United States Public Health 101

Adapted from a presentation prepared by the Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

November 2013

Key Questions We'll Discuss:

- What is public health? Why is it important?
- What are the 3 core functions and 10 essential services, and how do they impact the public's health?
- How is public health structured in the United States to deliver these core functions and services?
- What are the responsibilities at the federal, state, and local levels? For tribes and territories?
- What other groups are important?

Learning Objectives

At the end of this session, you will be able to

- Describe the roles and responsibilities of public health
- Describe the 3 core functions and 10 essential services of public health
- Describe the unique roles and responsibilities of public health at the federal, state, local, tribal and territorial levels

Public Health: An Overview

Health is…

…a dynamic state of complete **physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being** and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.*

and…

Public health is "What we as a society do **collectively to assure the conditions** in which people can be healthy."**

Source: *WHO, 1998; **IOM, 1988

Vision:

Healthy People in Healthy Communities

Mission:

- Promote Physical and Mental Health
- Prevent Disease, Injury, and Disability

Public Health

- Prevents epidemics and the spread of disease
- Protects against environmental hazards
- Prevents injuries
- Promotes and encourages healthy behaviors
- Responds to disasters and assists communities in recovery
- Assures the quality and accessibility of health services

Recent Health Threats/Events in US

- Hurricane Sandy in 2012 (NJ and NY)
- Salmonella in peanut butter in 2011
- H1N1 epidemic in 2009
- Hurricane Katrina in 2005 (New Orleans, LA & Mississippi)
- 9/11 attacks on the US in 2001 (New York City)

These events required responses from more than one geographical area and more than one agency, increasing collaboration and cooperation.

Hurricane Katrina, 2005

- Second-strongest hurricane ever recorded in the US
- Devastated Louisiana and Mississippi (Gulf Coast)
- Storm surge of 20 feet
- Greatest number of deaths were in New Orleans; 80% of the city was flooded
- About $75 billion in physical damages
- Economic impact in Louisiana and Mississippi >$110 billion
- Costliest hurricane in US history
- Affected about 90,000 square miles

