

# Chapter 3

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## PLAN FOR THE TRIBAL COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

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# Plan for the Tribal CHA

## Overview

- The tribe determines who will be involved in conducting the Tribal CHA. Some tribes form working groups consisting of tribal leaders, staff members or community members designated to be involved in the CHA process.
- Identify a primary work group, or a CHA Core Work Team, that consists of individuals tasked to lead and implement the major tasks for the Tribal CHA.
- The Tribal CHA has the potential to benefit multiple agencies, so working with key stakeholders to identify mutual goals is valuable.
- When the CHA involves collaboration, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and a work plan are useful tools.
- The CHA process will differ for each tribe and should be tailored to meet the needs of the tribe.
- The main steps to conducting a CHA include develop a plan, define the community, engage the community, identify indicators, collect data, analyze data, identify health priorities, and report results.

## PLANNING PHASE

The common elements of a CHA covered in this section are:

- Develop a plan
- Engage the community
- Define the population

At times, activities from one step often overlap with activities from another step. It is important to note that certain steps can be implemented at the same time, and it is often necessary to do so for efficiency. For example, the development of a CHA plan can be accomplished while the community is being defined and engaged. However, some steps must occur prior to others. For instance, the data collection and analysis steps should not begin until the health indicators have been identified.

## DETERMINE THE PURPOSE

### Determine Whether to Conduct a Tribal CHA

The decision to conduct a Tribal CHA is made by the tribe. There are many factors to consider when making the decision, including leadership support, broad community interest, resources available and needed (e.g., financial, staff support, and technology), time, and availability of data. Support from tribal leadership, including tribal council, health boards, advisory committees, and/or other groups, is essential to the success of a CHA.

**Table 1. Reasons for conducting a CHA.**

Topic	Considerations
The tribe plans to apply for accreditation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A CHA is a prerequisite for public health accreditation</li> </ul>
There are clear benefits to the tribe and the community's health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support data-based decision making in health improvement planning and inform health program development, resource allocation, and evaluation</li> <li>Enhance what is already known or improve understanding of community health issues</li> <li>Encourages community involvement in health issues and engages key stakeholders</li> </ul>
The findings will be utilized by tribal leaders and health professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform critical decisions</li> <li>Prioritize health issues</li> <li>Reference when submitting proposals or applications for grants</li> <li>Track and identify important trends on significant health issues over a period of time</li> </ul>

**Cost of a Tribal CHA:** There are costs associated with conducting a CHA. Costs vary depending on the comprehensiveness of a CHA; technical expertise and experience within the tribal health department to collect, analyze, and report on data; past experience conducting assessment, and other variables. Therefore, it is difficult to estimate the costs of conducting a CHA. Nevertheless, a tribal health department should expect costs for staffing, planning meetings, community involvement and incentives, data collection and analysis, and reporting the findings. To obtain funding for conducting a Tribal CHA, the tribal health department may cost share with other tribal departments conducting a community assessment, utilize internal health department funds and resources, and seek funding and/or other technical assistance from external sources (e.g. grants, foundations, health agencies, or organizations).



## TOOLKIT RESOURCE

### *Tool 1: Readiness Questionnaire for Tribal CHA Development*

Since the process requires much time, effort and resources, assessing the tribe's readiness to conduct a CHA is recommended. Use the questions to guide discussions about the tribe's readiness to conduct a Tribal CHA. Be sure to also include additional topics that are important to the tribe. This Tool is located on page 78 in the Tools and Resources section.

## Determine the Purpose

The CHA process will differ for each tribe. Such differences are due to community size, community location, tribal health operation status (e.g., Public Law 93-638 often referred to as '638', compacted, Indian Health Service "IHS"), tribal health department capacity, and key partnerships within the tribal public health system. Before starting the tribal CHA development process, it is essential to determine the purpose of the Tribal CHA. Communicating why the Tribal CHA should be developed and explaining overall expectations will provide direction for the individuals involved in the project. Developing a purpose statement with CHA Core Work Team will also help ensure the team has a shared understanding of the purpose of the CHA.

