

Plan4Health: A National Partnership

SUMMARY

Plan4Health connects communities across the country, funding work at the intersection of planning and public health. Anchored by American Planning Association (APA) Chapters and American Public Health Association (APHA) Affiliates, Plan4Health supports creative partnerships to build sustainable, cross-sector coalitions.

Coalitions work with communities to increase access to healthy food or increase opportunities for active living where residents live, work, and play. The Plan4Health project aims to build local capacity to address population health goals and promote the inclusion of health in non-traditional sectors.



CHALLENGE

Chronic diseases account for more than two-thirds of deaths in the United States and prior to death, have a significant negative impact on quality of life and productivity for sufferers. Race, socioeconomic status, and other social disadvantages are associated with higher rates chronic disease (CDC 2013). By increasing opportunities for people to engage in healthy behaviors chronic diseases and their impacts can be diminished. Planning in the United States

originated with a public health purpose. To address issues that resulted from rapid urbanization, federal, state, and local governments created a series of policies related to zoning, housing, and transportation. These policies have had lasting impacts on the ways we develop the built environment often resulting in unanticipated, detrimental health effects. Through an ecological model of health, we know that health outcomes are shaped by more than individual behaviors and clinical care.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS KEY

Plan4Health resources are open to all APA and APHA members-- and we want to hear more about what you need to integrate planning and public health where you live, work, and play.

To learn more about our national partnership and all coalitions participating in Plan4Health, check out the project website: www.plan4health.us.

Join the national conversation at the intersection of planning and public health on social media by using and following [#plan4health](https://twitter.com/plan4health).

"How your community is planned really has a lot to do with how healthy you are. You can't blame a child for not walking to school if there is not a safe way to walk to school. If there aren't parks and open spaces, it's hard to go play. In rural areas, they may be very car dependent, and there are not a lot of places to walk to."

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SOLUTION

Just as Plan4Health's coalitions are anchored by APA chapters and APHA affiliates, APA's Planning and Community Health Center is partnering with APHA at the national level. This key partnership ensures coalitions are supported throughout the project period — and that conversations and lessons learned at the local level are part of the national agenda to prevent chronic diseases. APA and APHA have been working at the crossroads of health and built environment for several years and first began a formal partnership in 2012 with a project to build bridges between health and design professions. Plan4Health is a major investment in the partnership, launching a new phase of this cross-sector work and encourage APA and APHA members to lead work in their communities.

RESULTS

In the initial months of the Plan4Health project, APA and APHA have supported 18 coalitions through training and technical assistance. The first Plan4Health cohort has had access to 12 Plan4Health webinars as well as nine peer calls opportunities for each focus area, making sure coalition members have had the opportunity to learn from national experts as well as from each other. APA and APHA staff members have also worked to share the story of the coalitions—and the power of their strategies to create change at the local level. Reaching the public through more than 40 unique messages, the Plan4Health team has launched a project blog and has shared news of the program with more than 50,000 planners and public health professionals all across the country.

SUSTAINING SUCCESS

As the Plan4Health project continues, the program will welcome a new cohort to the community—as well as expand its technical assistance and training opportunities, inviting APA and APHA members to contribute to a learning network. By capturing the experiences of the coalition activities, the project will continue to inform the national agenda for chronic disease prevention and to contribute to the evidence-base of effective interventions, ensuring we are able to support communities' efforts to create healthy, vibrant homes.

Plan4Health is made possible with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the CDC or imply endorsement by the U.S. Government. Learn more about Plan4Health and the National Implementation and Dissemination for Chronic Disease Prevention project at www.cdc.gov/communityhealth.