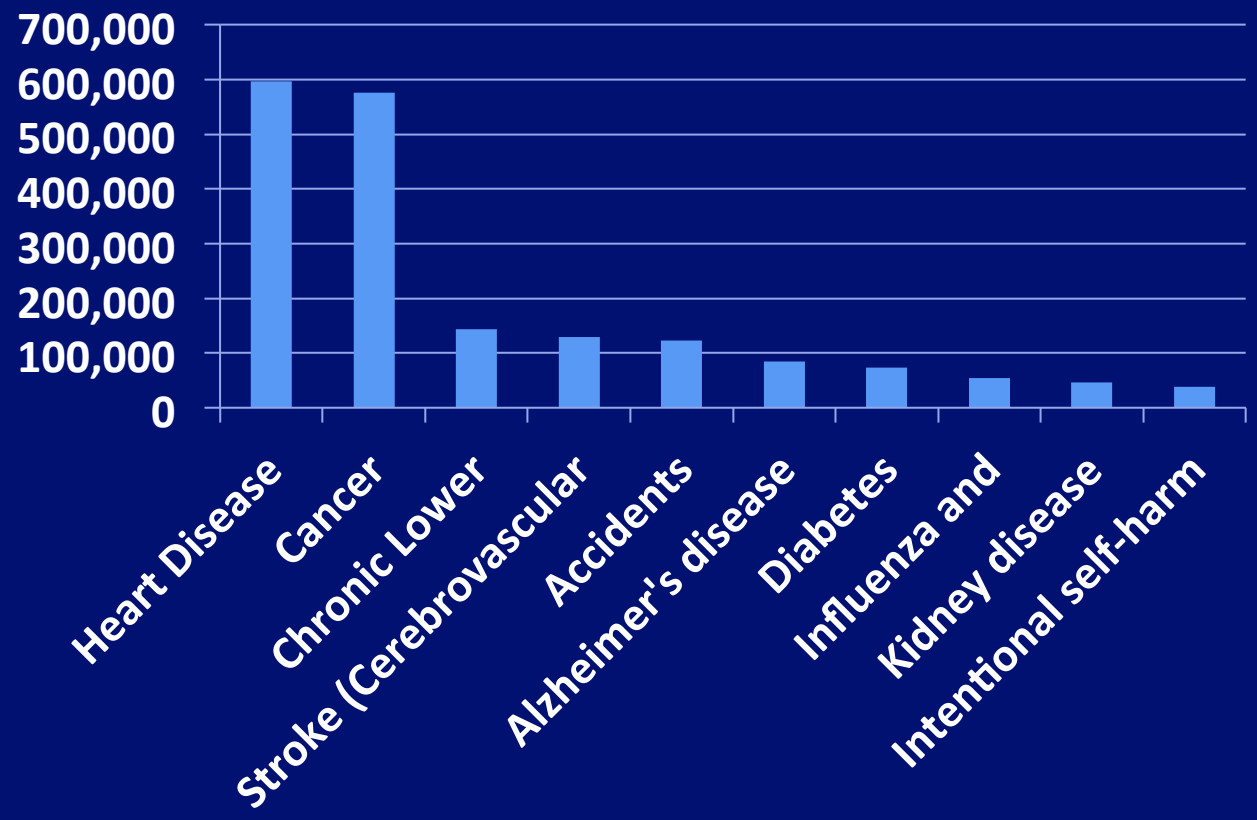
NASA Photo

9/11 Attack, 2001

- On September 11, 2001, 19 terrorists associated with al-Qaeda launched four coordinated attacks on the US.
- They hijacked four airplanes. Two crashed into the World Trade Center (NY) and one into the Pentagon (Washington, DC).
- The fourth plane crashed in a field in Pennsylvania after passengers tried to overcome the hijackers. It had targeted the US Capital.
- More than 3,000 people were killed during these attacks.

Photo by Michael Foran

Top 10 Causes of Death in the US



Source: *National Vital Statistics Reports*, Vol. 61, No. 6, October 10, 2012.

What does medicine do?

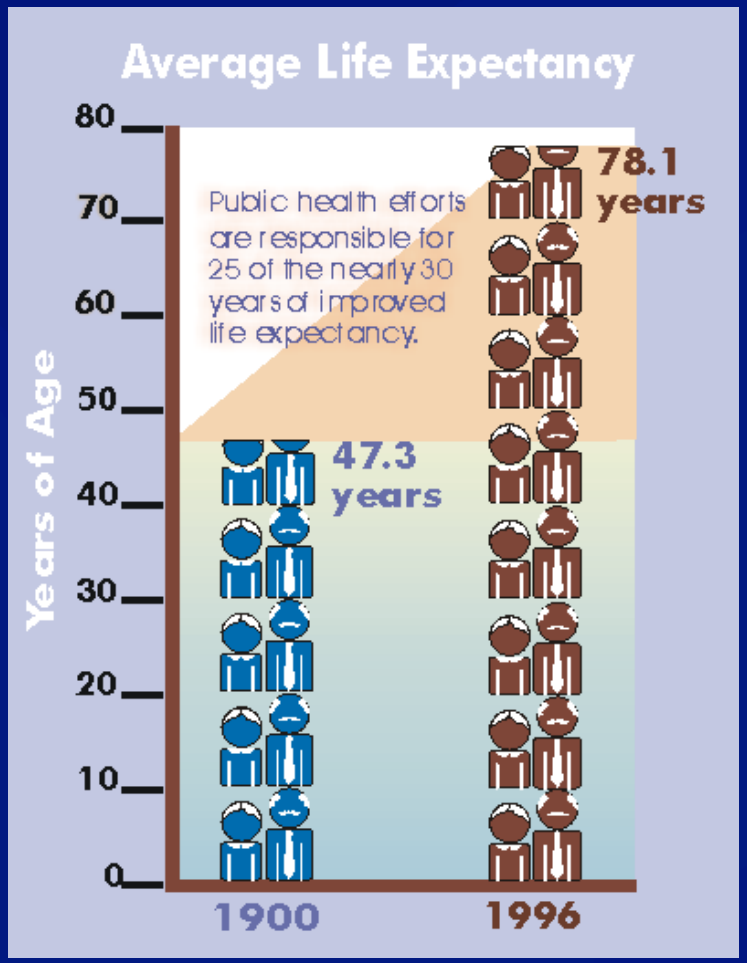
Saves lives one at a time

What does public health do?

Saves lives millions at a time

Average Life Expectancy

Thanks to public health for the extra 25 years of life!



