



Evaluating the Long-Term Impact of Nutrition Standards and Other Healthy Food Procurement Practices in Los Angeles County

NOPREN Food Service Guidelines Workgroup Meeting
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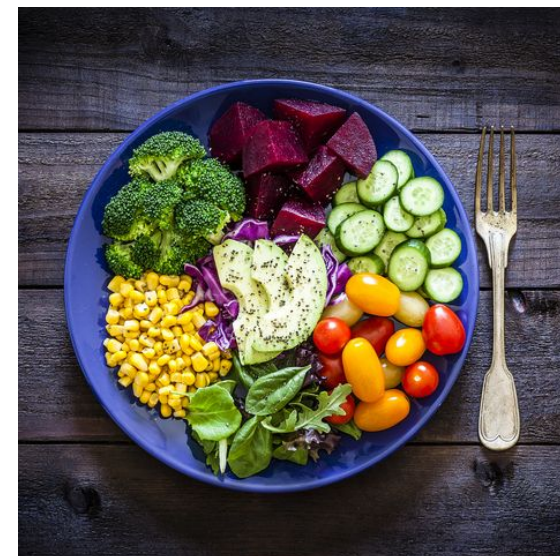
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Overview

- Quick recap of programmatic and evaluation healthy food procurement efforts in Los Angeles County
- Highlight long-term impact evaluation activities
- Discuss lessons learned





Brief Recap of Programmatic and Evaluation Efforts in Los Angeles County

Healthy Food Procurement (HFP) Initiative

2010 – Present

DPH launched its initiative to create healthier food environments in the County of Los Angeles government and the private sector with support from the CDC.

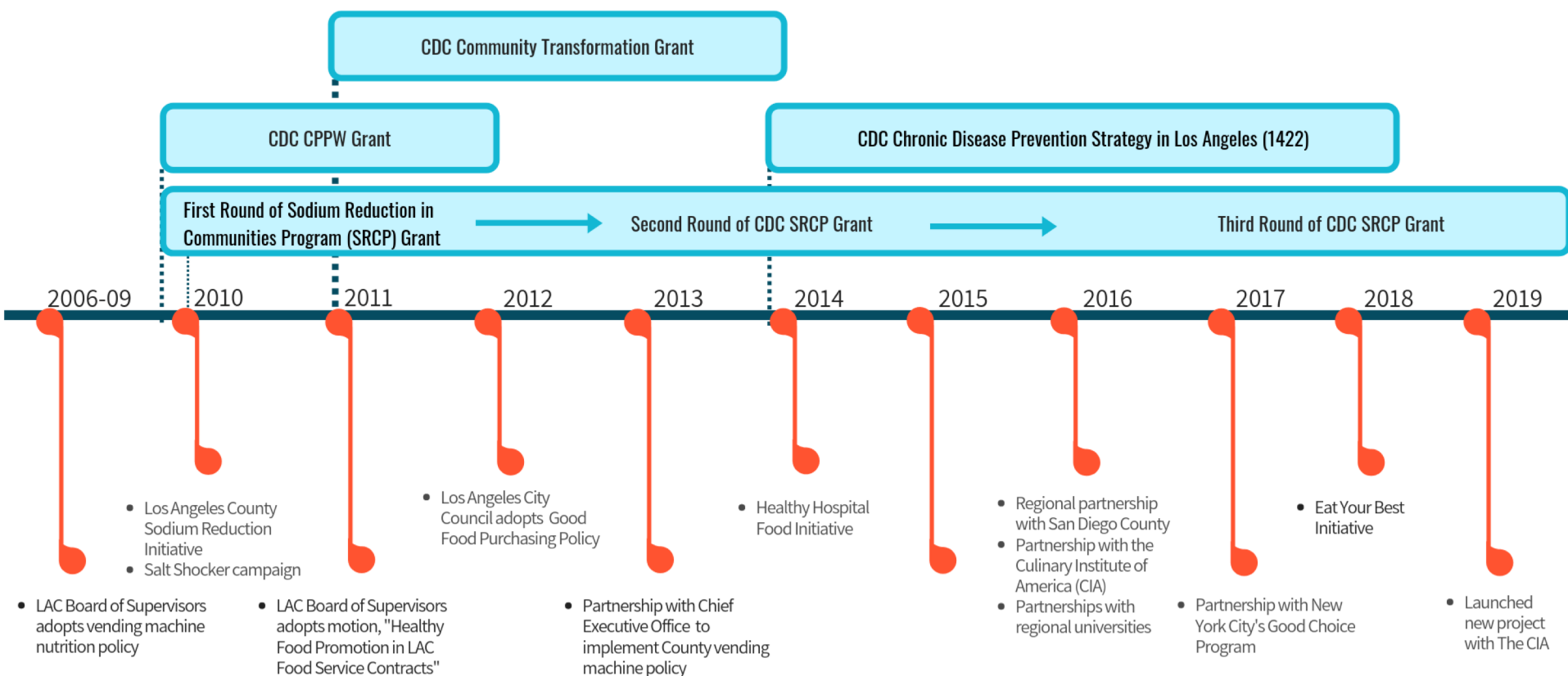
- *Communities Putting Prevention to Work*
- *Community Transformation Grants*
- *1422 Grant, State and Local Public Health Actions to Prevent Obesity, Diabetes, and Heart Disease and Stroke*
- *Sodium Reduction in Communities Program (2010-Present)*

