



PREVENTING CHRONIC DISEASE

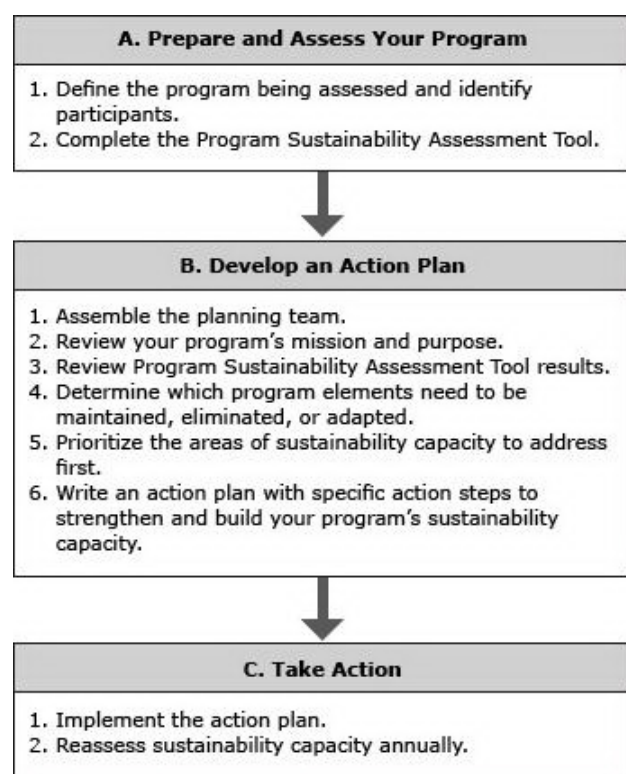
PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH, PRACTICE, AND POLICY

TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

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Using the Program Sustainability Assessment Tool to Assess and Plan for Sustainability

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2. Domain Scores: Group your 40 question scores by domain. (You should have 5 scores in each domain.) Calculate the average across these 5 scores for each of the 8 domains.
3. Calculate the average of your 8 domain scores.
4. Share your scores in a Sustainability Report (see a sample Sustainability Report at <https://sustaintool.org/assess>).

B. Develop an Action Plan

1. Assemble the planning team

As with any planning process, you need to have the right people in the room and a clear agenda for guiding discussion. Not everyone who takes the PSAT needs to be involved in the planning process. However, it would be helpful if those involved have taken the PSAT so that their opinions are represented in the sustainability scores. Consider selecting people who are in leadership roles or who are key to the program's operations

may be specific staff, stakeholders, or partners who need to be involved in completing an action step. As you write the plan, identify the resources, people, or groups that are needed to accomplish outlined action steps. Consider the unique skills and resources that different partners and stakeholders contribute to your program and how they might help advance your sustainability efforts. Studies indicate that it is vital to have influential and proactive leaders and champions, both inside and outside of your program (4,17–19). These supportive advocates are essential for creating a setting that promotes and facilitates sustainability (4,8,17,18).

c) Methods for tracking progress toward the completion of your action steps. Your sustainability plan should identify how you will monitor and track progress on each action step. Consider the metrics you will use to measure success. Having a tracking process determined in advance ensures that you document your progress appropriately.

As you build your plan, try to foresee any opposition you may face along the way, internally and externally (16). Discuss possible steps to take to win over opponents, navigate the system, or reduce the effects of opposing forces.

use as they monitored the progress of their actions. Lastly, the Communications Action Plan enabled them to demonstrate their accomplishments, tell their story, and build connections to support their sustainability beyond dollars.

Limitations and Implications for Practice

Many factors affect a public health program's capacity for sustainability. Although funding is important, other factors such as strong organizational support, partnerships, and communications can help make a program more competitive for funding, more successful in program work, and better able to weather challenges.

The PSAT and planning process provide public health programs and their partners with a reliable method for rating their programs' capacity for sustainability. This method is unique in that programs are able to identify their areas of strength and weakness across a range of sustainability factors and then make informed decisions about where to concentrate efforts.

One advantage of the PSAT is that it is a simple, user-friendly tool that can

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14. Batan M, Butterfoss FD, Jaffe A, LaPier T. A sustainability planning guide for healthy communities. Atlanta (GA): National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion; 2010.
[http://www.cdc.gov/healthy](http://www.cdc.gov/healthycommunitiesprogram/pdf/sustainability_guide.pdf)

Action Steps (Time Frame)	Person or Group Responsible	Resources	Monitoring Progress
3. Improve storytelling capacity through better organization, collection, and training of health department staff, local partners, and grantees. Training will include face-to-face meetings, webinars, and resources. (Beginning May 201x–ongoing)	Health department public information staff	• Storytelling train-the-trainer workshops • Travel costs, staff time, printing costs • Ongoing technical assistance to partners and grantees • Tracking database	• Training curriculum • Attendance list from trainings • Report of changes or implemented strategies following training events
4. Develop 5 short multimedia success story vignettes communicating the value of the program for use in community presentations, on the website, and social media outlets. (Completed by September 201x)	Website and Facebook administrator	• Editing and graphics support • Success story mining from grantee reports and evaluation data • Implementation pictures from site visits	• Creation of success story vignettes • Distribution of stories • Delivery of presentations, web posts, blog announcements, tweets, etc.

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