## DEVELOP A PLAN

### Choose the Best Approach for the Tribal CHA

Determining which approach is best suited depends largely on the purpose and objective for conducting the CHA. As mentioned in the previous section, tribal health departments conduct CHAs to inform program and services planning, prioritize resource allocation and policy development, and assess health status and evaluate improvement in health outcomes over time. This toolkit includes guidance for each common elements of the CHA process. If the tribe would like to explore additional options for conducting a CHA, there are a number of other models and approaches available to the public. Be sure to select a framework that is comprehensive, and addresses the PHAB standards for the community health assessment. There is no one framework that will guarantee that the tribe will meet the PHAB standards for the community health assessment, as PHAB determines what is considered acceptable documentation.

Table 2 lists examples of CHA frameworks. The last two models found in the table are specific to tribes. Whichever model or approach is taken, CHAs are conducted using a systematic process that includes the steps outlined in Chapter 1.

**Table 2. Examples of CHA frameworks and guides.**

<b>Framework</b>	<b>Organization and Website</b>
Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP)	National Association of County and City Health Officials <a href="http://www.naccho.org/topics/infrastructure/mapp/">http://www.naccho.org/topics/infrastructure/mapp/</a>
Community Health Assessment aNd Group Evaluation (CHANGE)	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/healthycommunitiesprogram/tools/change.htm">http://www.cdc.gov/healthycommunitiesprogram/tools/change.htm</a>
The Community Tool Box	University of Kansas <a href="http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/index.aspx">http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/index.aspx</a>
ACHI Community Health Assessment Toolkit	Association for Community Health Improvement <a href="http://www.assesstoolkit.org/">http://www.assesstoolkit.org/</a>
Indian Community Health Profile Project Toolkit	Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board <a href="http://www.npaihb.org/images/resources_docs/Toolkit_Final.pdf">http://www.npaihb.org/images/resources_docs/Toolkit_Final.pdf</a>
Five Steps to Community Assessment for American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start Programs	AED Center for Early Care and Education and American Indian Technical Assistance Network <a href="http://www.plan4preschool.org/docs/single/five-steps-to-community-assessment-for-american-indian-alaska-native-head-s/">http://www.plan4preschool.org/docs/single/five-steps-to-community-assessment-for-american-indian-alaska-native-head-s/</a>

### Obtain Tribal Approvals

Formal support from tribal leadership whether a tribal resolution or other approval mechanism is highly encouraged and often required. Having the appropriate approvals will also support efforts to engage other departments and programs within the tribe to participate in the CHA. Tribally-driven approaches must follow tribal protocols, and should address priority areas identified and defined by the tribal leadership.

## Recruit Members and Work Teams

Once the appropriate approvals are obtained from the tribal Leadership, it will be important to identify a work group, or a CHA Core Work Team, consisting of individuals tasked to lead and implement the major tasks for the Tribal CHA. It is recommended that the CHA Core Work Team remain relatively small with 6-8 members. CHA Core Work Teams might include:

- Health department staff
- Community members
- Tribal leaders
- Key stakeholders
- Staff from other tribal departments  
(See Figure 6)

**Consider the Ten Essential Public Health Services:** In order to determine who is best suited for the CHA Core Work Team, consider the Ten Essential Public Health Services and the various stakeholders engaged in the delivery of one or more of these services (See Figure 7). Other considerations for selecting the CHA Core Work Team may include:

- Staff with leadership roles
- Experience
- Area of expertise
- Access to data and information

**Consider Subcommittees:** In addition to the CHA Core Work Team, a tribe may form an additional CHA working group or subcommittees that focus on a specific element of the CHA. Figure 6 shows departments that can be included in the Tribal CHA process as CHA Core Work Team members, sub-committee members, or stakeholders. Through collaboration, these departments play an integral role by ensuring that Tribal CHA is comprehensive and includes the major health concerns addressed by all tribal programs.

Tribal Program Staff for Core CHA Work Team
Administration and Enrollment
Courts
Education
Elder Services
Health Transportation
Police Department
Social/Family Services
Wellness Center
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)
Youth Program

**Figure 6: Potential Tribal Programs Involved in the Tribal CHA**

## Identify Key Stakeholders and Potential Collaborators

In addition to the CHA Core Work Team, consider forming a broad based Tribal CHA Key Collaborators Team. The Tribal CHA Key Collaborators Team may include individuals who are unable to commit the time or resources needed to participate fully on the Tribal CHA Core Work Team, but are critical to the successful implementation of the Tribal CHA. The Tribal CHA Key Collaborators Team may function as an advisory body to the CHA Core Work Team. If a tribal health department is conducting a CHA for purposes of accreditation, it may be beneficial to involve representatives from tribal departments, state and federal agencies, and other local partners who bring a level of commitment and resources, whether financial and staff time, to support the broader goal of the tribal health department.

