

PANHANDLE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH ALLIANCE

REALIST EVALUATION OF ALIGNING SYSTEMS FOR HEALTH EQUITY ACROSS TEXAS

Founded in 2016 and part of United Way of Amarillo and Canyon, the **Panhandle Behavioral Health Alliance (PBHA)** seeks to build systems that improve the behavioral health life-cycle of care for all people in the Texas Panhandle. PBHA includes:

- 27 counties
- 150 alliance stakeholders
- 25 organizational members

METHODOLOGY: Texas Health Institute evaluated 20 cross-sector initiatives to determine how health care, public health, and social service organizations advance health equity. We conducted interviews with three leaders of PBHA’s backbone organization in spring 2021, administered surveys to 22 coalition members between August 2021 and January 2022, and reviewed materials from PBHA (charters, strategic plans, etc.). For more information, see the **comprehensive evaluation report**.

STRENGTHS

The majority of surveyed coalition members (80%) agree PBHA has a **shared vision** with priorities including a desire to align common efforts and urgent community need.

PBHA’s governance structure includes a membership model with an executive committee. Among surveyed respondents:

- 63% agree PBHA has established **strong governance** with leadership, appropriate roles, and defined relationships.
- 56% state that **leadership of a backbone organization facilitated** the development of governance structures.

“... I tried to be mindful of making sure the people we’re trying to serve have a voice at the table.”

- Key Informant

PBHA’s partnerships—such as with United Way and Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute—give the collaborative **more credibility, access to stakeholders, and financial stability**. PBHA has **meaningful data measurement systems** in place to evaluate the community and PBHA efforts. However, only 37% of surveyed respondents say the coalition has a strong data and measurement system.

“... Everyone who has a passion about the change has seen the need, and I’ve seen that we don’t have the resources to do it alone.”

- Key Informant

OPPORTUNITIES

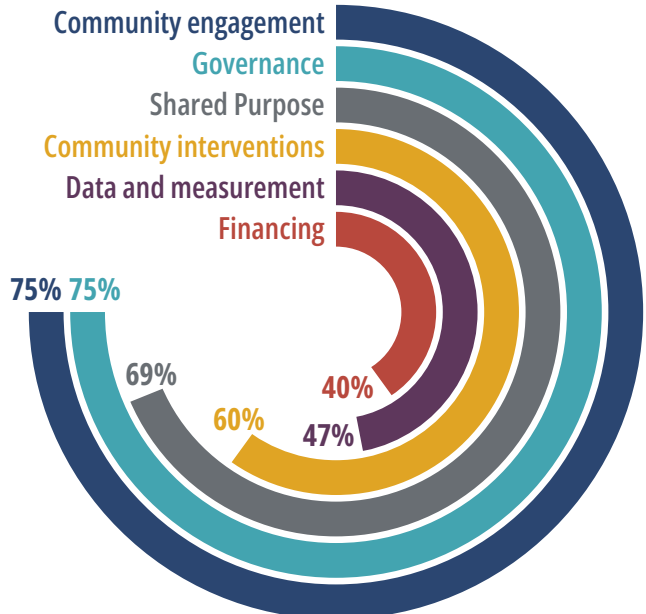
Finance and sustainability:

- Among respondents, 63% report the coalition **faced challenges with financial sustainability**.
- Members share **uncertainty** about how PBHA is building **sustainability**.

Coalition members indicate the Panhandle is sizable yet scarce of resources. This, however, can provide **opportunities for collaboration**.



HEALTH EQUITY



Respondents' estimation of extent to which "health equity" is most incorporated across core components

"[Everyone was in silos] when we started this work, [but] the silos have been brought down for many [There's] work that has to be done, but there's a lot more healthy conversation happening in all the areas of the community."

- Key Informant

SUSTAINABILITY AND OUTCOMES

- Among respondents:
- 47% say limited opportunities for funding inhibit sustainability.
 - 94% believe PBHA has progressed toward community goals and needs.
 - 63% believe PBHA has achieved shared progress towards racial equity.

Members recognize increased community awareness and dedicated staff are necessary for coalition success.

HEALTH EQUITY AND CORE COMPONENTS

Among coalition member organizations:

- 81%** say health equity (HE) is embedded in the shared purpose and vision of PBHA.
- 73%** think their definition of HE is "very aligned" or "aligned" with PBHA's.
- 75%** report the coalition operationalized HE strategies and principles across governance structures.

HEALTH EQUITY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Among coalition member organizations:

- 75%** report HE strategies are operationalized across community engagement.
- 93%** report that their organization is involved in community engagement and other trust building activities.
- 33%** state that their organization holds the coalition accountable to the community to a great extent.

To learn more about this evaluation, visit aligntexas.texashealthinstitute.org. Texas Health Institute is a nonprofit, nonpartisan public health institute with a mission to advance the health of all. Funding for this project has been made available through Aligning Systems for Health, led by the Georgia Health Policy Center with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

