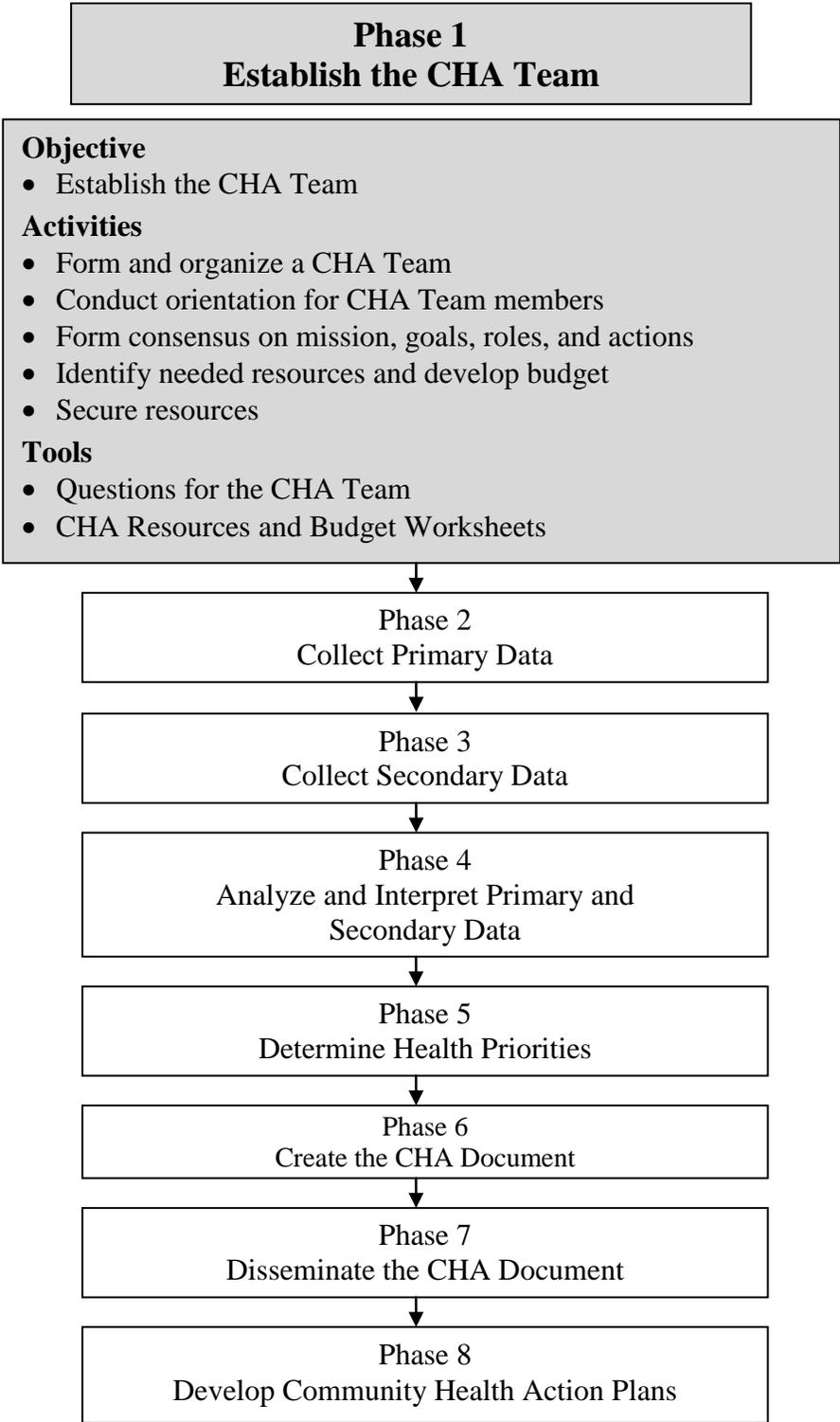


NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT PROCESS



Essential Services #4 Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems

Benchmark #1 LHD shall conduct and disseminate results of regular community health assessment

Accreditation Activity 1.1.a Evidence of community collaboration in planning/
conducting assessment

Accreditation Activity 1.1.b Reflect the demographic profile of population

Benchmark #11 LHD shall convene key constituents and community partners to identify, analyze and prioritize community health problems/issues.

