHAB standards and timeline  
 Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP)  
 Pros: PHAB recommended and nationally used  
 Cons: Timeline for final CHA and increased difficulty  
 The Community Tool Box (University of Kansas)  
 Pros: Easy to use, PHAB recommended, and community specific  
 Cons: Not as straightforward as MAPP  
 Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response (CASPER)  
 Pros: Random stratified sample and meets PHAB standards  
 Cons: Complicated sampling and lacks qualitative data  
 Select a combination of the CHA process to best fit your jurisdiction.

## 4 Identify goals for CHA with core committee

## 5 Identify/select measures to include in the CHA (from primary and secondary sources)

Secondary resources:

- Indicator worksheet

- Insights

- Community Health Data

- Data Requests Form

- ESSENCE (syndromic surveillance)

- BRFSS

- Hospital Discharge Data (inpatient and emergency department)

- Birth

- Death

- Fetal Death

- Abortion

- 2022 Communicable disease rates, contact [Meagan.Gillespie@mt.gov](mailto:Meagan.Gillespie@mt.gov)

- Immunization rates

  - For additional IZ rates, contact [Trisha.Gardner@mt.gov](mailto:Trisha.Gardner@mt.gov)

Planning for primary data collection:

- Primary data menu

- Learn from other LHJs (\*link to a summary of primary data collection methods used by other jurisdictions)

- CHA survey question template link

## 6 Share data/information (hold community dialogues or focus group discussions) for deeper analysis and understanding of what the data means

Stakeholder questions

Facilitation activities \*link to previously completed activities and/or agendas\*

Focused Conversation method

## 7 Select and collect additional indicators (based on community dialogue)

Collect additional secondary indicators

Update primary data questions

8

**Collect qualitative information (focus groups, key informant interviews)**

Core Support Team — is responsible for most of the work in this phase as it prepares for the CHA/CHIP process and recruit participants.

Steering Committee — is recruited and selected during this phase. The committee, which will guide and oversee the CHA/CHIP process, should be broadly representative of the community and the local public health system. ID interested parties.

Broad Community Involvement — participants should be recruited as invitations are extended for the Stakeholder Committee. The community should also be informed of the upcoming CHA/CHIP process and opportunities for involvement that will occur throughout the planning process. Worksheet.

9

**Organize/synthesize data**

Qualitative analysis methods

Quantitative analysis methods

Data visualization \*link from connected community\*

10

**Write/revise the CHA**

PHAB standards self-assessment

11

**Disseminate CHA to the community**

Communication planning guide and excel sheet

Continue to update CHA with new data as it become available

Next: Complete a Community Health Improvement Plan



# COMPONENTS OF A CHA

---

I. Cover Page

II. Acknowledgement Page

III. Table of Contents

IV. Executive Summary

V. CHA Methodology Summary/CHA  
Methodology Summary

VI. Community Description

VII. Data Summary

# I. Cover Page

The cover page should include the full name of the local or Tribal health department and the date of the CHA.

## II. Acknowledgement Page

Partners

Collaborators

Stakeholders

Funding sources

### **PHAB Requirements:**

- At least 2 organizations representing sectors other than governmental public health.
- At least 2 community members or organizations that represent populations who are disproportionately affected by conditions that contribute to poorer health outcomes.

## III. Table of Contents

PAGE #  
Executive Summary

PAGE #  
Executive Summary and CHA Methodology Summary

PAGE #  
Community Description

PAGE #  
Data Summary

## IV. Executive Summary

An introduction to your community health assessment planning process.

The process for how partners collaborated in developing the CHA.

A statement of your health department's goals or vision, and/or a summary of key findings from the community health assessment.

### CHA Methodology Summary

- A brief description of how you engaged community members and stakeholders.
- A brief description of data collection methods
- A brief description of the process used to identify health challenges and assets.

The CHA methodology summary should include the name (e.g., MAPP, ACHI, Assessing and Addressing Community Health Needs, University of Kansas Community Toolbox) and/or a brief description of the CHA planning process that you used. The description of method used should describe how you engaged community members, collected data, and identified health challenges and assets. This section helps create transparency in the CHA planning process and can be used to outline how the CHA was implemented.

## V. Community Description

A description of your community will place the assessment in context for the reader. The description will also help people involved in the assessment process better understand the unique characteristics of your community and how these characteristics impact public health.

Community Description may include:

Description of service area

- Location on map
- Geography

Demographics

- Population size and population trends
- Age distribution
- Gender ratio
- Family Size
- Race and ethnicity
- Sexual orientation
- Languages spoken
- Educational attainment
- Disabilities
- Mobility
- Veteran status
- Immigration status
- Life expectancy

Socioeconomics

- Median household income
- Employment status
- Percentage of population below federal poverty level
- Home ownership and homelessness

Secondary data from two or more different sources.

- **PHAB Requirement:** The percent of the population by race and ethnicity, Languages spoken within the jurisdiction, Other demographic characteristics, as appropriate for the jurisdiction.

## VI. Data Summary

- Description of health issues, health status measures and trends, and contributing causes of community health issues.
- Specific description of population groups with particular health issues.
- Summary of existing community assets, strengths, and resources to address health issues.
- Use both primary and secondary data.
- Continued engagement of the community throughout the data collection and analysis is important.

# RESOURCE PAGE

**PHAB standards (version 2022):**

- PHAB requires opportunity for the Tribal or local community at large to review and contribute to the assessment.
- PHAB requires the ongoing monitoring, refreshing, and adding of data and data analysis.

**More information and resources available at:**

- [www.phaboard.org](http://www.phaboard.org)
- <https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/brfss/publications>
- <https://www.naccho.org/uploads/downloadable-resources/PI-Workforce-HP2030-Tool-FINAL12-19-2022.pdf>
- <https://dphhs.mt.gov/publichealth/diseasesconditions/>
- <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/practice/assessplan/lph/community/chip.html>

This information was adapted from PHAB, NACCHO, the Minnesota Department of Health, Austin/Travis County Community Health Assessment, and the Department of U.S. Health & Human Services

**How the System Improvement Office can help:**

**Need technical assistance?** Contact [HHSPHSDBuildingHealthySystems@mt.gov](mailto:HHSPHSDBuildingHealthySystems@mt.gov)

**Grant Funding**

Through the Public Health Improvement Grant, MT DPHHS is able to provide grant funding for local and tribal health departments completing their CHA, CHIP, or Strategic Plan.

Email [KPride@mt.gov](mailto:KPride@mt.gov) to learn more.