



## SUCCESS STORY LAC DU FLAMBEAU



OUR NATIONS,  
OUR JOURNEYS

### Waswaaganing Anishinaabeg Da Mino'ayaawaad (The People of Lac du Flambeau are Traveling Towards Feeling Good)

The Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians (Lac du Flambeau) reservation is located in northern Wisconsin, overlapping parts of Vilas, Oneida, and Iron Counties. The reservation is in a remote rural area, stretching across 86,650 acres (approximately 144 square miles) of dense forest with 260 lakes (17,897 surface acres of water). There are 3,505 enrolled tribal members, about 1,852 of whom reside on the reservation.

The Peter Christensen Health Center Community Health Department's (CHD) mission is Empowering our Community through Prevention and Education. Our vision is to be the healthiest community in Vilas, Oneida, and Iron Counties, Wisconsin, by participating, protecting, promoting, maintaining, and improving the health of all community members. The CHD is overseen by the Community Health Supervisor, who is a registered nurse and an active participant in the Emergency Preparedness Team for the tribe. Our department has a wide variety of programs and is staffed by an Environmental Health Specialist, a Maternal Child Health Nurse, two Community Health Nurses, a Dietitian/Certified Diabetes Educator, a WIC Clerk/Healthy Start Home Visitor, a full-time Healthy Start Home Visitor, and a certified Diabetes Educator Nurse. The CHD also houses two Family Foundation Home Visitors in collaboration with Great Lakes Inter Tribal Council.

#### THE SITUATION

The CHD became familiar with public health accreditation several years ago. Our department staff attended information sessions, reviewed the requirements, and discussed our readiness; however, very little happened. A change in several staff positions in 2015 brought new ideas and a real commitment to pursuing accreditation. Around the same time, three of our local counties began a combined community health survey, and they reached out to Lac du Flambeau to participate. With our renewed commitment to pursuing accreditation, the opportunity to participate in the county community health survey, and a newly awarded accreditation grant from Red Star International, Inc., it seemed like the right time to conduct a community health assessment.

A community health assessment (CHA) is one of three prerequisites for public health accreditation, along with a community health improvement plan and a strategic plan. Initially, we attempted to use the same community health survey as the three local counties. However, there was a problem: the survey was not our own and revisions needed be made to make it culturally sensitive and to better reflect areas of importance to the Lac du Flambeau Community.

**THE TARGET PROJECT** (Tribal Accreditation Readiness through Guidance, Education and Technical Assistance), a partnership with Red Star International, Inc., Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board, Inc., Cherokee Nation, Chickasaw Nation, Ho-Chunk Nation, and Lac Du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians. The primary goal is increasing public health accreditation readiness among Tribal Health Departments through targeted capacity-building assistance and supporting activities that promote and support health department performance improvement.

#### FUNDER ACKNOWLEDGMENT

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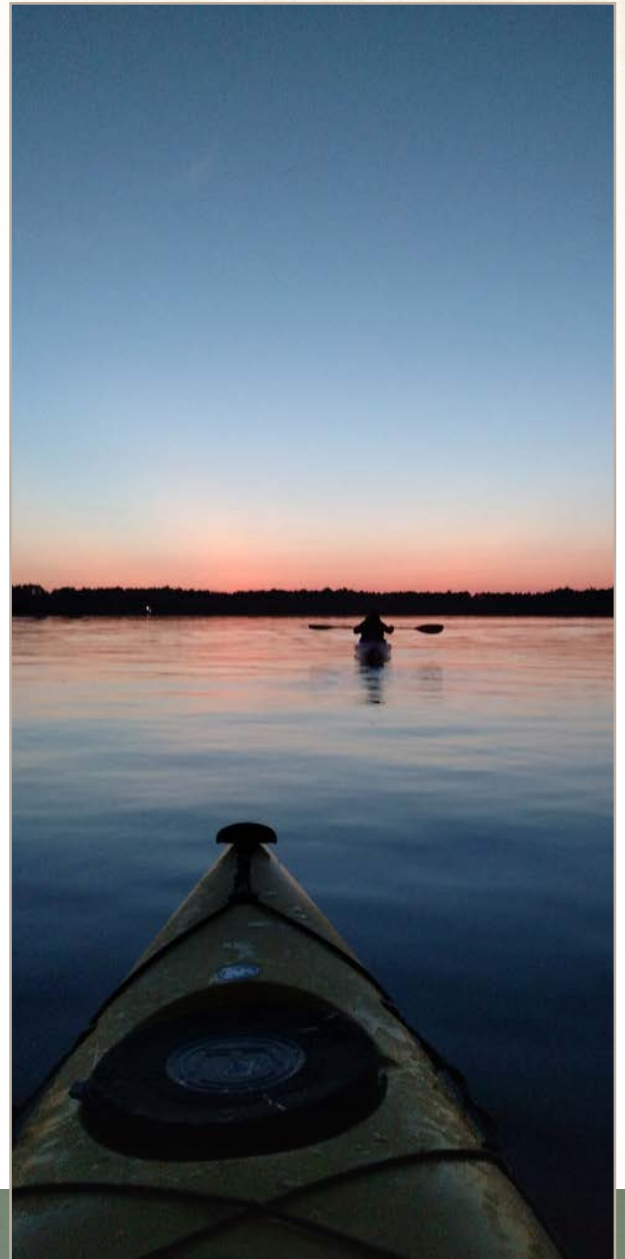






