

## **PHMC's Community Health Data Base: Utilizing Big Data for Small Area Strategic Planning**

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Do you ever wonder how to create meaningful public health programs with the scarce resources that are available? The best way to ensure that resources are used most effectively is to utilize real time and objective data to develop strategy to drive business development decisions. Data-driven program development supports the alignment of services with the needs of the market. The outcome is sound business practices related to increasing market share and controlling costs. Now more than ever, to sustain long-term profitability, organizations need to rethink the role of data in corporate-wide planning and development efforts.

Public Health Management Corporation's (PHMC) Community Health Data Base (CHDB) provides an unmatched set of information on local community health needs that can be used to develop focused findings supported by reliable data. It is the largest, local population based household survey in the country. Established in 1983, CHDB has been dedicated to community health improvement and providing objective, timely data to strategically plan programs for at-risk populations. CHDB collects and disseminates data on local residents and serves as a key data resource for health and social service providers.

For many years, CHDB has been utilized by local government and by regional health care systems to meet federal requirements as part of the ACA. For example, in 2012, the CHDB data on electronic cigarette was used in anti-smoking efforts. CHDB data has also been used to support laws against second-hand smoke in restaurants and bars, and later, all public places. CHDB data were used as part of a hearing to ban smoking in public restaurants. The data were used to highlight the impact of secondhand smoke and to show the negative health effects. CHDB data showed the high percentage of smokers in the City who were exposing non-smokers to secondhand smoke, including the number of adults and children whose asthma or heart disease could be aggravated by exposure to secondhand smoke in public places. CHDB data also showed how many non-smoking adults and children, especially children with asthma, were exposed to secondhand smoke in the home by living with a smoker. The smoking ban was put into effect in Philadelphia soon after the hearing.

Recently, the CHDB was used to measure sugary beverage consumption in support of a City Council bill to tax sugary beverages as an unhealthy food. The bill was passed, with the proceeds of the tax going to fund the City's schools, among other efforts.

The CHDB was used as the foundation for a city-wide Community Health Needs Assessment. PDPH's assessment will be used by the City to ensure that they are on-target in meeting the needs of vulnerable populations and to help them establish clear and needed deliverables.

CHDB data are also used extensively and exclusively by the majority of regional hospitals and health care systems to help them to think more strategically about their resources and to plan effective and targeted programs.

In 2013 and 2015, CHDB was selected as the sole data provider for hospitals in meeting the requirements of the federal regulations surrounding the Affordable Care Act. The data were used as the foundation for these assessments and the basis for all related community health implementation planning. CHDB was used to create needed health education programs, increase cancer screening utilization, disease management and expand the delivery of health care services. CHDB has completed

more than 50 Community Health Needs Assessments that identify unmet health needs across the region and the data are used by senior leadership to in creating three-year strategic plans for these institutions. And recently, CHDB was used as the basis for a regional-wide Community Health Implementation Plan. The data was instrumental in being able to provide information on chronically ill patients having their needs met at discharge from the area hospitals. Without the CHDB data, the critical needs of this population would be difficult to identify and address.

CHDB data can be used in developing priorities and rationales for strategic plans. Unlike state and national data, local data more accurately reflect the health status and health care needs of our communities. CHDB drives collaboration in solving public health issues and brings together local public health officials, business leaders, school districts, local government, law enforcement, first responders, and other agencies to provide a coordinated approach to solving the identified community health problems.

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