

Massachusetts Department of Public Health Baseline Capacity Assessment

Transforming Public Health in the Commonwealth

Your community, like 309 other communities in the Commonwealth, is part of a shared services Collaborative, helping to transform the local public health system in Massachusetts. Collaboratives help communities leverage state and local resources to increase staffing, expand access to public health services, improve health outcomes, and enhance health equity for all residents.



Over the next six months, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) Office of Local and Regional Health (OLRH) will conduct a Baseline Capacity Assessment to understand and document the current status of local and

regional public health services across the State. All communities currently part of a Collaborative funded by a Public Health Excellence (PHE) grant will be included in this assessment, at no cost to the municipality.

It is important to note that this is a resource assessment and not a performance assessment. It is intended to help DPH understand where resources are needed to elevate public health staffing, training, and funding in communities across the Commonwealth to a minimum standard, NOT to highlight or point out existing performance gaps. DPH is collaborating with several organizations to complete this assessment, which will be led by the Massachusetts Health Officers Association (MHOA).

DPH seeks to provide additional support to Collaboratives by allocating resources, which may include training and technical assistance, to local and regional health stakeholders based on the results of the assessment.



The assessment will consist of the following components:

- A request for a sample of reports for inspections conducted by local health departments in selected settings and timeframes.
- A review of existing staffing resources to determine alignment with current needs.
- A review of existing health department services and their alignment with existing statutes and regulations.
- A review of the current training levels of existing staff.

At the end of the assessment, MHOA will develop a Strategic Action Plan with input from each Collaborative and identify additional resources needed from DPH to implement their plan.

The Ask for Municipal Leaders and Board of Health Members

There are a number of ways that municipal leaders and board of health members can help make this assessment successful, including the following:

- Support your public health staff in providing responses to these requests
- Spread the message that this assessment will be linked to additional resource allocation, which may include training and technical assistance
- Embrace the opportunity to be part of transforming the way public health services are delivered



The anticipated benefits of this assessment to the Commonwealth and local communities include the following:

- Improving understanding of the efforts PHE grantees and municipalities have made to address existing gaps
- Insight into current capacity to meet existing statutes and regulations
- Understanding the allocation of resources required to address needs / gaps in resources and capacity
- Aligning training resources with regional needs
- Direction for the expansion of workforce development efforts
- Implementing ongoing capacity assessments to demonstrate progress and impact of investments at the state and local level
- Improving access to public health services across the Commonwealth

The results of this assessment will guide DPH in allocating resources and providing support to local and regional health.



The assessment will take place in phases over the course of 2022, with the following anticipated milestones:

- Information requests are anticipated to begin in Summer 2022
- Assessments will be complete by Fall 2022
- Strategic Action Plans will be created and shared by Winter 2022

We appreciate the support of you and your public health staff as we complete this assessment. We look forward to working together to transform the future of public health across the Commonwealth. Please contact Aimee Petrosky at OLRH with questions about the upcoming assessment.

Contact us

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Standards

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