Results That Matter Team

INSIGHT **i** FORMATION

Community Balanced Scorecards for Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure to Improve Health Outcomes

The Community Balanced Scorecard (CBSC) is a strategic performance management system to address outcomes that require collaboration by many organizations to improve, so often the case in public health. The Results That Matter Team built public health CBSC tools on a framework of the ten essential services of public health, creating a powerful methodology for improving public health infrastructure while simultaneously focusing collaborative strategies on improving health outcomes. County and state health departments across the country have been using CBSC tools. And national organizations such as ASTHO, NACCHO, and the Public Health Foundation have supported their use. CBSC tools have been featured in NPHPSP national training programs of the CDC Office of State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support (OSTLTS). Through ASTHO, the CDC's OSTLTS has also funded assistance to the Delaware Division of Public Health to use CBSC tools for strategic planning in a way that supports accreditation preparation and performance management. Insightformation's InsightVision software makes a CBSC more powerful, enabling a health department to use it as a robust performance management system.

An Ideal System for "Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure to Improve Outcomes" Grants

For health departments applying for the CDC grant program "Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure to Improve Health Outcomes," CBSC is an ideal methodology to meet the performance management requirements of component 1, and to apply to the performance management category for enhanced funding of component 2. It will also support a health department's ability to improve in any of the other categories of component 2. Here are some of the outcome-focused ways it will help improve public health infrastructure and make departments' applications for this grant program more competitive:

- Throughout the grant program announcement, the CDC encourages applicants to use national standards, such as those of the National Public Health Performance Standards Program (NPHPSP) or the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). A public health CBSC is structured to build off either the NPHPSP or PHAB framework. This has enabled a state health department to develop outcome-focused strategies that also will strengthen its infrastructure based on PHAB domains. And it has helped local health departments develop strategies to improve outcomes while strengthening community health infrastructure based on the NPHPSP.

- CBSCs can be "cascaded" from a "top-level" strategy map to align all parts of a health department and its key partners to the same overall performance management structure. In addition, issue-specific strategy maps that build off the top level can focus more detailed, measurable, ground level efforts and keep them aligned with the overall system, as state and local health departments have been doing. In this way, strategies for all four "key areas" identified by the CDC can be developed that align with the department's overall CBSC performance management system.

- Adding CBSC performance measures, data collection, and monitoring completes the continuous improvement cycle, enabling health departments to meet the "Measurable Program Indicator" of the Performance Management Category of the grant program.

- InsightVision software not only facilitates required performance reporting, it also enables viewing performance data in different ways with ease, for example, looking at high-level strategic views of overall performance, and zooming in for performance details of concern. That enables public health leaders and program managers to home in quickly on programs or activities that need to be enhanced, dropped, or augmented, to improve how resources are used to achieve outcomes.

- CBSC measures not only involve organizational performance and public health outcomes as required by the CDC, they are also structured as "performance drivers" and "results" measures based on cause-and-effect assumptions, enabling public health managers to determine early whether strategies are working and where mid-course corrections are needed, accelerating continuous improvement.

- A full suite of CBSC tools, including templates for planning and documenting measurable contributions of organizations and partners, enables health departments to evaluate and improve effectiveness over multiple dimensions and in multiple ways, including the impact of system improvements on the public's health. InsightVision software makes multi-level evaluation routine, enabling a health department to meet the Performance Management "Program Sub-Goal."

In addition to providing an ideal fit for the performance management category of this grant program, the CBSC methodology and InsightVision software will also strengthen a health department's ability to succeed in the other three "categories of core public health infrastructure" as described in the grant announcement. For example:

- "Policy and Workforce Development" are not only a grant category, they are also components of both NPHPSP and PHAB standards. So they can be (and have been) readily built into CBSC strategy maps. They can then be managed for continuous improvement as part of a health department's performance management system.

- The "Best Practice Implementation" category reflects the NPHPSP and PHAB standards that encourage using the evidence-base of public health to improve performance. Thus, identifying, using, and sustaining best practices can also readily be built into CBSC strategy maps, as several health departments have done.

- Both the "Public Health System Development/Redevelopment" and the "Policy and Workforce Development" grant categories stress cross-jurisdictional or cross-community collaboration. CBSC was especially designed to support collaboration across organizational or jurisdictional boundaries. For example, strategy maps help partners find their roles in common strategies, and CBSC tools such as "Community Results Compacts" strengthen accountability of all partners. Also, a state can establish top level CBSC strategies for key issues and support local health departments in developing their own, locally-specific strategies that align with the top level.

- InsightVision software can be used to manage the complexity of multiple partners and multiple strategies, making it easy to track performance by issue, jurisdiction, and partner. And partner staff as well as health department staff can be InsightVision users, making performance transparent to all, creating mutual accountability for results, and enabling all partners to participate in continuous performance improvement.

To build the CBSC methodology or InsightVision software into your grant application, or to get more information about these tools, contact:

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