2011 – County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors adopted Board motion, *Healthy Food Promotion in LA County Food Services Contracts*.





Healthy Food Procurement Initiative Timeline



Los Angeles County Sodium Reduction Initiative (LACSR)

Los Angeles County (LAC) Health Profile

- Heart disease and stroke are leading causes of death
- 30% of residents have ever been diagnosed with high blood pressure
- It is estimated that less than 4% of residents can accurately identify daily sodium limits

Strategies

- Nutrition and Procurement Standards
- Menu Modifications (e.g., food preparation)
- Behavioral Economic Approaches
- Consumer Education
- *Eat Your Best* Plant-Based Initiative

THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY SODIUM REDUCTION INITIATIVE

OUR VISION: Reduce sodium intake among Los Angeles County residents to limits recommended by the U.S. 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

SODIUM CONSUMPTION: A GROWING PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM

- Excess sodium consumption can lead to **high blood pressure** which increases the risk for **heart disease** and **stroke** — two leading causes of death among Los Angeles County (LAC) residents.^{1,2}
- While federal guidelines recommend that U.S. adults should consume less than **2,300 milligrams** of sodium per day, it is estimated that on average adults consume more than **3,400 milligrams** of sodium daily.³
- More than **70%** of sodium consumed comes from packaged, processed, store-bought and prepared foods — **not from the salt shaker**.⁴
- In 2016, **nearly 28%** of LAC residents had high blood pressure.⁵
- A recent study found that **less than 4%** of LAC residents accurately identify the daily sodium intake limits. This lack of knowledge may lead to excess sodium consumption.⁶

IMPROVING FOOD ENVIRONMENTS IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