Consolidated Agreement Be a collaborative effort with local partners such as hospitals and local Healthy Carolinians Partnerships (if such exists).

Additional Accreditation Benchmarks may apply to the CHA (verify by Accreditation Site visit and LHD self-assessment instrument)

Phase 1: Establish the CHA Team

Community health assessment (CHA) is a process to determine the health status, needs, and health resources in a county. In order for this to be meaningful, people from throughout the county must be mobilized throughout the process. While building commitment takes lots of time and energy, there is no better way to build support for public health interventions than to engage residents in identifying important health issues, developing strategies for addressing these issues, and initiating actions and interventions. Simply stated, change "...is more likely to be successful and permanent when the people it affects are involved in initiating and promoting it." (Thompson & Kinne, 1990, p. 45)

The first phase of the CHA process starts with forming a CHA Team. This CHA Team should have a broad representation of county residents and representatives from strategic agencies and organizations that have a good understanding of the county and are willing to commit the time and effort necessary to make the process a success. The development of the CHA involves the participation of a wide range of key community members who reflect all facets of the county. Members of the CHA Team can include representatives from:

- Business and industry
- Health care providers
- Public health
- School systems
- Media
- Local universities and colleges
- Civic and social organizations
- Local government
- Voluntary agencies
- Hospitals
- Other appropriate groups

It is very important that the CHA Team involve people who have significant influence in the county (e.g., elected officials), as well as the people who are most affected by health problems (e.g., residents of low-income neighborhoods). Because assessment can bring about changes in the community, it is essential to involve those who might be affected by any changes.

Other county residents, who are not serving on the CHA Team, can serve on committees like publicity or finance, participate in surveys, provide feedback on particular issues, or volunteer resources.

Most counties already have working groups with diverse membership in community partnerships such as a Healthy Carolinians partnership. Such a group can serve as the CHA Team so there is no need to start one from scratch.

Value of CHA to the Community	
✓	To share the assessment process and findings with the county residents and to educate local residents, health care providers, and students regarding pressing health problems
✓	To empower community members to act on issues of concern
✓	To identify emerging issues, to provide data for deciding programmatic/organizational decisions, and to plan effective, collaborative interventions to promote better health
✓	To advocate for community change with politicians and other local decision-makers
✓	To promote collaboration and partnership among community members and groups
✓	To furnish a baseline by which to monitor changes
✓	To serve as a reference point and a historical perspective for future county assessments
✓	To provide a resource for activities such as writing grant applications
✓	To serve as a model for other counties who are planning an assessment

CHA Team Model

One successful CHA Team model has three levels of participants:

- **Advisory Group** – The Advisory Group is a large group of people who agree to serve as advisors or overseers for the project.
- **Work Group** – The Work Group can be a subset of the Advisory Group. The Work Group plans for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data, develops the CHA document, and then presenting the results to the Advisory Group for approval.
- **Project Facilitator** – The Project Facilitator is responsible for coordinating and leading the CHA process.

Advisory Group

The Advisory Group should have at least 10 members who are interested in health assessment and community planning and who agree to function as an advisory board or steering committee throughout the process. This group can be very large depending on the interest in the county and should include a broad representation of the residents of the county. Members need to understand the CHA process and decide on the overall goals. As advocates and leaders, they serve as the watchdog for the process, making sure that everything is going as planned, and act as advocates of the process in the county. The following are some responsibilities of the Advisory Group:

- Agree to meet for a defined period of time (e.g., at least 9-12 months)
- Review the CHA process materials
- Review statistics, survey data, and other forms of information about the county
- Review recommended goals and objectives
- Act as advocates for the CHA process in the county, including helping identify resources and support
- Work with local constituents to explain the process and provide feedback

Work Group

The Work Group may include four to 10 people from the Advisory Group. Although this group is smaller than the Advisory Group, it should also contain representatives of the county as a whole including representatives from both the local health department and local hospitals. This Work Group provides the majority of the work necessary to complete the process.