Source: National vital Statistics System, National Center for Health Statistics

Ten Great Public Health Achievements USA (1900–1999)

- Vaccinations
- Safer workplace
- Safer and healthier food
- Motor vehicle safety
- Control of infectious diseases
- Decline in deaths from coronary heart disease and stroke
- Family planning
- Recognition of tobacco use as a health hazard
- Healthier mothers and babies
- Fluoridation of drinking water

Source: http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00056796.htm

How Has Public Health Extended Life Expectancy?

The foundation for public health lies within the 3 core functions defined by the IOM:

- **Assessment**
- **Policy Development**
- **Assurance**

Public health is guided by the Ten Essential Public Health Services and is applied to every facet of public health (national → state → local and tribes and territories)

Source of core functions: Institute of Medicine. *The Future of Public Health*. 1988.
Source of Ten Essential Public Health Services: Core Public Health Functions Steering Committee, 1994.

Essential Public Health Services

- **Developed by the Core Public Health Functions Steering Committee (1994)**
  - Included reps from national organizations and federal agencies
  - Charge: To provide a description and definition of public health
  - Developed the "Public Health in America" statement

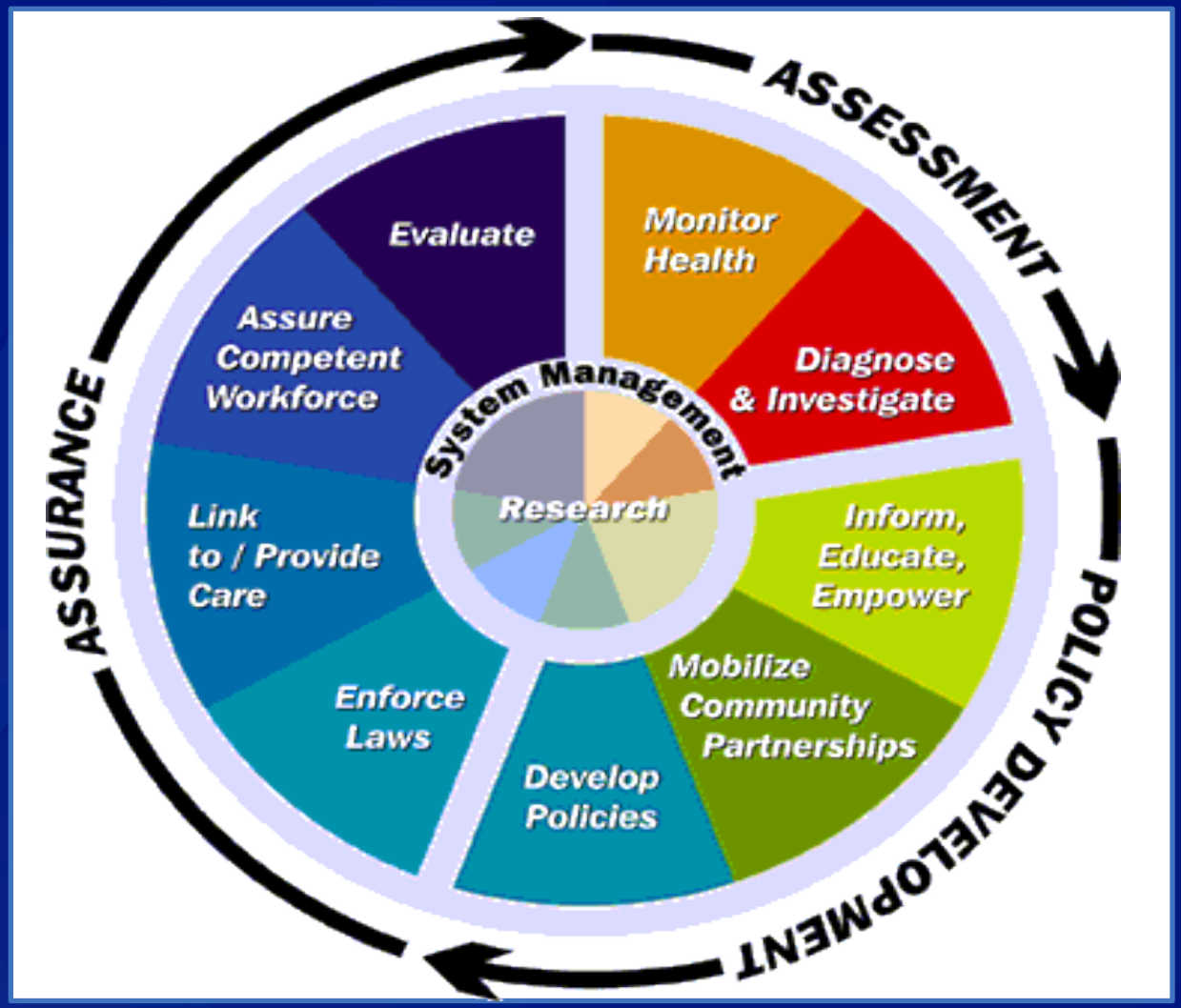
Source of Ten Essential Public Health Services: Core Public Health Functions Steering Committee, 1994