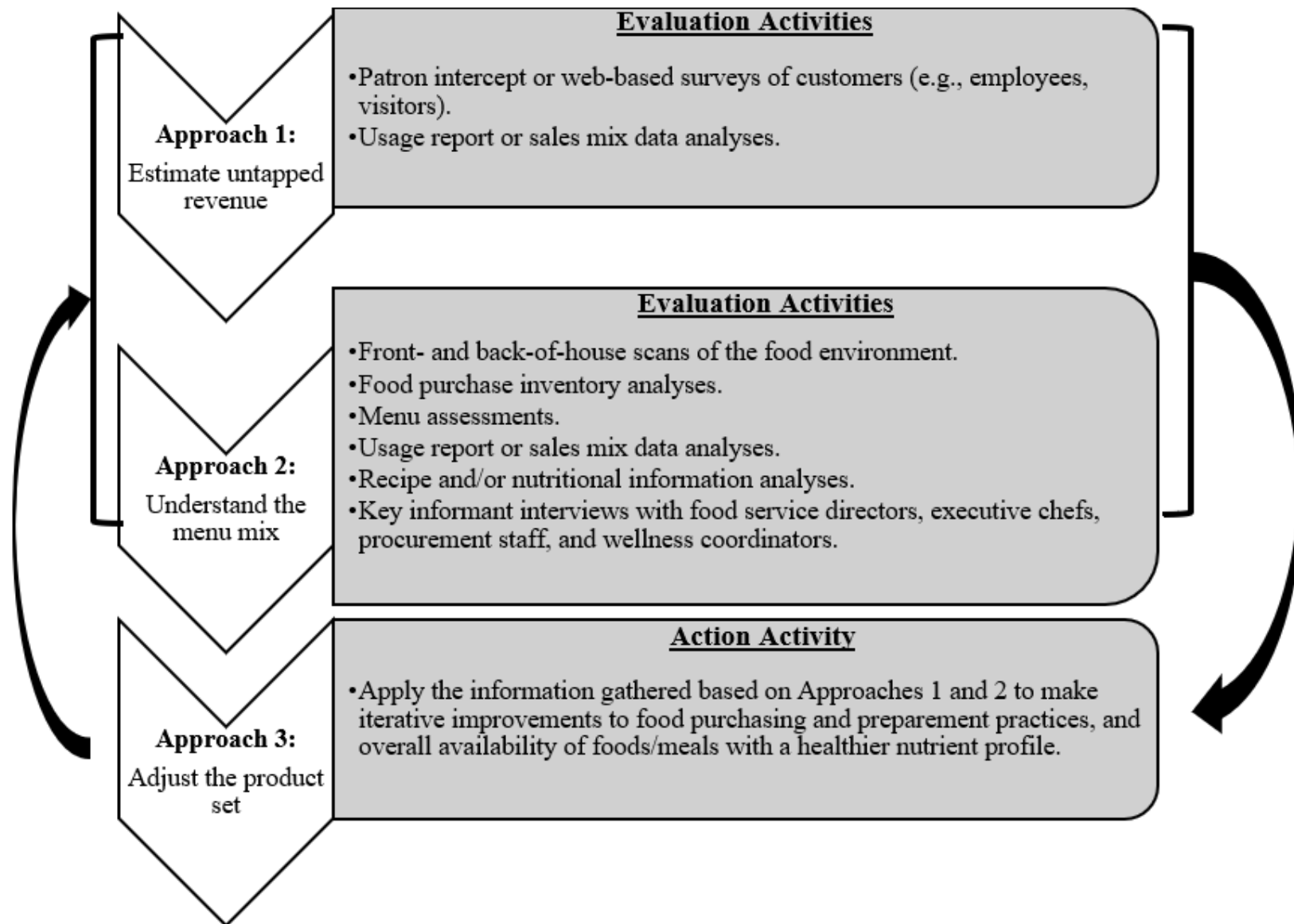
- In 2010, the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH), as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Sodium Reduction in Communities Program (SRCP), launched the **Los Angeles County Sodium Reduction Initiative** to improve the availability of lower sodium foods in public and private sector food service institutions.
- DPH is partnering with the **County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency** to reduce sodium intake in the Southern California region. To support these efforts both counties are partnering with food distributors to implement **Good Choice**, a nutrition labeling program to increase overall access to lower sodium food products.
- Improving food environments to include lower sodium options can have widespread impact in supporting the prevention of high blood pressure and other cardiovascular diseases.

24 Partners

Estimated 4.8 Million People Reached

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH | 1

Building the Business Case for Healthy Food Procurement





Long-Term Impact Evaluation Activities

Approach #1:

Estimate Potential Untapped Revenue

Usage reports or sales mix data

- Examines the volume for which a menu item or items are produced or sold during a set period of time.

