



Public Health

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Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE: September 14, 2011

HEADLINE: *Public Health Accreditation Board Launches National Accreditation for Health Departments*

LEWISTON, IDAHO - Carol Moehrle, Director of Public Health - Idaho North Central District and Vice-Chair of the Public Health Accreditation Board's (PHAB) Executive Committee will help launch the first national accreditation program for all public health departments today at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C. The goal of PHAB's accreditation program, initiated and supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), is to protect and improve Americans' health by advancing the quality and performance of all of the nation's public health departments—state, local, territorial and tribal.

"PHAB's vision for accreditation is to create a reliable national standard for public health," said Kaye Bender, RN, PhD, FAAN, President and CEO of the Public Health Accreditation Board, which was created in 2007 to create, manage and promote national public health accreditation. "PHAB supports health departments in achieving this standard by recognizing the important work they do and by providing support to improve their services."

Health departments around the country work every day to combat new public health threats and keep people healthy. For example, public health departments are charged with ensuring that communities have access to safe food and water, clean air and life-saving vaccines. National public health accreditation provides consistent standards so that people in different states and towns have access to the same range and quality of services. It also helps maximize scarce resources by encouraging strategic investments to improve people's health, demonstrates accountability to residents and elected officials, and spurs innovation as departments work to meet their communities' needs.

"With shrinking budgets and a growing number of health challenges to address, there has never been a more important time for public health departments to focus on the best and most efficient ways to keep people healthy," said James Marks, MD, MPH, Senior Vice President and Director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Health Group.

"Accreditation is a powerful way to publicly recognize that health departments are doing a good job, while at the same time driving them to continuously improve," said Judith A. Monroe, MD, FAAFP, Deputy Director at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Director of the agency's Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support. "The launch of this program is a major milestone for public health and we applaud the hundreds of national, state, tribal, and local public health practitioners who played a role in its development."

Learn more about PHAB and accreditation at www.phaboard.org.