

National Community-Based Organization Network (NCBON)

FACT SHEET

We, the members of NCBON, are dedicated to the survival and flourishing of grassroots organizations and improved community health. As advocates for such communities, we have created this National Community-Based Organization Network (NCBON). We pledge our energies, time, and finances to the development of this network representing community-based organizations (CBOs) across the United States, to encourage their growth and development.

NCBON brings community organizations and their members into a national network to enhance capacities to 1) partner with universities/agencies within their neighborhoods and broader communities to promote health; and 2) to act collectively to influence decision making and policy at a national level.

NCBON organizes a business meeting and workshops at the Annual Meeting of APHA. Our members participate fully in policy making, presentations and publications, as part of the CBPH Caucus. We work to expand the role of community in American Public Health Association. With help from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, we provide financial support for scholarships that help an increasing number of CBO representatives to attend APHA (3 in 2001, 8 in 2002, 31 in 2003, 22 in 2004 and 33 for the upcoming meeting in December 2005).

Vision Statement

Grassroots communities proactively and progressively guiding their health, welfare, and development, using partnerships with others when appropriate

Goals

- A communication/networking system will be established whereby grassroots community-based organizations representing local residents will share best practices, lessons learned, and other resources to support collaboration and minimize power differentials between CBOs and their institutional partners.
- Community-based organizations will be in the forefront of policy formation. Local community members will be effectively organized to assure that decisions affecting their lives are made only in collaboration with those so affected. This includes the spectrum of decision-making from information gathering and planning through implementation.

- All segments of the community—the young, the elderly, the immigrants, the non-English-speaking, the men, the women—will find effective vehicles to make their voices heard.
- NCBON will be a growing, self-sustaining organization.

History

NCBON was established in 2004 by members of the Community-Based Public Health Caucus of the American Public Health Association (APHA). The Community-Based Public Health (CBPH) Caucus believes that Community lies at the heart of public health and that interventions work best when they are rooted in the values, knowledge, expertise, and interests of the community itself.

CBO members of the Caucus concluded that if their role as community partners was to be fully realized in the caucus, they needed to develop an effective network of CBOs who are part of partnerships or want to partner together with academic and agency/government institutions to carry out research and solve community problems. In this way, community members in the Caucus and APHA can have a significant influence and an effective voice,

Definition: Community-Based Organization (CBO)

A community-based organization is one that is driven by community residents in all aspects of its existence. By that we mean:

- The governing body consists of a majority of residents
- The staff is drawn primarily from the pool of local residents
- The main operating offices are in the community
- Priority issue areas are identified and defined by residents through open forums and surveys
- Solutions to address priority issues are developed with residents

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