

## **JCHC Policy Options – Structure and Financing of Local Health Departments**

OPTION 1: The JCHC could introduce legislation to amend the Code of Virginia to require LHDs to ensure the availability of clinical services, either by the LHD or by other providers, facilitate access to and linkage with clinical care, as well as address chronic disease and injury prevention. The legislation should include an enactment clause directing VDH to update the Local Government Agreements to reflect these changes.

OPTION 2: The JCHC could introduce a Section 1 bill directing VDH to design a state performance management process for each LHD, with the goals of assessing the ability of each LHD to meet minimum capacity requirements, assisting in continuous quality improvement, and providing a transparent accountability mechanism to ensure public health functions are being met.

OPTION 3: The JCHC could introduce a Section 1 bill directing VDH to develop and submit a plan by November 1, 2023 for the development of a centralized data system that will enable VDH to access necessary data from all LHDs across departments to support LHD assessment and performance management, as well as enable greater data sharing with stakeholders and the public.

OPTION 4: The JCHC could introduce a budget amendment to provide additional funding to VDH for loan repayment programs for LHD staff.

Additionally, a targeted salary increase for LHD employees would assist with both recruitment and retention. This would not only improve satisfaction for tenured employees who are frustrated by their stagnant wages, but also improve the salary range LHDs can offer to candidates during the hiring process. While doing so might not allow LHDs to match or beat industry salary rates, it would make their offers more competitive, in addition to state benefits.

OPTION 5: The JCHC could introduce a budget amendment to fund targeted increases for LHD staff base salaries to align with current industry salary benchmarks.

OPTION 6: The JCHC could introduce a budget amendment directing VDH to create regional operations and facilities management positions to assist LHDs and providing funding for these staff.

OPTION 7: The JCHC could introduce a Section 1 bill directing VDH to require all health districts to participate in the CHA/CHIP process, in coordination with the state health assessment process and local health system Community Health Needs Assessments. The legislation should include an enactment clause directing VDH to update the Local Government Agreements to reflect these changes.

OPTION 8: The JCHC could introduce a Section 1 bill directing VDH to determine the funding necessary to provide sufficient communications capacity across all health districts. VDH should submit the funding estimate to the Chairs of the House Appropriations Committee and Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee by August 1, 2023

OPTION 9: The JCHC could introduce a Section 1 bill directing that VDH track cooperative budget funding per capita, compare that funding to the identified needs of each LHD, and make appropriate adjustments as additional funding is made available.

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OPTION 10: The JCHC could introduce a Section 1 bill directing VDH to update state regulations for environmental health services to increase inspection fees and adjust them based on the type of establishment being inspected, to account for the typical time it takes to conduct the inspection.

OPTION 11: The JCHC could introduce a Section 1 bill directing VDH to adopt regulations to implement a system of civil monetary penalties on facilities in violation of state environmental health regulations.