The Work Group needs available “support” staff. Support staff may be several volunteers or paid staff from a local agency who are willing to make copies, prepare mass mailings, enter data, schedule meetings, etc. The following are some duties of the Work Group:

- Lead the process and become the CHA process “experts”
- Establish and meet with subcommittees as needed
- Perform or delegate data collection work
- Interpret findings
- Develop the community health action plans
- Ensure that interventions are implemented and evaluated

Project Facilitator

The Project Facilitator coordinates the CHA process. This person is responsible for keeping the process moving and making sure that everyone is aware of the progress and tasks at hand. Within the CHA Team, however, there may be others assigned to lead subcommittees to complete special tasks. For example, one member may coordinate a group to conduct a survey. The following are some duties of the Project Facilitator:

- Assure broad representation of county residents and communication links to the county
- Keep the process moving, make sure tasks are completed on time and delegate tasks
- Coordinate CHA meetings
- Make sure the members of the Advisory and Work Groups have the information and tools needed to complete their tasks
- Coordinate access to support materials (e.g., equipment, work space, office supplies, etc.)
- Serve as the central contact person for the CHA Team, county residents, and media
- Serve as contact person to request technical assistance

CHA Team Orientation

An effective way to get a CHA process off the ground is for the local public health department and/or a community partner to host an orientation for the CHA Team members. This orientation will help to solidify the group and will provide a foundation for future work.

Start the orientation by asking CHA Team members their opinions about how the CHA process will benefit the residents in the county. *Questions for the CHA Team* in Phase 1 Tools provides a set of questions that are designed to help build consensus about what to do and how to do it. This exercise provides a forum for members of the CHA Team to voice their expectations and self-interests regarding the CHA process. These questions can also stimulate dialogue that allows the CHA Team members to reach a shared understanding of the goals and objectives of the CHA process. Record the group’s answers to these questions so that they can be distributed

along with the minutes of the meeting. Appendix B, *Frequently Asked Questions*, includes information to support this discussion.

The agenda should include a review of county demographics and special geographical or unique features of the county so that all members have a clear understanding of the county's make up. (Data Sources: State Center for Health Statistics, County Health Data Book, local convention and visitors' bureau, NC Department of Commerce, NC Employment Security Commissions, US Census)

CHA Team Orientation Discussion Items

- ✓ Provide an overview of the scope and the goals of community-based assessment
- ✓ Provide an opportunity for each team member to articulate his or her goals and perspectives regarding their own or their agency's involvement
- ✓ Discuss the skills needed to guide and support the CHA process and the potential contributions of resources, knowledge, and skills of each CHA Team member
- ✓ Clarify individual member's role to avoid "turf concerns"
- ✓ Give the group time to reach common ground and develop a clearly articulated mission or purpose
- ✓ Establish a budget and timeline for the CHA project
- ✓ Discuss possible resource, training, and technical assistance needs

CHA Resources

Motivated persons, who represent the county, will be needed to give their time and talents to the CHA process. The more people from the county who are involved, the more successful the CHA process will be. Have the CHA Team suggest people in the county who can assist with the process. The *CHA Resources Worksheets* in Phase 1 Tools can help the CHA Team identify organizational, individual, and financial resources.

The CHA process requires hard work, commitment of time, and a planned budget. The time, energy, and commitment of many organizations and individuals are needed because it takes a great deal of work to complete the data collection, review, and analysis, and the action planning tasks. Staff and volunteer time required to undertake an assessment should not be underestimated. The amount of time depends on the task and the availability of each person. Estimate as much as possible the time commitment needed so people understand what they are undertaking.