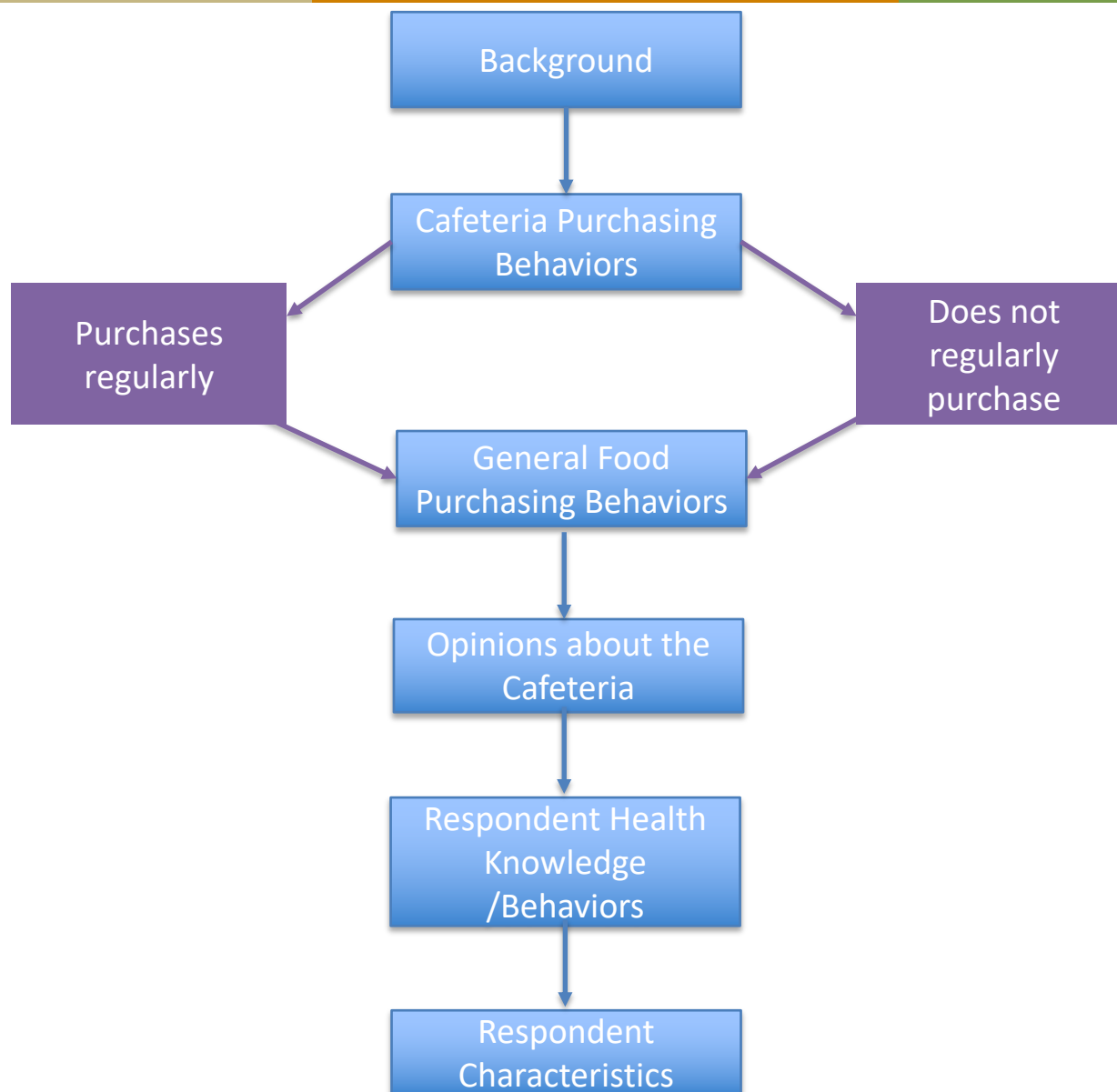
Approach #1:

Estimate Potential Untapped Revenue

Patron intercept of web-based survey analyses

- Benchmarks the percentage of customers eating or not eating at food service operator facilities and their nutrition-related knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

Example of Survey Question Categories





Survey Category	Sub-Category	Survey Question Examples
Background	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Which of the following best describes you? (<i>Response options: Staff, Faculty, Visitor, etc</i>)
Food Purchasing Behaviors	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Do you regularly purchase food (including meals, snacks, and/or beverages) from <institution>(<i>Response options: Yes or No</i>)
--	Regularly purchases food	<ul style="list-style-type: none">On average, how many times a week do you purchase items from the following stations during: a) Breakfast; b) Lunch <insert photo of each station> (<i>Response options: Never, 1x/week, 2x per week, 3x per week, 4x per week, 5x or more per week</i>)
--	Does not regularly purchase food	<ul style="list-style-type: none">What is the main reason you do not regularly buy a meal, snack, and/or beverage at <institution>? (<i>Response options: Variety is limited, Not enough healthy choices, Hours of operation are limited, Prices are too expensive, Other [fill in]</i>)
General Food Purchasing Behaviors	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Typically, when you buy a meal, how important is each of the following: a) calories it has; b) sodium it has; c) added sugar; d) how it tastes; e) getting a good price; e) that it is locally sourced; f) that it is organic (<i>Response options: 4-point likert scale</i>)



