



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHRONIC DISEASE DIRECTORS
Promoting Health. Preventing Disease.

Recommendations for State Health Agencies: *Actions to Support Integration of Chronic Disease Programs*

Chronic disease programs in state public health agencies across the United States are increasingly taking action to integrate activities across single-disease program lines. The perceived benefits of program integration include efficient use of staff, funds, and surveillance and intervention efforts.

The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD), with the support of the CDC National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP), convened a workshop on chronic disease program integration in March 2006. Attending the interactive meeting were chronic disease staff from state health departments, as well as representatives from NCCDPHP and NACDD. Participants of the two-day meeting created a list of recommendations for state health agencies to use as a guide in planning and implementing chronic disease program integration initiatives. A summary of the recommendations is found below.

Recommendations for State Health Agency Actions to Support Integration of Chronic Disease Programs

- Engage SHA leadership.
- Develop crosscutting epidemiology and surveillance programs.
- Leverage the use of information technology.
- Build state and local partnerships.
- Develop integrated state plans.
- Engage management and administration.
- Implement integrated interventions.
- Evaluate integration activities.

To help achieve each of the recommended actions, specific tasks can be undertaken. The **following page provides a checklist of tasks** a health department could use to help establish and maintain a program integration initiative. It also provides common definitions for public health practitioners.

The **checklist is intended as a tool** only, and not every task necessarily needs to be addressed, as integration efforts initially get underway. Periodically, the checklist should be reviewed as part of planning and evaluation. The review and eventual implementation of all tasks will help assure the success of a chronic disease program integration initiative.



State Health Agency Actions for Program Integration ~ A Checklist for Planning and Implementation ~

Engage state health agency leadership

- Convene organizational and ongoing cross-program meetings.
- Define the purposes of program integration.
- Secure organizational endorsement of activities.
- Keep leaders informed about integration progress.

Develop crosscutting epidemiology and surveillance programs

- Develop a master plan and schedule for surveillance integration efforts that includes, when feasible, sharing of resources.
- Support a trained and skilled multi-program epidemiology workforce.
- Take steps to integrate mapping of disease burden and risk factors.
- Package data reports to include multiple program areas that are meaningful and understandable by diverse audiences.
- Develop data sources for integrated public health systems.

Leverage the use of information technology

- Assure that administrative and management systems across programs and organizations are compatible.
- Jointly create or share software tools.
- Develop systems to collect integrated data.
- Share information is across program lines.
- Establish repositories of collaborative workplans and population-based data.

Build state and local partnerships

- Work to strengthen relationships across chronic disease programs, government and non-government organizations, and lay and professional groups.
- Assess partnership membership to determine gaps and identify new potential partners, including non-traditional groups.
- Help assure communication networks and tools are in place for sharing of information among staff, partners, and community collaborators.

Develop integrated state plans.

- Establish program integration as a priority.
- Convene a chronic disease partnership forum that meets on a regular basis.
- Guide integration efforts.
- Facilitate the use of common and specialized data sources.
- Assure that performance measures are identified and data are collected.
- Realign activities for integrated programming.
- Develop a process to regularly monitor integration progress.

Engage management and administration

- Assess readiness and organizational support for a program integration initiative.
- Dedicate staff time to program integration efforts.
- Hold regular, joint managements meetings.
- Conduct assessments to determine common linkages and program gaps.
- Plan and implement strategies to engage partners, stakeholders, and program staff.
- Negotiate, track, and evaluate changes in financial management practices.
- Consider realigning or adding staff, budget, or program activities.
- Bring together partners and stakeholders for joint problem solving efforts.

Implement integrated interventions

- Identify resources and staff for implementing interventions.
- Develop interventions that identify specific targets for change and the best channels through which to effect changes.
- Help assure strategies are evidence-based.
- Find ways to share workloads and resources.
- Review activities for efficiency and effectiveness on a regular basis.
- Assure a communication mechanism is in place to provide updates to all staff involved in implementing and evaluating interventions.

Evaluate chronic disease program integration initiatives.

- Identify resources and staff needed to conduct evaluation activities.
- Develop an evaluation plan that includes both qualitative and quantitative monitoring.
- Determine cross-cutting performance measures, short-term benchmarks, and integration outcome indicators.
- Develop a method to collect, process, and analyze data.
- Use evaluation findings to make programmatic adjustments and modifications.
- Share outcomes, including lessons learned, with partners and stakeholders.