

Case Study A

In late 2002 the Healthy County Health Department convened a wide range of organizations and entities in order to develop a community health improvement plan. This collaboration included community representatives from local hospitals, clinics, community-based organizations, schools, churches as well as the county public health agency. A Healthy County Community Health Council (the “Council”) was established; its goal was to improve the overall health of the county’s population through a community-wide health improvement plan that would prevent disease, promote physical and mental health, and better the quality of life within the community. The Council identified common community health values and a health vision for the large metropolitan population it served. In addition, a mission statement was drafted for the local public health system.

In order for the Council to obtain the necessary information for the community health improvement plan, strategies and tools from NACCHO’s MAPP (Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships) process were used. MAPP includes four assessment activities:

1. Community Health Status Assessment, which attempts to answer the question, “How healthy are our residents?” The compilation of local health data and the examination of changes over time were assessed in comparison with local, state and national level data and with national health objectives established for the year 2010 through the Healthy People 2010 process.
2. Forces of Change Assessment. During this assessment a randomly selected group of participants from the community provided input as to “What is occurring or might occur that affects the health of our community or the local public health system?” As a result of this assessment, the important forces of change affecting the community as well as the potential impacts of those forces.
3. Local Public Health System Assessment, which attempts to answer the question, “How well are essential public health services being provided to our community?” was conducted. The collaborative used tools, consisting of standards and indicators, developed by Public Health Practice Program Office of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to perform this assessment.
4. Community Themes and Strengths Assessment, which seeks to identify “What health and health-related issues are important to our community?” Both a survey and a focus group were conducted to examine perceptions of community health and the quality of life within the community.

The Council established a subcommittee that was charged with developing an ordered list of the most important health problems and issues facing the community. The subcommittee was provided with data and information derived from the four assessments. After the compilation and analysis stages were completed, the collaborative refined the vision and mission statements for the community health improvement plan. Health problems and issues were then prioritized, and goals, objectives and workplans were formulated for the priority health needs. The end result was a community health improvement plan that identified priority community health problems and issues, and delineated plans to achieve targets identified in the plan.

Case Study A - Discussion Questions

This case study describes a communitywide effort to improve the health status of the county's population. It includes aspects of performance management in order to accomplish this end. The following questions focus on performance management issues involved in community health improvement efforts.

1. Identify the target of this performance management application. Whose or what's performance is being improved?
2. Describe what the performance accomplishment is this case study.
3. Which of the four components of performance management are evident in this case study? Which are not?
 - Does this case study demonstrate the use of performance standards? How?
 - Does this case study demonstrate the use of performance measurement? How?
 - Does this case study demonstrate the use of reporting performance? How?
 - Does this case study demonstrate the use of quality improvement? How?
4. Which specific performance management components in this case study could be enhanced? How?
5. Assume that the state health agency has required all communities in this state to complete a similar process in order for the state to develop a state health plan and state health priorities. No other statewide planning activities would be undertaken. In this scenario, what problems would you foresee from a performance management perspective? What might be done to enhance specific performance management components into a statewide health improvement initiative?
6. Have you been (or are you now) involved in a communitywide health improvement effort? If so, which components of comprehensive performance management were in place? What suggestions do you have for improving that effort?

Case Study A - Discussion Questions: Facilitator's Notes

1. Identify the target of this performance management application. Whose or what's performance is being improved?
 - This case study focuses on the performance of a local public health system in improving the health status of the population.

2. Which of the four components of performance management are evident in this case study? Which are not?
 - All four components were used in the case study. A **performance management system** is the continuous use of the 4 performance management components so that they are integrated into an agency's core operations. Performance management can be carried out at multiple levels, including the program, organization, community, and state levels. However it is applied, the performance management cycle is a tool to improve health, increase efficiency, and create other benefits and value for society.

- a. Does this case study demonstrate the use of performance standards? How?
 - Performance standards include identifying relevant standards, selecting indicators, setting goals and targets and communicating expectations. Performance standards are objective standards or guidelines that are used to assess an organization's performance. They may be based on national, state or scientific guidelines or be based on the public's or leaders' expectations.
 - The case study addresses the beginning stages of gathering all stakeholders and representatives from the community. The collaboration resulted in the formation of a Community Health Council which communicated its expectations and identified the mission, vision and goals of this effort.
 - The Council needs to identify relevant standards or indicators that will be used to assess the performance of the collaborative community health improvement plan. Standards or indicators may be set based on national, state, or scientific guidelines; by benchmarking against similar organization; based on the public's or leaders' expectations (e.g., 100% access, zero disparities); or other methods.