Survey Category	Sub-Category	Survey Question Examples
Opinions about <institution>	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In general, how satisfied are you with the food options sold at Café Med? (<i>Response options: 4-point likert scale</i>)<ul style="list-style-type: none">Please explain why you responded very satisfied, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied (<i>Response option: fill in</i>)
Health Respondent Knowledge and Behaviors	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Please fill in the blank in the following statement: “In general, an average adult should consume no more than ____ milligrams of sodium per day” (<i>Response option: whole number fill in</i>)
Respondent Characteristics	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none">How do you describe yourself? (<i>Response options: Male, Female, Transgender, Prefer not to answer</i>)What is your age? (<i>Response option: fill in</i>)

Approach #2: Understand the Menu Mix

Usage reports or sales mix data

- Examines the volume for which a menu item or items are produced or sold during a set period of time.

Approach #2: Understand the Menu Mix

Food Purchase Inventory Analyses

- Examines the types of products and ingredients a food service operator purchases from its food distributors.

Approach #2: Understand the Menu Mix

Back-of-House Environmental Scans (Pantry Assessments)

- Captures data on the nutritional quality of ingredients used during food preparation in instances where food service operators are unable to share food purchase inventory data.

Approach #2: Understand the Menu Mix

Recipe and/or nutritional information
analyses

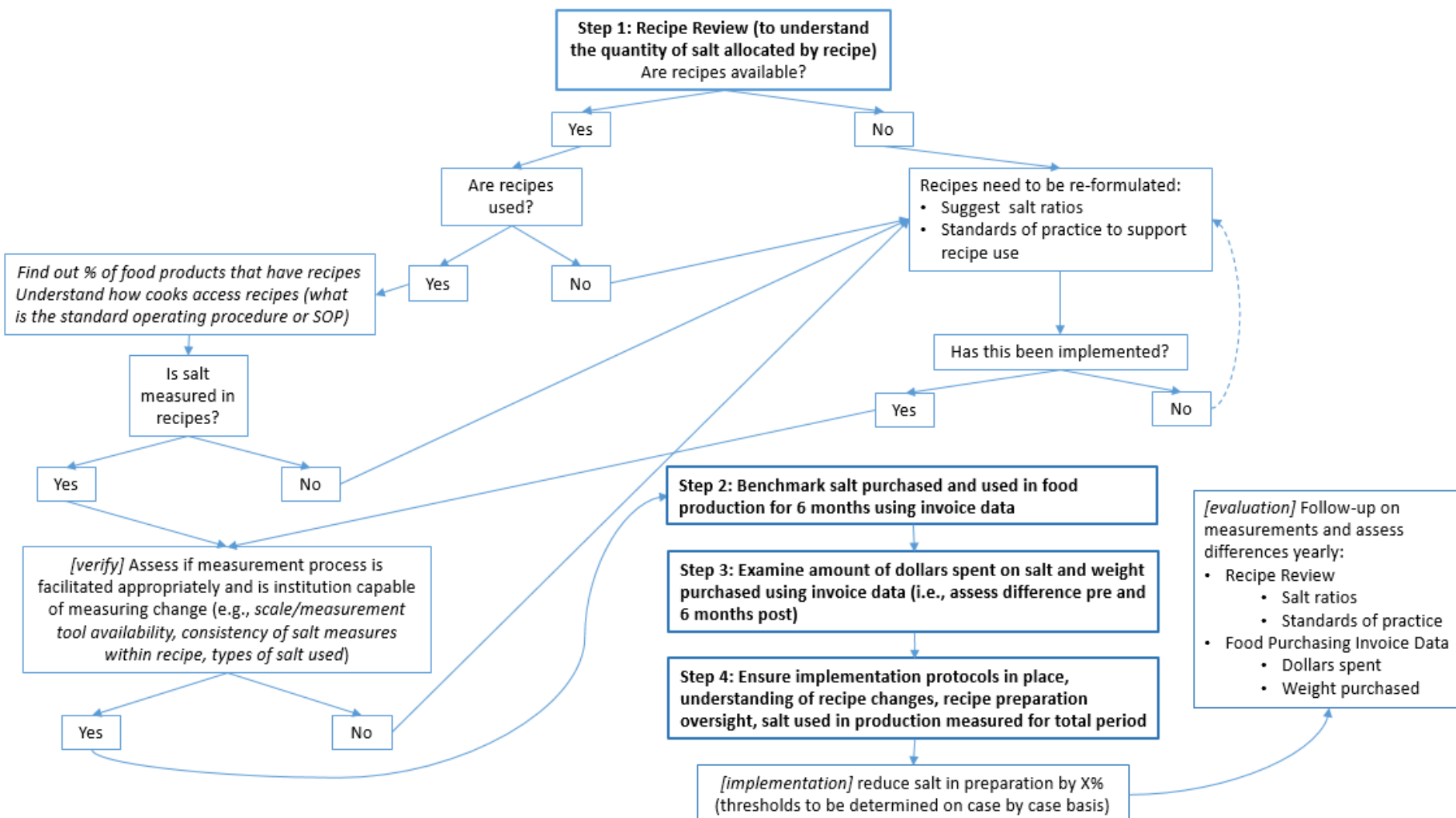
- Examines the nutritional quality of menu items to assess the extent to which foods meet healthy nutrition standards.