The PHAB standards and measures for a CHA require documentation of broad community participation in terms of partner participation representing various sectors outside the health department. According to *PHAB Standards and Measures Version 1.0* (Measure 1.1.2 T/L and Measure 1.1.1 T/L) documentation of the following is required:

- Regular meetings or communication with partners to consider data sources, review data, and conduct analysis
- Collaborative process to identify and collect data or information, identify health issues, assets, and resources to address health

### Ten Essential Public Health Services

1. **Monitor** health status to identify community health problems.
2. **Diagnose and investigate** health problems and health hazards in the community.
3. **Inform, educate, and empower** people about health issues.
4. **Mobilize** community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.
5. **Develop** policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.
6. **Enforce** laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
7. **Link** people to needed personal health services and assure the provision of health care when otherwise unavailable.
8. **Assure** a competent public health and personal healthcare workforce.
9. **Evaluate** effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.
10. **Research** for new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

Reference: National Public Health Performance Standards  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nphpsp/essentialservices.html>

**Figure 7. Ten Essential Public Health Services.**

## Develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA)

There are a number of helpful tools that tribes can use when collaborating with external agencies. One document is a MOA, which outlines the terms of the collaboration and responsibilities of each of the entities involved. A sample MOA is located in the appendix. At minimum, the MOA should cover the following sections:

- Purpose and Description of CHP Development
- Articles of Agreement and Responsibilities
- Confidentiality and Security of Information
- Time Period
- Signatures from the tribal leader and the authority from the collaborating organization



### TOOLKIT RESOURCE

#### *Tool 2: Sample Tribal CHA MOA*

The purpose of a MOA is to establish the relationship and describe the responsibilities of organizations. The MOA is intended to solidify the mutual understanding between partnering organizations. Determine components of the sample MOA, and adapt the document to describe the expectations of the involved parties. Legal consultation is recommended and often required. This Tool is located on page 79 in the Tools and Resources section.

## Set Goals and Objectives

The Tribal CHA Core Work Team will refer to project goals and objectives throughout the CHA process to guide activities and make decisions. A project goal is non-specific, non-measurable, and usually cannot be attained (e.g., an ideal). A project objective is measurable and more realistic. An objective is a statement that outlines what the program will achieve- it answers the question, “*What does success look like?*” Objectives define the following:

- Who or what will change
- How many are going to change
- What/ how much change is expected
- When this change will occur

# Plan for the Tribal CHA

The acronym 'SMART' is used to describe how to write an objective. 'SMART' stands for:

- **Specific** - What are we going to do (and with whom)?
- **Measurable** - Is it able to be measured? How?
- **Achievable** - Can it get done in the current political climate, with the proposed timeframe, and money we have?
- **Relevant** - Will this objective lead to the desired result?
- **Time-bound** - When will it be completed?

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### **Tribal Epidemiology Centers**

Tribal Epidemiology Centers (TECs) are an excellent resource for epidemiology and data services and technical assistance. There are 12 TECs serving the various regions of the country as designated by the Indian Health Service (IHS) Service Areas. TECs are funded by the IHS and CDC and were established through the reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA) in 1996. TECs serve tribal communities by managing public information systems, supporting the investigation of disease, managing disease prevention and control programs, and assisting with response to public health emergencies with other public health authorities. For more information on TECs, visit the website: [http://www.ihs.gov/epi/index.cfm?module=epi\\_tec\\_main](http://www.ihs.gov/epi/index.cfm?module=epi_tec_main)

### **The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. Tribal Epidemiology Center (ITCA TEC)**

The ITCA TEC provides services to the American Indian tribes in the Phoenix and Tucson Areas of the Indian Health Service. The ITCA TEC may be able to assist tribal health departments by providing specific health data and assisting with data management, analysis, and report construction.

## Develop a Tribal CHA Work Plan

Now that the work teams, purpose, community, and audience have been defined, the next step is to develop a clear and comprehensive plan to guide tasks and activities. One helpful tool is a work plan that describes the CHA process and clearly outlines responsibilities for all individuals and organizations involved. The plan is especially useful when several programs are involved in the Tribal CHA. A work plan may include the task to be completed; the individual or group responsible for arranging or completing the task; the time frame or due date for the task; and notes or additional comments. A sample CHA work plan and a template for developing a tribal-specific work plan are located in the appendix. The sample work plan includes all the common elements of CHA implementation. Table 3 below displays a possible entry on the work plan.

