



Connie Beck, Director  
Social Services | Public Health | Mental Health

## news release

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Dec. 28, 2016

### Public Health awarded national accreditation

The Public Health branch of the Humboldt County Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) has been awarded national accreditation by the Public Health Accreditation Board. One of 141 accredited health departments nationwide, Humboldt is the first California county of its size to achieve this status.

Accreditation is expected to streamline the funding processes for key programs like Alcohol and Other Drugs, communicable disease reporting and suicide prevention, and make the department more competitive when applying for grant funding.

This is because a public health agency that follows the processes and standards outlined in the accreditation requirements is more likely to do a better job and result in better health outcomes for their community, explained Public Health Director Buckley.

"This status is something for staff to be proud of," she said. "As our greatest strengths, the board highlighted our innovativeness and forward thinking, our authentic engagement with the community and the dedication and commitment our staff has to the work of public health."

The years-long process to become accredited included working with community partners to develop the Community Health Assessment (CHA) in 2013 and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) in 2014.

The CHA is a collaborative, comprehensive overview of the health of the community. The CHIP's purpose is to identify how to strategically and collaboratively address priority areas to improve the health and well-being of county residents.

Public Health also established internal committees dedicated to workforce development and quality improvement; reviewed, updated and developed

policies and procedures; developed a performance management system; and developed and implemented a strategic plan.

As part of the process, hundreds of examples of work done by Public Health staff were evaluated by the Public Health Accreditation Board demonstrating that it meets or exceeds 97 measures related to the 12 Domains, which include Assess, Investigate, Inform and Educate, Community Engagement, Policies and Plans, Public Health Laws, Access to Care, Workforce, Quality Improvement, Evidence-Based Practices, Administration and Management, and Governance.

"Receiving PHAB accreditation is an impressive achievement," stated a letter to Public Health from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention Director Dr. Thomas R. Frieden and Dr. Jose Montero director, Office for State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Support. "CDC recognizes the time and effort that leaders and staff members from all levels of your health department have dedicated to this effort. We commend the Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services' Public Health for this extraordinary accomplishment."

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