Develop a Budget

The financial resources needed to complete the CHA process depend on: (1) the size of the county, (2) the amount of "in-kind" resources (e.g., donated time, money, supplies, space, etc.), and (3) how extensive the CHA process is (e.g., if a survey is done, the number of collaborating agencies/ organizations). The CHA Team needs to set up a budget before beginning the process regardless of how simple the process seems and how many donations are received. See Phase I Tools for a *CHA Budget Worksheet*. Costs can be grouped into the following categories:

\$ Project Facilitator Support. A local project facilitator will be needed to coordinate the CHA process. Whether this person is full or part time depends on how much work is done by the Work Group and other community members and the length of time available to complete the CHA process. –The project facilitator can be a health educator in the public health department and/or a staff person from the hospital or a community partner. A project

facilitator will still be needed to coordinate and oversee the work even if an external company is hired to facilitate or implement the CHA process.

- \$ **Office Space.** The project facilitator will need office space. This space can provide a central location where CHA Team members can review and analyze data, gather needed supplies, and leave information and materials for others. Look for space in the local public health department, hospital, or the offices of other agencies or community partners.
- \$ **Support Staff.** Staff will be needed for administrative support to duplicate materials, distributing surveys, inputting data, and many other jobs. Volunteers can provide this service but the equivalent of a half-time, paid staff may be necessary.
- \$ **Office Equipment.** Office equipment such as a computer (with appropriate software, an Internet connection, and an email account), telephone, fax machine, printer, and copy machine will be needed.
- \$ **Supplies.** Office supplies such as paper, envelopes, notebooks, pens, and pencils will be needed. These supplies can be donated.
- \$ **Meeting Space.** The CHA team will need a location for regular meetings. This space must accommodate the size of the Advisory Group comfortably. When engaging the county residents with information sharing and priority setting, the CHA Team may need to look for a larger meeting space that can accommodate a “town hall” type meeting.
- \$ **Communication.** Communication expenses for telephone, mailing, faxing, and videoconferencing will be needed.
- \$ **Travel.** Funds for mileage or overnight stays (e.g., to attend training sessions or meetings) to reimburse key Team members will be necessary.
- \$ **Public Relations.** A budget for placing advertisements or public service announcements in local newspapers, newsletters, or radio stations will be needed.
- \$ **Training and/or Consultants.** Training and/or consulting resources may be available within the public health department, community partners, educational institutions, and the NC Division of Public Health. Many resources are available at no cost. The community may choose to hire an outside consultant to perform part of the assessment (e.g., conduct a community survey).

Points to Keep in Mind When Working With the CHA Team and County Residents

- ✓ Recognize that one or two people will not be able to complete the CHA
- ✓ Assure all populations within the county are represented
- ✓ Develop a time line for the project
- ✓ Stay on target
- ✓ Obtain needed training for participants
- ✓ Coordinate appropriate office space and support staff
- ✓ Develop a method of keeping county residents informed
- ✓ Build consensus
- ✓ Reward participants for doing a good job
- ✓ Seek outside help in dealing with sensitive issues

Financial Support

The CHA Team needs to develop a plan to secure the needed funds. Be cautious about allowing one stakeholder to provide all of the needed resources (e.g., one local hospital supplying all of the needed funds, space, supplies, and support staff time). Even with the best intentions, the outcome of the assessment may be biased in favor of that stakeholder. Plan for several interested parties to contribute funding.

Work with the local governments – county commissions and/or city councils – to include funding in the annual budget for CHA. Ask for this funding to be recurring. The best way to secure this funding is to prove to the government officials the value of this project to the county and local agencies. Show them how the data gathered can be used for planning and evaluating programs that they fund and support.