## MAKING IT OUR OWN

- First, we had to select the model we would use to conduct the CHA. We selected the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona's Tribal Community Health Assessment Toolkit. We chose the toolkit because it was tribally specific, easy to understand, and the process was aligned with the Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) requirements for CHA.
- We convened a CHA Core Team to develop a CHA Plan. With technical assistance and training, we developed a vision statement, defined our community, identified strategies for community and stakeholder engagement, and determined our priority health indicators and data sources.
- The CHA Core Team presented the county community health survey to the Tribal Health Advisory Board to obtain support to conduct the survey and to get input on how to revise it.
- We administered the CHA survey at several community events from June through September 2016. The team collected over 200 surveys from adult community members.
- Qualitative data is one of the PHAB requirements for CHA. In addition to the survey, the CHA Core Team decided to engage the community in the assessment by using "Community Photo Voice." Community photo voice is a method of using photographs taken by the community members to capture their voices, or perspectives on health.
- The team worked with the communications department and developed a flyer to promote the activity. A raffle and prize-giving were offered as incentives to community participation.
- The CHA Core Team is now in the final stages of data collection and analysis, using the community health survey data, photo voice data, and other data available within the tribe and through the Great Lakes Tribal Epidemiology Center.



## SUCSESSES

Our greatest success was leveraging resources to conduct a community health assessment. Once we started the CHA, we were able to engage others in the CHA and to provide information to others on the value of public health accreditation. We recently received approval from our Tribal Health Advisory Board to move forward and pursue accreditation.

- We were able to build relationships with our three local counties, who are also pursuing public health accreditation.
- We successfully completed the community health survey, which will provide an overall picture of health for our area.
- We have a much better understanding of how the community views health.





## LESSONS LEARNED

- Time: You have to be able to set aside time to focus on your accreditation efforts. With our busy schedules, it can be difficult to set aside enough time. We found it was hard to move forward without a designated time to work on the CHA.
- Obtain approval from your local leaders and government on accreditation and CHA efforts before moving forward: Update them frequently on your progress. Also, keep your coalitions and key stake holders in mind. Ask them for their feedback on a regular basis and provide updates as you can.
- Establish a CHA team with a specialized skill set: Our department appointed a staff member with excellent organization skills as the accreditation coordinator. She led the CHA team with her data management skills. Two other CHD staff were selected to head leadership engagement and community engagement.
- Use community events to your advantage: Community events are a great way to reach our community members. Our department was able to complete the majority of questionnaires at a couple of our major events.
- Offer incentives: Offering community members an incentive to participate in the survey seemed to increase their interest.
- Obtain a good sampling of all ages and cultures within your community to obtain diverse views: We worked with our schools, Elders Dining Room (senior center), and a community-based coalition to ensure input from youth, elders, and the adult community members interested in mobilizing the community.



## KEY RESOURCES USED

### Resources

- The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona Tribal Community Health Assessment for Public Health Accreditation: A Practical Guide and Toolkit
- NACCHO's Resource Center for Community Health Assessments and Community Health Improvement Plans (CHA/CHIP Resource Center)

### Tribal Partners

- Tribal Council
- Tribal Departments: Communications, Culture, Housing, Police
- Peter Christensen Health Center

### Community Partners

- Health Advisory Board
- Healthy Community Action Team (HCAT)
- Minobimaadiziwin Coalition
- LDF Schools

### Public Health Partners

- Great Lakes Inter Tribal Council Epidemiology Center
- Howard Young Medical Center
- Institute for Wisconsin's Health and Ingenuity Enterprises Group, LLC
- Red Star International
- State of Wisconsin Public Health
- Vilas County Court House and Health Department





## NEXT STEPS

The Lac du Flambeau Community Health Department's next steps are to complete the CHA. Once the Community Health Assessment Report is finalized, it will be presented to Tribal Council, CHD stakeholders, and the community. During our work on the CHA, we also completed an organizational self-study based on the PHAB Standards and Measures. Our plan is to use the information and data we gathered in the CHA and self-study to build a strong community health improvement plan and strategic plan.



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