



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Kent County Health Department Submits Application for National Accreditation**

GRAND RAPIDS – The Kent County Health Department (KCHD) is excited to announce that it has submitted an application for accreditation to the national Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB). The Health Department is one of the first local health departments in the state to apply for PHAB accreditation.

The Health Department began preparations for completing national public health accreditation in January 2012. “The process of reviewing our programs and operations to ensure we are meeting current PHAB standards took several months,” said Cathy Raevsky, Administrative Health Officer for the Kent County Health Department. “The application process for PHAB is intense, but it helped KCHD identify areas for improvement, and we have learned a lot about what we can do differently.”

If accredited by PHAB, KCHD will join an elite group of state, local, and tribal health departments that have been able to demonstrate achievement of elite national standards, ensuring essential public health services are being provided to within the Kent County community.

National accreditation is designed to:

- Promote high performance and continuous quality improvement;
- Recognize high performers that meet nationally accepted standards of quality and improvement;
- Illustrate health department accountability to the public and policymakers;
- Increase the visibility and public awareness of governmental public health, leading to greater public trust and increased health department credibility, and ultimately a stronger constituency for public health funding and infrastructure;
- Clarify the public’s expectations of health departments.

Attainment of PHAB standards will help KCHD in securing grant funding and the department will be recognized as one of the top local health departments in the country. The Kent County Health Department has been accredited through the state’s program for more than ten years; however, the prospect of becoming a nationally accredited health department was not a possibility until the launch of PHAB in late 2011. At this time, only a handful of local health departments nationally have completed the PHAB accreditation process, and the names of these sites have not yet been released publicly by the PHAB. KCHD should know by January of 2014 if it will receive accreditation through PHAB.

More information on PHAB can be found at [www.phaboard.org](http://www.phaboard.org).

**KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 260 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and four satellite clinics located in Wyoming, Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit [www.accesskent.com/health](http://www.accesskent.com/health).**