Essential Services of Public Health

- Monitor health status
- Diagnose and investigate
- Inform, educate, and empower
- Mobilize community partnerships
- Develop policies and plans
- Enforce laws and regulations
- Link people to needed services/assure care
- Assure a competent workforce
- Evaluate health services
- Research

Source of Ten Essential Public Health Services: Core Public Health Functions Steering Committee, 1994

Essential Services Cycle



Source: Public Health Functions Steering Committee, Adopted Fall 1994
Available at: http://www.health.gov/phfunctions/public.htm

The Essential Public Health Services

Evaluation and continuous quality improvement

Identifying and sharing best practices; participation in research

Community health assessment; registries

Public health workforce and leadership

Investigate infectious water-, food-, and vector-borne disease outbreaks

Access to care, link with primary care

Health education and health promotion

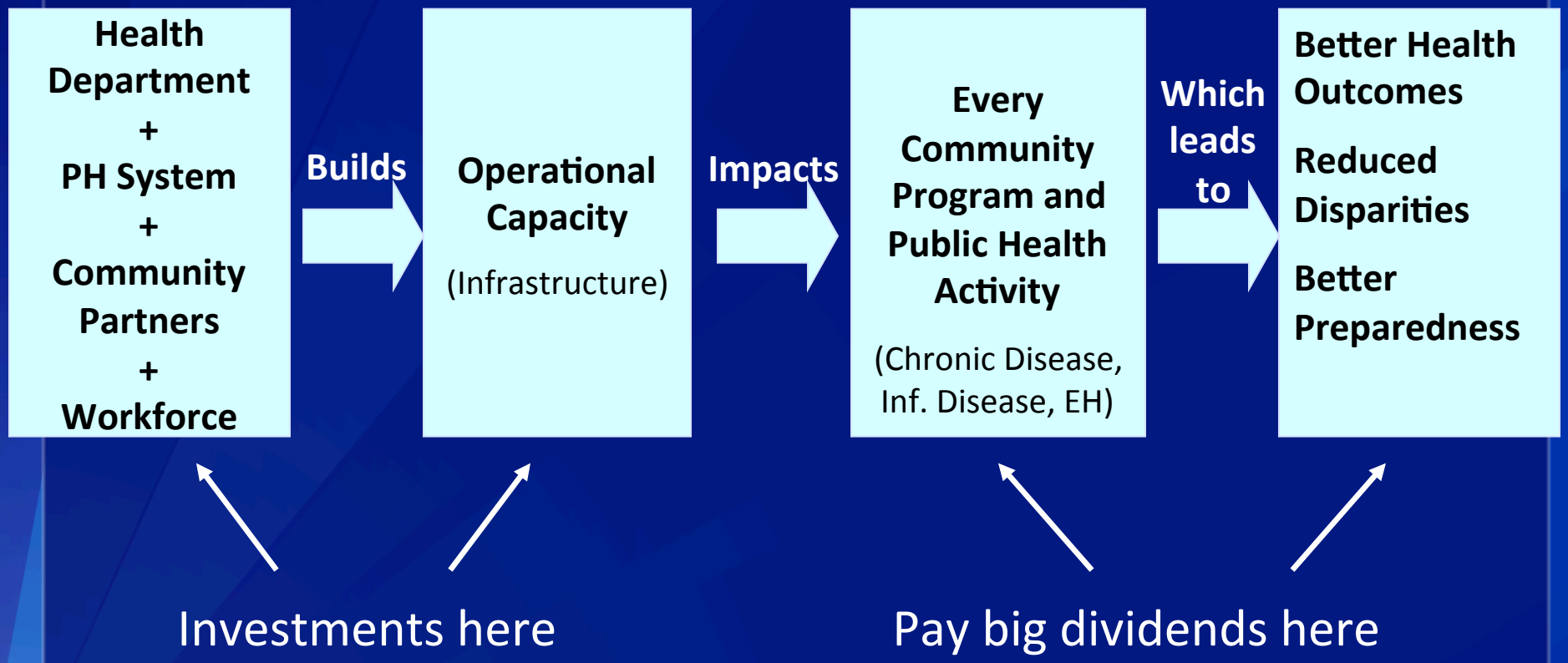
Enforcement, review of laws

Partnerships with private sector, civic groups, NGOs, faith community, etc.

Strategic planning; community health improvement planning

Structure of Public Health in the United States

Framework for Improving the Performance of Public Health

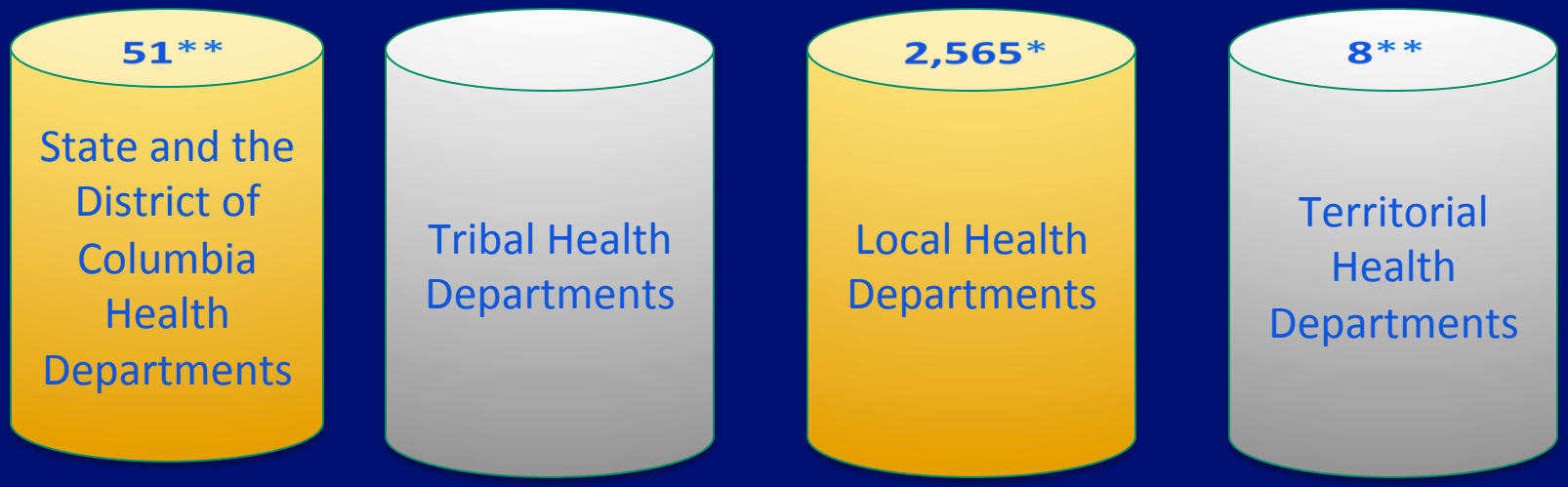


Source: D. Lenaway. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office of Chief of Public Health Practice. 2009 (unpublished)

Governmental Public Health

State and Local Health Departments

Retain the primary responsibility for health under the US Constitution



* Number based on 2010 National Profile of Local Health Departments (NACCHO, 2011)
** Numbers cited from *ASTHO, Profile of State Public Health*, Volume Two, 2011

Federal Public Health

Roles and Responsibilities

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support

Federal Public Health Responsibilities

- Ensure all levels of government have the capabilities to provide essential public health services
- Act when health threats may span more than one state, a region, or the entire nation
- Act where the solutions may be beyond the jurisdiction of individual states
- Act to assist the states when they lack the expertise or resources to effectively respond in a public health emergency (e.g., a disaster, bioterrorism, or an emerging disease)
- Facilitate the formulation of public health goals (in collaboration with state and local governments and other relevant stakeholders)

Source: Trust for America's Health. *Public Health Leadership Initiative: An Action Plan for Healthy People in Healthy Communities in the 21st Century.* Washington, DC. 2006.

