



Association for Community Health Improvement's Request to Join the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice

Background

As the United States health care system transforms toward a population health paradigm, hospitals and health care systems are recognizing that in order to improve the health of the communities they serve they need to work collaboratively to address the social determinants of health. Regulations in the Affordable Care Act, namely value-based payment models and the community health needs assessment (CHNA) requirement, are providing the infrastructure and impetus for hospitals to more actively engage in community health improvement initiatives in partnership with multi-sector community stakeholders, namely public health and community development organizations. As the community health field becomes more sophisticated in its approach, standards and best practices are emerging from a variety of research disciplines to support the most effective approaches to improve community health.

Who We Are

The Association for Community Health Improvement (ACHI) is the premier national association dedicated to helping health leaders expand their knowledge and enhance their performance in achieving community health goals. A personal membership group of the American Hospital Association, ACHI advances healthy communities by providing education, professional development and peer networking opportunities to support community benefit, community health and population health professionals from across the US.

In existence since 2002, ACHI has more than 1,000 members from across the country. While our core membership are community benefit professionals from hospitals and health care systems, ACHI also has members from state hospital associations, public health and community development organizations, consulting companies and academic institutions. ACHI aims to cultivate a society of professionals who apply their specialized knowledge and expertise to effectively educate and collaborate with their communities in achieving the highest potential health for community residents. We are driven by our values of collaboration, equity, excellence, innovation and integrity in all our efforts. ACHI receives guidance from a 16-person Advisory Council made up of community health leaders from across the country.

What We Do

The heart of ACHI's work is the support we provide our members as they work toward achieving their community health improvement goals. Since ACHI's membership is diverse in the roles and sectors in which they work, we strive to provide content that will appeal to a wide audience and showcase collaborative approaches to community health improvement. Each year, ACHI hosts 7-10 webinars on a range of community health issues, produces 2-4 guidance reports and sends bi-weekly newsletters to the membership. ACHI provides ongoing engagement opportunities for members through volunteer participation in committees focused on planning and execution of the educational curriculum, the annual conference and membership recruitment and retention. To view archives of ACHI's webinars or read the guides, visit www.healthycommunities.org.



The annual national conference is ACHI's flagship event. Held every year in early March, the three day national conference has consistently grown over the past thirteen years to host over 600 attendees. The multi-sectoral scope of the ACHI conference positions the meeting as a convener in connecting the work of community health, population health and public health. Breakout sessions are the core component of the conference and feature community health improvement efforts of teams from across the US. Our grassroots approach for soliciting proposals to present at the conference affords us the opportunity to select presentations that address the scope of approaches hospitals and their community partners are using to address community health needs. Conference participants have the unique opportunity to network with their colleagues from across the country to gain insights that support their work. The ACHI conference fosters the opportunity for hospitals and diverse health professionals to collaborate and learn from one another as they work toward achieving the highest potential of health in their communities. To learn more about the ACHI National Conference, visit www.healthycommunities.org/achi2017.

Through its affiliation with the Health Research and Educational Trust, ACHI supports numerous grant-funded projects. Current projects include:

- A learning collaborative for outstanding hospital-community partnerships
- Developing a searchable website database of all community health needs assessments
- Creating a model for patient and community engagement in CHNAs
- Updating the Community Health Assessment Toolkit to reflect advances in CHNA practices

As a division of the American Hospital Association, ACHI is at the forefront of hospital-based community health improvement efforts nationally. Our placement in a major national association enables ACHI to continuously strengthen connections with health care and community health leaders to expand our reach and raise awareness about the crucial role of hospitals and health care systems in improving community health.

Council on Linkages Membership

ACHI would be honored to join the prestigious organizations on the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice. As the only organization whose core constituency is health care organizations, ACHI could provide a unique voice and perspective of the health care field. We would value the opportunity to help link public health research results with hospital-based community health practice. Additionally, serving on the Council would also further ACHI's goal to be more closely connected with our colleagues in national-level public health organizations as we work toward our shared goal – healthier people in healthier communities. We appreciate your consideration for membership.