



Evaluating the Accountable Communities of Health

Center for Community Health and Evaluation

An Accountable Community of Health (ACH) is a group of people in a given geographic area representing entities from a variety of different sectors with a common interest in improving health. With support from the state, nine ACHs are formally organizing across Washington for the purpose of coordinating activities, jointly implementing new health related projects, and advising state agencies on how to best address health needs within their geographic area.

Evaluating the progress of ACHs

The Health Care Authority (HCA) has contracted with the Center for Community Health and Evaluation (CCHE) to evaluate the ACHs. CCHE aims to understand how ACHs come together, agree on community health priorities, engage in health improvement activities, contribute to the Healthier Washington initiative, and work towards becoming sustainable coalitions. As an evaluation partner, CCHE provides timely feedback from multiple data sources to Healthier Washington and HCA staff about success factors, challenges, and lessons learned to inform program improvement. CCHE will also assess the ACHs' impact at the end of the project.

Measuring outcomes. A measurement framework has been designed to guide the assessment of the ACHs' progress (see visual on the next page). The framework balances the need to compare across the ACHs and the need for individual ACHs to tailor some outcome measures to their regional priorities. The framework divides ACH outcomes into:

- Short-term operational measures about the strength and functioning of the ACH as a coalition
- Intermediate activity measures about ACH project work and Healthier Washington activities
- Long-term regional health measures about project impact on regional health indicators and statewide health improvement priorities

Collecting data. Data is being collected from multiple sources to understand ACH capacity and progress.

- Site visits to all nine ACH regions to see ACH's in action
- Interviews with backbone staff and ACH members to understand ACH development, regional ACH activities, and their participation in state-level Healthier Washington activities
- Surveys of ACH members to gather members' perceptions of their ACH
- Observation of meetings where ACH members are convened to discuss the statewide initiative
- Review of grant applications, designation proposals, and reports submitted by ACHs to HCA

CCHE's evaluation approach

When your goal is to improve community health, you have questions about what works. At the Center for Community Health and Evaluation (CCHE) we take a collaborative approach to help find the answers. We partner with coalitions, health departments, and many other organizations, on evaluation planning, data collection, analysis, and reporting. Our approach emphasizes sharing data and evaluation findings with our clients when it is most helpful for their activities and decision-making.