CHECKPOINT

Before leaving Phase 1, check to see if the following tasks are completed:

- ✓ Formed a CHA Team with members assigned to Advisory and Work Groups and a Project Facilitator identified
- ✓ Held an orientation for CHA Team members
- ✓ Developed a CHA budget (see CHA Budget Worksheet)
- ✓ Identified additional CHA resources (see CHA Resources Worksheet)

Appendix at

<http://www.healthycarolinians.org/assessment/resources/survey.aspx>

PHASE 1 TOOLS

Questions for the CHA Team

1. Why are we initiating a community health assessment process in our county?
2. What do we want to know about the county's health and well-being?
3. How will the community health assessment change/benefit the residents of our county?
4. What issues of particular importance do we want to make sure to investigate?
5. Do we have equal representation from various and diverse groups of health-care consumers and providers?
6. How will our county make sure that all county resident's opinions—providers and consumers—are heard and respected?
7. How do our county residents deal with fractious or sensitive issues? How will the team deal with differences in opinion over these issues?
8. How will our county use the results of the community health assessment process in the development of county community health action plans, even if we are uncomfortable with the results?

Check out Appendix B: *Frequently Asked Questions* for additional questions and information. (Appendix at www.healthycarolinians.org).

CHA Resources Worksheet Examples

Potential Subcommittee Members - There may be people who don't have time to participate on the CHA Team, but who might serve on a subcommittee for a shorter period of time or help complete or offer expertise on a specific task or area. Depending on how the CHA Team structures the health assessment, subcommittees may be needed to focus on specific neighborhoods or townships, types of organizations, sub populations, or age groups. Alternatively, the subcommittees may carry out specific tasks, such as gathering secondary data, facilitating listening sessions or focus groups, or administering a survey. *(Note: Add rows)*

Name/Organization	Phone number/email	Potential subcommittee

Potential Staff Support. Staff, either volunteer or paid, will be needed throughout the project to stuff envelopes, make copies, enter survey data, etc. *(Note: Add rows)*

Name/Organization	Phone number/email	Potential Support

Potential Financial Aid. Many people, organizations, or businesses who cannot contribute time or human resources may want to contribute financially because they recognize the importance of the CHA process. *(Note: Add rows)*

Name/Organization	Phone number/email	Potential Aid

Potential Office Space, Equipment, and Supplies. Businesses or organizations often can donate office space, equipment (e.g., copy machine, fax machine, phone, and computer) and supplies (e.g. paper, envelopes, etc.) on a temporary or intermittent basis. *(Note: Add rows)*

Name/Organization	Phone number/email	Potential Contribution

Other. There may be resources that individuals or organizations might be willing to donate. *(Note: Add rows)*

Name/Organization	Phone number/email	Resource/Donation

CHA Budget Worksheet Example

Item	Resources needed	In-kind Support	Other support (specify)
Staff (FTEs)		<i>LHD* will provide FT Project Facilitator for 1 year (apprx. \$50,000 salary + benefits)</i>	
Office space		<i>LHD will provide office space for Project Facilitator (apprx. \$1,000)</i>	
Office equipment		<i>LHD will provide computer, internet, and software for Project Facilitator (apprx. \$2,000)</i>	
Office supplies		<i>LHD will provide office supplies for Project Facilitator (appr. \$5,000)</i>	
Communication		<i>LHD will provide phone line and internet for Project Facilitator (appr. \$500)</i>	
Travel	<i>Travel to Community Health Assessment Institute for Project Facilitator and 2 members of CHA Team: Mileage: 200 miles * 0.485 * 3 people = \$291; Hotel: 1 night (\$125) * 3 people = \$375 Total: \$666</i>		
Public relations / Marketing	<i>Advertisement in the county newspaper for seven days: \$40 *7 = \$280</i>	<i>Local TV station will provide free PSAs for a month regarding the health assessment.(apprx. \$3,000)</i>	<i>County Communications Officer will provide free PSAs and announcements over public access channels.</i>
Training		<i>CHA Institute in February 2012 at no cost.</i>	
Contractual	<i>County Technical College for development of survey methodology and analysis of survey findings: \$3,500</i>	<i>(County Tech is providing this service at cost)</i>	
Printing	<i>Printing 30 copies of the full assessment: \$25 *30 = \$750 Printing 10,000 copies of the executive summary in color brochures: \$1,300</i>		
Total	\$6,496		

*LHD - Local Health Department