**Table 3. Sample task from a Tribal CHA work plan.**

<b>TASK</b>	<b>PERSON(S) OR GROUP RESPONSIBLE</b>	<b>TIME FRAME / DUE DATE</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL COMMENTS</b>
Obtain permission from Tribal Leaders to plan and implement a CHA	Tribal Health Director	1 to 3 Months	Obtain approval from Tribal Health Advisory Committee



### TOOLKIT RESOURCE

#### *Tool 3: Tribal CHA Work Plan Sample and Templates*

A work plan is a practical tool for organizing projects that involve many individuals and guide project related tasks. Common tasks involved in the Tribal CHA are outlined in the sample work plan in Tool 3. Use the template to develop a work plan that describes the activities that must occur for the Tribal CHA to be completed. This Tool is located on page 85 in the Tools and Resources section.

## DEFINE THE COMMUNITY

Defining the community to be included in the CHA is important and will guide data collection efforts. Community can be defined in a number of ways, and depends largely on the overall purpose of the CHA. Community can be defined by geographic boundaries, such as a reservation or tribal jurisdiction. It can refer to specific regions (e.g., pueblo, district, chapter house, community), or other types of geographic boundaries. Include the approximate population size and a clear description of who are considered community members (e.g., enrolled tribal members, spouses and children of tribal members, all those living within a specific geographic boundary or all those who access services). Consider people, culture and web of relationships, as well as history, government, politics, institutions, groups, organizations, economics, and social structure.

**Population served by the jurisdiction for public health accreditation:** Tribal health departments seeking public health accreditation need to align the definition of the community with the “population served by the jurisdiction” as identified by the tribe in the application for accreditation. Even if a tribe does not have a land-base, a CHA community must be defined in specific terms.

## DETERMINE THE AUDIENCE

It is important to consider and determine who will use the information obtained from the assessment. Once the Tribal CHA has been conducted, a tribal CHP that summarizes the data will be developed. The CHP can be a confidential document or a public document. Tribes may prefer to keep the CHP as a private document and limit the users of the report to the tribal council, designated health professionals, and staff members. Other tribes may prefer to use the CHP as a public document and provide access to all community members interested in the health of the community. Determining the audience and users of the CHP will influence the way the CHP is developed and disseminated, and should be defined during the early stages of planning the CHA. This will prevent future misunderstandings about the CHA, and how the data will be communicated.



### TOOLKIT RESOURCE

*Tool 4: Tribal CHA Purpose, Community, and Audience Definitions*

Before conducting the Tribal CHA, it is important to agree upon the reason for conducting the assessment, who will be included, and who will have access to the findings. Use this tool to write a purpose statement, define the community, and determine the main audience for the Tribal CHA. This Tool is located on page 87 in the Tools and Resources section.

## ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY

Community engagement is an essential element of the CHA process and is a requirement for public health accreditation. Tribal health departments can involve community members in a variety of ways during all phases of the CHA process. Community participation and input are valuable since the CHA results could potentially influence the health status and health service delivery in the community. The tribe can seek community buy-in and acceptance before deciding whether to conduct the Tribal CHA, during the process with information gathering, or after its development to interpret the findings. The tribe can host events, such as community forums or town hall meetings, to prioritize health concerns, identify community strengths, and explore root causes to important health concerns. Community engagement activities are an effective way to obtain information from those who do not on the work team but have an interest in the project.



### TOOLKIT RESOURCE

*Tool 5: Planning and Strategies Checklist for Community Engagement and Involvement Checklist*

Before involving the community in the CHA, it is important to consider how the community will be reached. Use the Planning and Strategies Checklist to consider the location of the event, the funding source, and what strategy will be used to engage the community. This Tool is located on page 90 in the Tools and Resources section.



### Plan for the Tribal CHA—Toolkit Resources

- **Tool 1: Readiness Questionnaire for Tribal CHA Development**
- **Tool 2: Sample Tribal CHA Memorandum of Agreement**
- **Tool 3: Tribal CHA Work Plan Sample and Template**
- **Tool 4: Purpose, Community and Audience Definitions**
- **Tool 5: Planning and Strategies Checklist for Community Engagement and Involvement**

