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Health Department officially files for accreditation

With the help of Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck and Kane County Board Chairman Chris Lauzen, the Health Department officially submitted its documentation needed for national accreditation during a ceremony at the Health Department today.

With the click of a button, the documents were sent to the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) during the last day of National Public Health Week.

“To be accredited would place us among the best local health departments in the nation and is another example of our commitment to achieve our vision of having the healthiest residents in Illinois by 2030,” said Health Department Executive Director Barbara Jeffers.

“Accreditation is the wave of the future in public health and we are encouraging all departments to become accredited,” Hasbrouck said.

“Our job is to provide the best possible services to our residents for the lowest possible cost, and to have our health department accredited is another example of our commitment to meet that responsibility,” Lauzen said.

Filing for accreditation is just the first step. Next, PHAB must review the submitted documents (329 of them covering 12 separate domains, or categories), a process which can take several weeks. PHAB then schedules a two-day site visit, where staff members who worked on the different domains, as well as stakeholders and partners, are interviewed. The final decision will be made after the PHAB Accreditation Committee reviews the site visit report.

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Accreditation through PHAB provides a means for a department to identify performance improvement opportunities, to improve management, develop leadership, and improve relationships with the community. The process is one that challenges the health department to think about what business it does and how it does that business. It encourages and stimulates quality and performance improvement as well as greater accountability and transparency.

Each year the first week of April is celebrated as National Public Health Week. This year's theme is "Public Health is ROI: Save Lives, Save Money." The 2013 NPHW theme was developed to highlight the value of prevention and the importance of well-supported public health systems in preventing disease, saving lives and curbing health care spending.

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