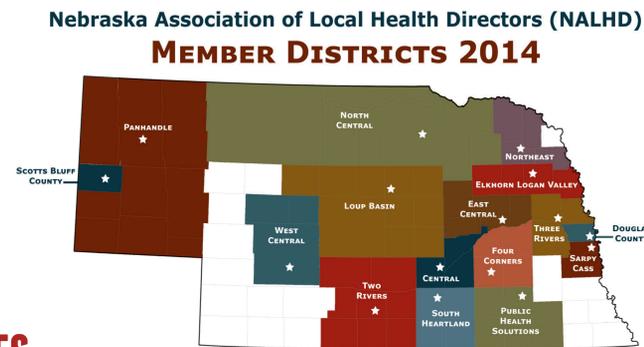


# A STRATEGY FOR AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND HEALTH LITERACY EDUCATION FOR RURAL AREAS

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## BACKGROUND

The Nebraska Association of Local Health Directors (NALHD) is cultivating health literacy practices by way of the Outreach Partnership to Improve Health Literacy (OPIHL). This work is funded by HRSA's Office of Rural Health Care Services Outreach Program and provides Nebraska's rural local and tribal health departments with health literacy training and tools. In September 2014, NALHD was awarded a supplemental grant to help with outreach related to the Affordable Care Act (ACA). 14 health departments serving 69 counties made the commitment to help educate their communities about the ACA.



## CHALLENGES

Nebraska residents encountered challenges while seeking information about the ACA. Among these were...

1. Nebraska did not expand Medicaid, and resistance to the ACA from key community members complicated efforts to educate Nebraskans about their options.
2. Rural Nebraska is vast and sparsely populated, creating challenges for in-person education and outreach related to the ACA.

NALHD needed to educate health department staff across the state so that they would be prepared to field questions and point people in the right direction.

## FEATURES

- Provides an interactive space to collaborate online—utilizing GoToMeeting;
- Allows people to meet, learn new skills, and network;
- Allows real-time review and development of material;
- Is facilitated by a health literacy expert;
- Includes a brief introduction or review of health literate practices and tools;
- Targets local health department staff;
- Is free to participants.

## THE RULES

- Participants come ready to actively review and critique the featured materials.
- If one of their materials is selected for review, they will share the revised, final product so that other sites can use or pull from what they have created.



OUTREACH PARTNERSHIP TO IMPROVE  
**HEALTH LITERACY**



## SOLUTION: A COLLABINAR

NALHD hosted 2 well-reviewed web events about the ACA. 30 local health department staff members attended these live events. The first event featured panelists from Enroll Nebraska and from our state's navigator grantee organization. The second event was our first collabinar, which highlighted ways that Teach Back can be applied to ACA outreach activities. Participants overwhelmingly agree that the collabinar better prepared them to collaborate with other agencies to help with outreach related to the ACA.

## SUSTAINABILITY

OPIHL's supplemental project resulted in 37 general educators located in local health departments across the state. Through the OPIHL project, NALHD continues to implement monthly collabinars covering topics such as health literate web design, material design, and outreach techniques. Collabinars sustain collaboration between staff at different local health departments who could not, otherwise, meet in person. Collabinars are proving to be useful tools to further efforts to improve health literate practices.

**col•lă•bi•nar (noun):**  
Collaborating using a webinar platform.