



May 2023 Public Comment on Proposed Changes to Standards & Activities

Summary Report – Health Director Feedback

Introduction

In May 2023, health department staff and partners were invited to participate in an open public comment period to provide input on an early set of proposed changes to NCLHDA standards and activities. Respondents were invited to review the [Proposed Accreditation Standards & Activities](#) and submit feedback through a Qualtrics survey, which included a series of multiple choice and free response options. **81 respondents submitted feedback** through the public comment form, 96% of whom were local health department staff – primarily health directors (28) and/or Agency Accreditation Coordinators (22). Respondents also held roles on the Standards Workgroup, Site Visit Team, or other subject matter experts.

Key Takeways

Across all respondents, a large majority agreed that standards reflected activities that were important for health departments, related to work that falls under LHD responsibility, and match what respondents would expect to see. *Standard E: Equity* and *Standard G: Organizational Leadership, Governance, & Legal Services* had the least agreement, and activities within these two standards also received the most edits. Public comments included acknowledgement that proposed revisions reduce duplication, while also highlighting components that need further revisions.

Next Steps

The Accreditation Standards Workgroup has already met to start incorporating public comment feedback, and they will continue to discuss revisions to the proposed standards. Legal affairs at DPH is offering assistance in drafting the standards and activities in rulemaking language, and NCLHDA program staff are holding discussions with DPH sections to reduce duplication of monitoring.

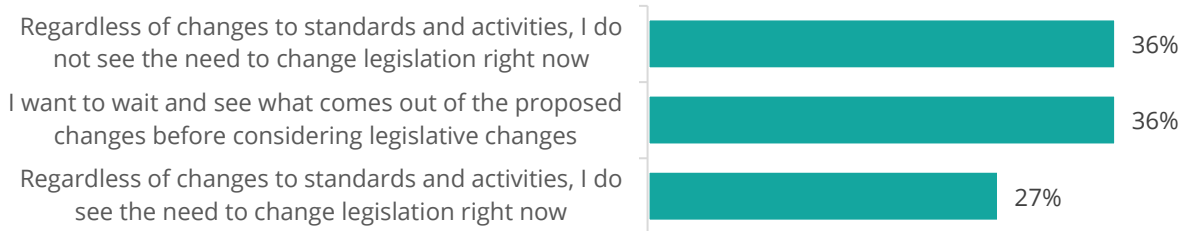
NCIPH sees on-going collaboration and conversations with DPH, NCALHD, AACs, and other partners as vital in developing an accreditation program that is reflective of today's public health practice and health department operations. NCLHDA plans to facilitate conversations with Board Members and people involved in the initial development of accreditation to inform the revised proposal. Balancing the need for appropriate input and desire for change, the program hopes that new rules can be adopted in 2025, with changes implemented in 2026.

Health Director Specific Feedback

At the end of the public comment survey, health directors were invited to answer a few additional questions about potential future directions for the NCLHDA program, which 22 health directors out of answered, representing 25% of health departments.

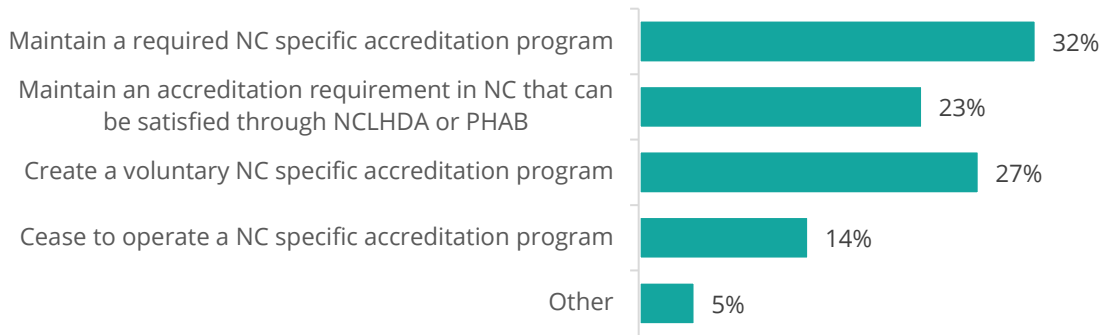
72% of health director respondents did not see the need to change legislation right now, with half of those wanting to wait to see what comes out of current proposed changes first. Six health directors felt the need to make legislative changes now.

Which option best aligns with your thoughts on pursuing legislative changes:



55% of health director respondents supported an accreditation requirement of some kind, 27% preferred a voluntary program. 2 respondents were interested in ceasing to operate a state-specific program.

In considering options beyond current legislation, please select the option that best aligns with your hopes for local health department accreditation in North Carolina:



Written comments brought up questions about the value and the purpose versus the time and resources needed to maintain accreditation.

The NCLHDA Program’s annual survey data can also help complement findings from public comment. Of the 30 health directors who completed the 2023 annual survey, 47% viewed the NCLHDA process as extremely, very, or moderately valuable. 53% found slight or no value in the process.

How valuable is the NCLHDA process to your agency? Health Director Respondents (n=30)