Note: For additional questions refer to Section II: Performance Standards of the Performance Management Self-Assessment Tool.

b. Does this case study demonstrate the use of performance measurement? How?

- Performance measurement is the refining of indicators and defining measure. Performance measures are quantitative measures of capacities, processes, or outcomes relevant to the assessment of a performance indicator. It also includes developing a data system which can collect the data based on the measures.
- The four MAPP assessments are used as the major source of performance measures. After targets are established, data or information, often called indicators, related to those standards are identified and collected standard. The various indicators collected through the MAPP assessments provide the Council with a means of measuring performance relative to the targets it has identified.

Note: For additional questions refer to Section III: Performance Measurement of the Performance Management Self-Assessment Tool.

c. Does this case study demonstrate the use of reporting performance? How?

- The reporting of performance component includes analyzing data, feeding data back to managers, staff, policy makers, and constituent, and developing a regular reporting cycle.
- The data and information derived from the four assessments were collected and analyzed by the subcommittee appointed by the Council. The data was fed back to the Council and to the various stakeholders in the community, including the organizations collaborating through the Council.
- There was no mention of a regular reporting cycle or determination if targets were met, goals achieved, or when to re-assess.

Note: For additional questions refer to Section IV: Reporting of Progress of the Performance Management Self-Assessment Tool.

d. Does this case study demonstrate the use of quality improvement? How?

- Quality improvement process relies on the use of data for decisions to improve policies, programs and outcomes, then manage those changes and create a learning organization.
- The information provided does not describe what actions were taken to improve efforts to address specific priority health problems identified in the planning process.
- There are no processes identified for the plan to ensure that they continually take actions to improve performance and accountability.

Note: For additional questions refer to Section V: Quality Improvement Process of the Performance Management Self-Assessment Tool.

3. Which specific performance management components in this case study could be enhanced? How?

- Performance standards: Public health agencies and their partners can benefit from using national standards, state specific standards, benchmarks from other jurisdictions, or agency specific targets to define performance expectations. Standards for health outcomes could be developed from Healthy People 2010 national health objectives tailored to the unique circumstances and assets of this community. Standards for public health processes and capacity could be derived from The National Public Health Performance Standards Program (NPHPSP) which defines performance in each of the 10 Essential Public Health Services for state and local public health systems and governing bodies. The NPHPSP supports users of the national standards with a variety of technical assistance products including online data submission and an analytic report back to the user jurisdiction.
 - Reporting of Progress: It would be beneficial to create a regular reporting cycle. After the program has developed its new objectives, these too then should be reviewed to see if targets and goals have been achieved and the entire process be re-assessed.
 - Quality Improvement:
 - The community health improvement plan prioritized health problems and issues, identified goals and objectives and established clear work plans that assigned responsibility, redeployed resources, assured accountability for results, and an established timetable.
 - Including a process to use performance information to decide areas for more evaluation.
 - Additional Questions to Discuss:
 - Is there a set specific performance standards, targets, or goals? How do you determine these standards? Is there benchmark against similar state organizations or use national, state, or scientific guidelines?
 - Is there a way to measure the capacity, process, or outcomes of established performance standards and targets? What tools do you use to assist in these efforts?
 - Is there documentation or reporting of progress? Is this information regularly available to managers, staff, and others?
 - Is there a quality improvement process? What do you do with the information gathered in the progress report or document? Is there a process to manage changes in policies, programs, or infrastructure that are based on performance standards, measurements, and reports?
4. Assume that the state health agency has required all communities in this state to complete a similar process in order for the state to develop a state health plan and state health priorities. No other statewide planning activities would be undertaken. In this scenario, what problems would you foresee from a performance management perspective? What might be done to enhance specific

performance management components into a statewide health improvement initiative?

- Aggregating data and information from all communities in the state would be useful for a statewide health improvement effort, but aggregating a series of local assessments would not be sufficient enough. Therefore, statewide standards and targets should be used and it is likely that additional data (indicators) would be necessary. Certainly there should also be a statewide body (similar to the Council) that convenes the process and assures involvement of important stakeholders (which may differ at the state level from those assembled at the local level). Improvement efforts would likely involve different or additional parties

5. Have you been (or are you now) involved in a communitywide health improvement effort? If so, which components of comprehensive performance management were in place? What suggestions do you have for improving that effort?

- Use the Performance Management Self-Assessment Tool to help identify all the components of the system that should be applied.