RANKINGS & ROADMAPS
From Data to Action

The County Health Rankings are a call to action. The Take Action Cycle is a simple and straightforward process that guides you from data to action. At its core, are people working together to improve health in a community because we know solving issues like poor high school graduation rates, excessive drinking, or inadequate healthcare require the wisdom and resources of people from all walks of life. Gather information, set priorities, find the most effective approaches to address priorities, act on what’s important and evaluate those actions along the way.

Simple. But like so many simple and straightforward processes, it can be challenging to know where to start and how to keep going when you get stuck.

Take Action Cycle

Visit the Roadmaps to Health Action Center (www.countyhealthrankings.org/roadmaps/action-center) to find guides focused on each step in the cycle.

- **Work Together.** With a shared vision and commitment to improved health, working together yields better results than working alone. Work Together cuts across the Take Action Cycle.
- **Communicate.** Effective and continuous communication between leaders and members of your multi-sector team and with stakeholders, media, and decision makers is essential for your efforts to be successful.
- **Assess Needs & Resources.** One of the first steps is to take stock of your community’s needs, resources, strengths, and assets.
- **Focus on What’s Important.** Without focus, all issues seem equally important. Taking time to set priorities will ensure that you direct your community’s valuable and limited resources to the most important issues.
- **Choose Effective Policies & Programs.** Choosing effective policies and programs that work in real life will maximize your chances of success.
- **Act on What’s Important.** Take action—ensure that selected policies and programs are adopted, implemented, improved, and maintained in order to achieve intended results.
- **Evaluate Actions.** Evaluate to be sure that what you’re doing is working in the way you intended and that your efforts are as effective and efficient as possible. Evaluation Actions cuts across the cycle.
**County Health Rankings**

The *County Health Rankings* are released annually and provide a snapshot of the overall health of counties in every state across the nation. Counties receive two within-state summary ranks, Health Outcomes and Health Factors, along with specific data for each measure. Health Outcomes describe quality of and length of life and represent the current health of a county. Health Factors describe the health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment and represent what influences the future health of the county.

![Diagram of County Health Rankings model](image)

*County Health Rankings model © 2014 UWPHI*
Rankings & Roadmaps Overview

Take Action Cycle
Which Action Steps have we done? What’s working well? Which Action Steps are most challenging? Do we need to “circle” back? Are we stuck between steps? Which ones?
PRACTICE SESSIONS

CHALLENGE: Recruiting new partners

Many public health and health care access coalitions are now broadening their focus from a single issue focus to addressing community needs as determined by a health assessment. First steps often include re-branding the coalition and recruiting new partners. Coalitions formerly made up of public health and healthcare partners understand they want to include partners from various sectors, but they’re not sure where to start with recruiting.

ACTIVITY: Coalition expansion to broaden participation

In small groups, discuss the following questions:

- Which sectors might a coalition want to engage in their work?
- Think about types of organizations within the sectors you identify. Where might you start within each sector?
- How might you approach potential partners?

TOOL: Building a Contact List

Begin to brainstorm recruitment: Who should be part of your partnership? Who has influence? Who is most impacted by the issue?

Individual Reflection

What did you learn? How might you use this in your community?
CHALLENGE: Finding strategies that work
Based on a recent health assessment, assume you have identified three priorities: access to healthy foods, tobacco use, and education, specifically, early childhood education. You’ve established action teams for each priority, and their first task is to come up with possible strategies to address each priority, focusing on evidence-informed strategies.

ACTIVITY: Using What Works for Health
Your small group is tasked with finding evidence-informed strategies to address one priority. Using the Intro to What Works for Health worksheet, walk through the tool and identify potential strategies.

Individual Reflection
What types of policies or programs do you want to look up in What Works for Health?

Shapes Reflection

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**CHALLENGE: Getting started with policy change**
If your coalition members are new to policy work and advocacy, and not sure how to get started, explore these tools to get every moving in a policy direction.

**TOOL: Three Key Questions**
What do you want? Why do you want it? Who has the power to give it to you?

**TOOL: Sphere of Influence**
The Sphere of Influence helps groups build grassroots pressure for policy change through informal channels.

**CHALLENGE: Refine your message**
Assume you’ve done well engaging new members and your action teams are working hard on their priority issues, but you’ve noticed that members struggle to articulate the coalition’s purpose. You want every member of the coalition to be able to clearly state why your coalition exists.

**TOOL: 27-9-3**
No more than 27 words, delivered in 9 seconds, with no more than 3 key points.

**ACTIVITY: 27-9-3 Practice**
You have one elevator ride to convince the people you are riding with to come visit your home town. What would you say? Individually, use the Developing Your Persuasive Message – the 27-9-3 Rule to draft a message to share with others in your group.
**Individual Reflection**

3 – Lessons learned
2 – Unanswered questions
1 – Tool you envision trying out as a result of this training

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