A National Survey of Correlates of Local Health Department Engagement in Community Policy to Encourage Physical Activity

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Acknowledgements

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Background

- Recommendations for public health involvement in built environment decision making
- Practice gaps
  - PAPRN Policy Maker Study
  - Local Health Department (LHD) policy involvement

Study Purpose

To examine the associations between LHD structural characteristics, performance improvement efforts and collaborations and their participation in policy/advocacy activities related to:

- Community level urban design and land use to encourage physical activity
- Active transportation options
- Expanding access to recreation facilities
2013 NACCHO Profile Survey

• Conducted every 2-3 years to document current infrastructure and practice
• All 2532 LHDs received core questionnaire
  (leadership, jurisdiction, financing, programs, services)
• 624 LHDs received Module 1 (accreditation, core competencies, cross-jurisdictional sharing, partnership/collaboration)
Dependent variables

Any/ever participation (yes/no) in policy/advocacy activities related to:

- Community level urban design and land use policies to encourage physical activity
- Active transportation options
- Expanding access to recreational facilities
Independent variables

- **LHD structural characteristics**
  - Population size served, region, governance type, local board of health, staffing level

- **Performance improvement efforts**
  - PHAB status, completion of CHA and CHIP in past 5 years, use of core competencies, use of Community Guide

- **Collaboration**
  - Partnerships with organizations in the community related to land use
Statistical Analysis

- 3 multivariable logistic regression models
  - Community level urban design and land use policies to encourage physical activity
  - Active transportation options
  - Access to recreation facilities
- All independent variables retained in each model
- Weighted to be nationally representative
**Study Sample*, n=490 (response rate=79%)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population served</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000-499,000</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500,000+</td>
<td>5%</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic region</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northeast</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwest</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>12%</td>
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</table>

*Weighted percentages*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction type</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City (multi-city)</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County (multi-county)</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (city-county)</td>
<td>14%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governance</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared</td>
<td>9%</td>
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*Weighted percentages*
Bivariate Results (*p*<.05)

- All 3 areas: population size served, CHIP in past 5 years, PHAB status, use of Community Guide, partnerships for land use
- Urban design / land use: use of core competencies
- Active transportation / Recreation access: CHA in past 5 years
- Active transportation: region, governance type
Built environment policy participation

- Community design/land use: 25%
- Active transportation: 16%
- Access to recreation facilities: 23%
Policy/Advocacy Activities - Community Level Urban Design and Land Use*

*Variables that were statistically significant in multivariable model
Policy/Advocacy Activities - Active Transportation Options*

*Variables that were statistically significant in multivariable model
Policy/Advocacy Activities -
Expanding Access to Recreation Facilities*

*Variables that were statistically significant in multivariable model

Odds Ratio (95% CI, p<.05)
Implications for Policy and Practice

- Assist smaller departments
- Performance improvement efforts
- Coaching for unfamiliar technical areas
Next Steps - Physical Activity Policy Research Network+ study

- **Goal:** To establish roles, responsibilities and core competencies of LHDs in local land use and transportation policy and assess current state of these

- **Phase I:** Multi-disciplinary, nationally representative Expert Panel to participate in key informant interviews, group sessions and ranking processes

- **Phase II:** Online survey to local health officials in all 50 states in collaboration with NACCHO
Contact Information

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