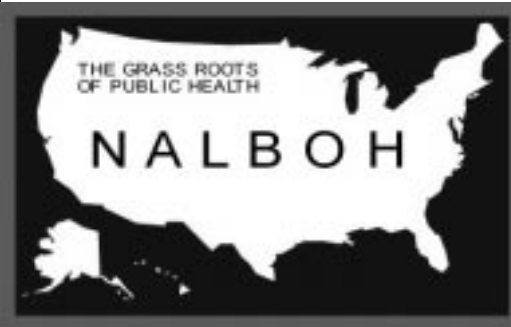


# Governance Instrument

The National Association of Local Boards of Health (NALBOH), in collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other national public health partners, has developed a comprehensive evaluation methodology which will equip governing bodies, such as local boards of health, with the tools to become more effective in their oversight of local health departments, their participation in the local health system, and their provision of essential public health services.

Regardless of whether or not public health services are provided by the official public health agency or a private entity, the governing body is the government authority ultimately accountable for public health at the local level. The National Public Health Performance Standards Program (NPHPSP) governance instrument will allow local governing bodies to evaluate themselves, to begin strategic planning, and to compare their efforts with other governing bodies of similar size and demographic representation.

The goal of the NPHPSP governance instrument is to educate local governing bodies regarding their fundamental responsibility for ensuring: 1.) that their communities have access to essential



public health services and 2.) that these services improve community health. Participation in the NPHPSP will provide local governing bodies with information that can be used to select targets for improving local public health system performance, identifying assets, targeting needs, monitoring progress, and advocating for additional resources.

The NPHPSP involves completing an evaluation process that translates the Essential Services of Public Health into a measurement tool. This will generate objective data for assessing the effectiveness of public health governing bodies. Specific indicators of performance will identify current strengths and weaknesses of the public health system.

Five core responsibilities of local governing bodies have been identified. These are to: ensure authority, ensure resources, policy development, ensure continuous evaluation and improvement, and ensure collaboration. Through broad participation in the

NPHPSP, governing bodies can ensure the system's fullest potential is used to improve the public's health.

The governance instrument will be field tested with local boards of health during 2001. (over)

## NALBOH Performance Standards Work Group Members:

J. Frederick Agel, Southeast Region Trustee, GA, NALBOH

Ned E. Baker, MPH, State Affiliate Trustee, OH, NALBOH

Grace Duncan, RN, BSN, Past President, OH, NALBOH

Ken Hartke, West Great Lakes Region Trustee, IL, NALBOH

Vaughn Mamlin Upshaw, DrPH, EdD, President, NC, NALBOH

Harvey Wallace, PhD, President-Elect, MI, NALBOH

Diane Wartgow, West Region Trustee, CO, NALBOH

## NALBOH Program Staff:

Marie M. Fallon, Executive Director

Edwin Pratt, Jr. MPH, Project Director



## **Governance Performance Assessment Instrument Example**

### **Essential Service #2: Diagnose and Investigate Health Problems and Health Hazards in the Community**

#### **This service includes:**

- Epidemiologic investigations of disease outbreaks, patterns of infections, chronic diseases, injuries, environmental hazards, and other health threats;
- Active infectious disease epidemiology programs; and
- Access to a public health laboratory capable of conducting rapid screening and high volume testing.

### **Indicator G2: Oversight to Assure Public Health Surveillance and Response**

#### **Governance Model Standard (G2):**

The board of health or other governing body is responsible for assuring that the community is adequately served by:

- a public health laboratory,
- active disease health problem epidemiology programs,
- technical capacity sufficient to conduct appropriate epidemiologic investigations.

#### **To accomplish this, the board of health or other governing body:**

- acts to assist the community in securing the needed resources to carry out these activities;
- adopts policies to assure the diagnosis and investigation of health threats in the community;
- conducts regular reviews of these activities and reports its conclusions and recommendations to the community; and
- assures the development of appropriate policies for public health emergencies.

#### **Please answer the following questions related to Essential Service #2:**

- G2.1:** Does the board of health or other governing body annually assure that laboratory facilities supplying services to the community are licensed and/or accredited to perform public health laboratory functions?
- G2.2:** Does the board of health or other governing body assure access to appropriate epidemiologic expertise?
- G2.3:** Does the board of health or other governing body assure access to appropriate the technology required for diagnosis and investigation of health threats in the community?
- G2.4:** Does the board of health or other governing body annually assure the resources (including local, state, and national resources) used in the diagnosis and investigation of health threats in the community?
- G2.5:** Does the board of health or other governing body, when necessary, lobby or advocate for a change in resource allocation for diagnoses and investigation of health threats?
- G2.6:** Does the board of health or other governing body annually review policies that concern diagnosis and investigation of health threats?
- G2.7:** Does the board of health or other governing body annually review the authority and regulatory mechanisms that support the diagnosis and investigation of health threats?
- G2.8:** Does the board of health or other governing body annually review the system used to diagnose and investigate health threats for effectiveness and appropriateness?

**Note: This does not represent the full text of Indicator G2.2. Not all sub-measures are included in this example. For the full text of the instrument, please go to [www.nalboh.org](http://www.nalboh.org).**