Approach #3: Adjust Product Set

Example: Salt Measurement Protocol

- Food purchasing inventory
- Back-of-house environmental scans (e.g., pantry assessment, etc.)
- Recipe assessment

Salt Measurement Protocol





Lessons Learned To Date

Barriers & Facilitators

Facilitators	Barriers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Institutional readiness to operationalize new approaches.• Strong partnerships with key stakeholders on evaluation and monitoring (e.g. vendors, contract monitors).• Vendor capacity and willingness to share key data sources (e.g., nutritional analysis, sales data).• Patron receptivity to changes to food environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Differences among targeted venue's internal administrative processes, contracts divisions, and unique needs and concerns.• Variation in level interest level and understanding of nutrition concepts among different stakeholders.• Concerns about cost, availability and acceptability of healthier food options.• Challenges with data collection, data synthesis, and data analysis efforts.

Usage Reports or Sales Mix Data



Challenges	Solutions
Food service operators are often reluctant to share these types of proprietary information due to fears of being regulated and mandated to achieve certain standards.	Showcase business case success stories using examples of how other DPH partners have used this data to improve their business practices for health; work with a credible food industry consultant to reinforce that this data is necessary for making informed business decisions.
Food service operators often do not understand DPH's data requests.	Use the correct terminology when asking institutions for such data (e.g., ask for "sales mix" instead of "sales" data)

Usage Reports or Sales Mix Data *[CONT'D]*

Challenge(s)	Solution(s)
Food service operators may not have collected the data in a way that is conducive to analyses and/or that provide data that are in difficult to understand formats (e.g., total sales are aggregated rather than itemized, making it difficult for DPH staff to identify top-selling items).	Work with food service operators to program point-of-sale machines to collect itemized sales data (e.g., have a button on the cash register that distinguishes between healthy and unhealthy meals).

Patron Intercept or Web-Based Surveys



Challenge(s)	Solution(s)
Administering patron surveys and analyzing corresponding data can be time and staff intensive, which makes it difficult for DPH to help institutional food industry partners to make informed decisions in real-time.	Disseminate web-based survey links through existing channels (e.g. list-servs) and encourage partners to promote the survey to their institutional bases.
Survey fatigue or general disinterest among prospective respondents in taking the survey results in low participation rates, which may introduce survey bias.	Work with institutional partners to provide financial or other incentives (e.g., free meal) to survey participants.

Food Purchase Inventory Analyses



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Back of House Environmental Scans



Challenge(s)	Solution(s)
Environmental scans are DPH staff and time intensive, and lead to delays in providing partners with results which could help them make informed decisions.	Create a simplified self-assessment environmental scan tools that institutional partners can complete themselves.

Recipe and/or Nutritional Information Analysis



Challenge(s)	Solution(s)
Some food service operators are unable to carry out nutritional analyses of their menu items because they either do not have or do not follow recipes.	DPH should continue to work with food service partners to develop recipes and to implement standardization protocols.
Nutritional information is difficult for institutions to update given that menus and product sets are constantly changing.	DPH should work with food service partners to implement timely reporting protocols to capture changes made to the nutritional profile of the food environment.



THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?

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