



*Issue 23 - April 2015*

## Welcome to qualitymatters!

In this issue, we're excited to honor Quality Improvement (QI) Innovator Award winner Alex Eichman in a special feature story. You'll also find information on the newest PHQIX drawing, scholarship opportunities from our partners, and registration information on many upcoming partners' events that you won't want to miss out on. Finally, you'll find featured resources from our partners Public Health Centers for Excellence and the Public Health Foundation (PHF)! You can always visit [www.phqix.org](http://www.phqix.org) and connect with us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#) for more news and updates!

Would you like to submit something for possible distribution in a future PHQIX newsletter? Let us know at [contact@phqix.org](mailto:contact@phqix.org).

-The PHQIX Team

## QI Innovator Awards

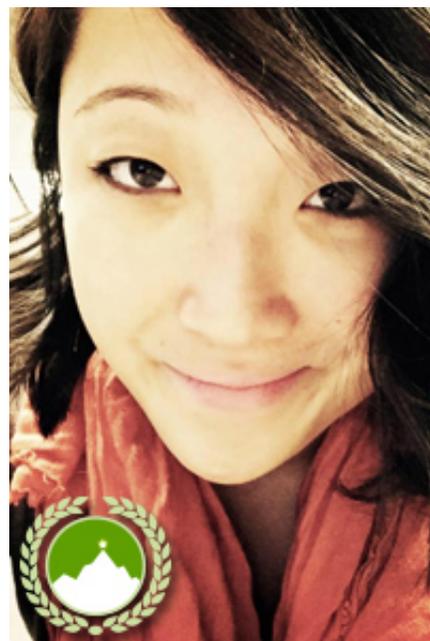
This month, we are pleased to honor Alex Eichman as a public health quality improvement (QI) Innovator!

### What makes Alex Eichman a QI Innovator?

Alex Eichman leads the Performance Improvement Team (PIT) at the Washington County Department of Public Health and Environment in Minnesota. Since the beginning of her career, she has been a leader and advocate for applying QI to public health. Alex has led innovative QI initiatives that empower employees, and she has formally integrated a QI culture into her department. She engages staff at all levels to develop user-friendly, participatory, and fun tools and processes. For example, the PIT was developed under Alex's leadership into an energizing environment based on a motorsports "PIT stop" theme.

In auto racing, the pit stop is where cars stop during a race for refueling, new tires, repairs, or mechanical adjustments from the pit crew. In the department, the PIT, just like a pit crew, is a resource to help staff make repairs and adjustments and provides new resources to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their work.

Alex has become a well-known statewide resource on QI, performance management, accreditation preparation, program evaluation, and results-based accountability.



She goes out of her way to share new ideas and lessons learned with public health colleagues. Alex's passion, enthusiasm, and captivating approach influence many to try QI tools, techniques, and philosophy.

Click [here](#) to read the full story, including Alex's insights regarding challenges encountered, lessons learned, and advice about public health QI.

## News and Updates

### PHQIX Spring Drawing is Now Open!

We are excited to announce that the PHQIX spring drawing is under way! To enter the drawing, simply comment on a [QI Initiative](#) or [Community Forum](#) post by **Friday, May 1**, for a chance to win a PHQIX prize. Comment today!



### Partial Scholarships available for NNPHI's PHIT!



The National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI) is offering seven partial scholarships to its Public Health Improvement Training (PHIT)! PHIT will be held from June 9 to 10, 2015, at the InterContinental New Orleans hotel in Louisiana. Scholarship applications are being accepted now through **April 30**. You can find the scholarship guidelines and application information at the [PHIT registration site](#) under the "Fees" tab.

### PHQIX Will Be at the 2015 PHSSR Keeneland Conference!

PHQIX is excited to be attending the 2015 Public Health Services and Systems Research Keeneland Conference next week in Lexington, Kentucky! Stop by the PHQIX booth to further network with the QI community and maybe walk away with some PHQIX prizes!



Stephen Brown of the PHQIX team will be at the PHSSR Keeneland Conference presenting a poster titled "Quality Improvement Trends in Public Health Practice." The poster explores the trends in QI work performed by public health practitioners, pulling data from published QI initiatives on PHQIX. The poster session is Tuesday, April 21, 2015, from 5:30 to 6:45 pm in the Magnolia Jr. Ballroom at the Hilton Downtown Lexington.

### MAPP Training Scholarship Launched for Kansas City, MO



The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is offering scholarships to the Mobilizing for Action through Planning and Partnerships (MAPP) training! MAPP is a community-owned strategic planning process informed by comprehensive assessments for improving the public's health. MAPP works as a framework to help communities prioritize public health issues, identify resources for addressing them, and take action. As a MAPP training participant, you will learn the nuts and bolts of the MAPP process, hear stories from the field from MAPP users, and gain concrete skills for engaging community organizations, partners, and community members in your MAPP process.

