

# Nonprofit Hospitals and Community Health Assessment

## Nonprofit hospitals are now required to conduct community health assessments. How do these assessments relate to the Minnesota Local Public Health Assessment and Planning process?

As a part of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, a private nonprofit hospital is required to complete a Community Health Needs Assessment to maintain its tax-exempt, 501(c)(3) status; this requirement applies to tax years beginning after March 23, 2012.

This new requirement provides an opportunity for CHBs to engage their local non-profit hospitals in the assessment and planning process. **Both entities can work together to perform one assessment and plan, or each can continue to draft their own.** MDH encourages CHBs to work together with community partners when possible.

A nonprofit hospital must complete a community health assessment at least every three years; this assessment includes input from the broader community, including public health experts. If a hospital identifies specific community needs during the assessment process, it must either describe the implementation of appropriate interventions, or state why these needs cannot be addressed.

Upon completion, hospitals must make these assessments widely available, including via IRS Form 990 (currently being revised).

Collaborating on a community health assessment can provide the following benefits to both hospitals and CHBs:

- Allows hospitals and CHBs to share data and expertise
- Increases the quality and consistency of the assessment process
- Engages additional partners in assessment
- Creates shared accountability for community outcomes
- Increases trust and relationship-building in the community
- Helps prevent "engagement fatigue" among community partners
- Fulfills national public health accreditation standards

[Federally Qualified Health Centers \(FQHCs\)](#) [Attn: Non-MDH link] must also complete a similar needs assessment at least every five years, to demonstrate understanding of the target community's health care needs, as well as to inform the FQHC's service strategy.

## Resources

- Minnesota Hospital Association: [Community Needs Assessment](#) [Attn: Non-MDH link]
- MDH: [Federally Qualified Health Centers](#)