The scholarship is for the MAPP training registration fee and does **not** include travel and lodging. Scholarship recipients will be responsible for travel, lodging, and all other travel-related expenses. Click [here](#) to read more about who qualifies for the scholarship. All Kansas City, Missouri, MAPP training scholarship applications are due by **8:00 p.m. EST on Friday, April 24, 2015**. For questions, please e-mail [mapp@naccho.org](mailto:mapp@naccho.org). Apply for a scholarship [here](#)!

# New QI Initiatives

Check out these QI initiatives!

## Conducting Timely Investigations of Health Problems and Environmental Health Hazards in Fillmore County

In Fillmore County Public Health department, the time from notification to investigation of health problems and environmental health hazards (animal bites, infectious diseases, and nuisances) took longer than desired. Data was collected to understand the current state; investigations ranged from 24-144 hours following notification. The QI project approach included the creating, tracking, applying, and auditing of standard operating procedures; updating of agreements; condensing of incident management guidelines; acquiring legal documentation related to health and environmental hazards; and developed a tracking system for recording labs, investigation results, and referral outcomes (PH-Doc). The team exceeded their goal; 100% of notifications were investigated within 24 hours...[continue reading](#).

## Quality Improvement and Communicable Disease Reporting

Because surveillance for communicable disease had been provided by the state, the Red Cliff Community health department had limited knowledge of communicable diseases in their community. They used quality improvement to bring communicable disease reporting, surveillance, control and prevention back to the health department. Partnering with other PH departments provided t lessons and best practices. Current and new process maps were created, followed by the identification of gaps and improvement solutions (5 Whys and Radar Charts were used). An action plan and bi-weekly team time was used to monitor implementation of the solutions, learnings, and modifications. Project outcomes included reporting and completing follow-up for 100% of communicable diseases and team member knowledge testing improved from an average score of 84% to 96%. The benefits extended beyond communicable disease - it increased collaboration and partnerships with Ashland and Bayfield Counties. Continue reading [here!](#)

# Upcoming Events

## Register Now for the NNPHI Annual Conference: Building Healthy Communities in Our Connected World: A Vision for 2020!

The conference will be held from May 12 to 14, 2015, in Louisiana at the scenic Hilton New Orleans Riverside hotel. Registration is now open! [Click here](#) for more information about the conference and to register.



## Exploring the Public Health Improvement Resource Center (Webinar)



Are you looking for performance improvement resources to help meet Public Health Accreditation Board standards and measures but are unsure of where to look? Are you trying to narrow down your search for resources to find what you need? Do you have a great resource to share with the field? Tune in to PHF's [Exploring the Public Health Improvement Resource Center webinar](#) on Tuesday, May 19, 2015, at 1:00 p.m. EST.

## Apply to Participate in the 13th Annual PHIT!

The 13th annual PHIT, Advancing Performance in Agencies, Systems and Communities, will be held from June 9 to 10, 2015, at the InterContinental New Orleans hotel in Louisiana. PHIT will provide opportunities for training in performance improvement topics such as performance management and performance measures, national voluntary accreditation, facilitation, QI, health assessment and improvement planning, and strategic planning.



**Because of the high demand to attend PHIT, registration is limited, and your registration will require approval.** Registration closes on Thursday, May 7, 2015, or when capacity is reached, so click [here](#) for more information and to apply to register!

NNPHI is offering seven partial scholarships to attend this training. Read the announcement in "News and Updates" to learn more!

## Register Now for NACCHO Annual 2015!



Registration is now open for NACCHO Annual 2015: Envisioning the Future: Creating Our Path! The conference will be held in Kansas City, Missouri, from July 7 to 9, 2015. NACCHO Annual 2015 is an opportunity to join a thousand of your colleagues for the year's largest gathering of local health officials in the United States. The conference will provide an interactive setting for local health officials and their public health partners from around the country to examine strategies, share ideas, and plan actions for sustaining or reinventing their organizations in the new era. Click

[here](#) to learn more and to register!

## Featured Resources

### Public Health Centers for Excellence: New "QI in Five" Online Tutorials

The Public Health Centers for Excellence has released a new video series, "QI in Five." These free online tutorials are around 5-10 minutes long and give a quick overview of QI tools, performance management processes, strategic planning, and community health assessment approaches. Check out the [Public Health Centers for Excellence Resources](#) page to watch!



### Rapid-Cycle Kaizen for Process Improvement



With public health organizations prioritizing quality improvement - both for accreditation readiness and for the overall success of organizational objectives - it is no surprise that *Kaizen* (Japanese for "change for the better") has become a popular approach. The Public Health Foundation (PHF) developed and has been using a [Rapid Cycle Kaizen approach](#) for many years to engage cross-functional teams to respond over a brief time frame - two to three days. Find out more about PHF's *Kaizen* process improvement events and [recently developed tools](#) that can help your

organization tackle sizable challenges in a shortened time frame.

## QUALITY IMPROVEMENT TOGETHER

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