Other Roles of Federal Public Health

Federal government plays a crucial role in

- Providing leadership, through regulatory powers, in setting health
  - Goals
  - Policies
  - Standards
- Contributing operational and financial resources
- Financing research and higher education
- Supporting the development of scientific and technological tools needed to improve the effectiveness of public health infrastructure at all levels

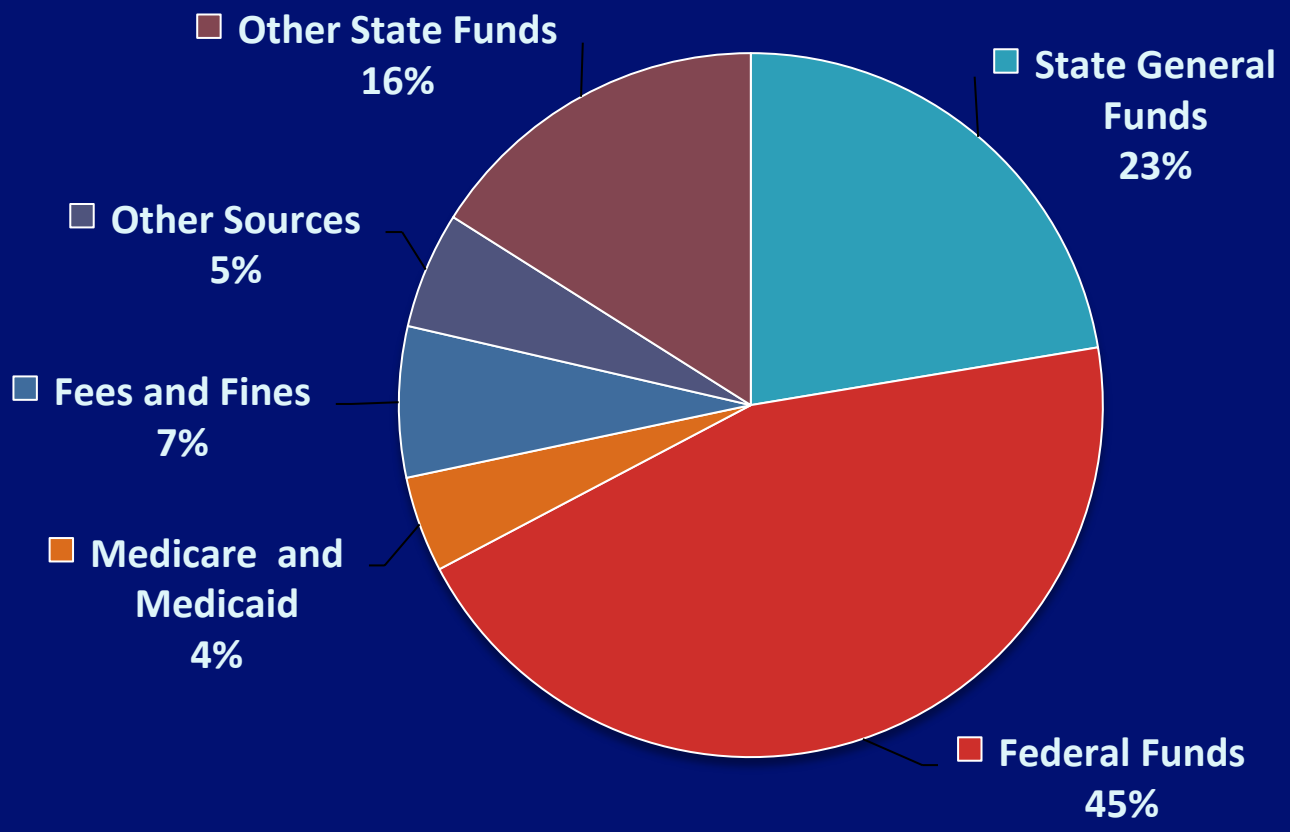
State Health Departments

Roles and Responsibilities

State Roles

- Screening for diseases and conditions
- Treatment for diseases
- Technical assistance and training
- State laboratory services
- Epidemiology and surveillance

State Health Agency Funding by Source (n=48)



Source: ASTHO: Profile of State Public Health, Volume Two, 2011

Local Health Departments

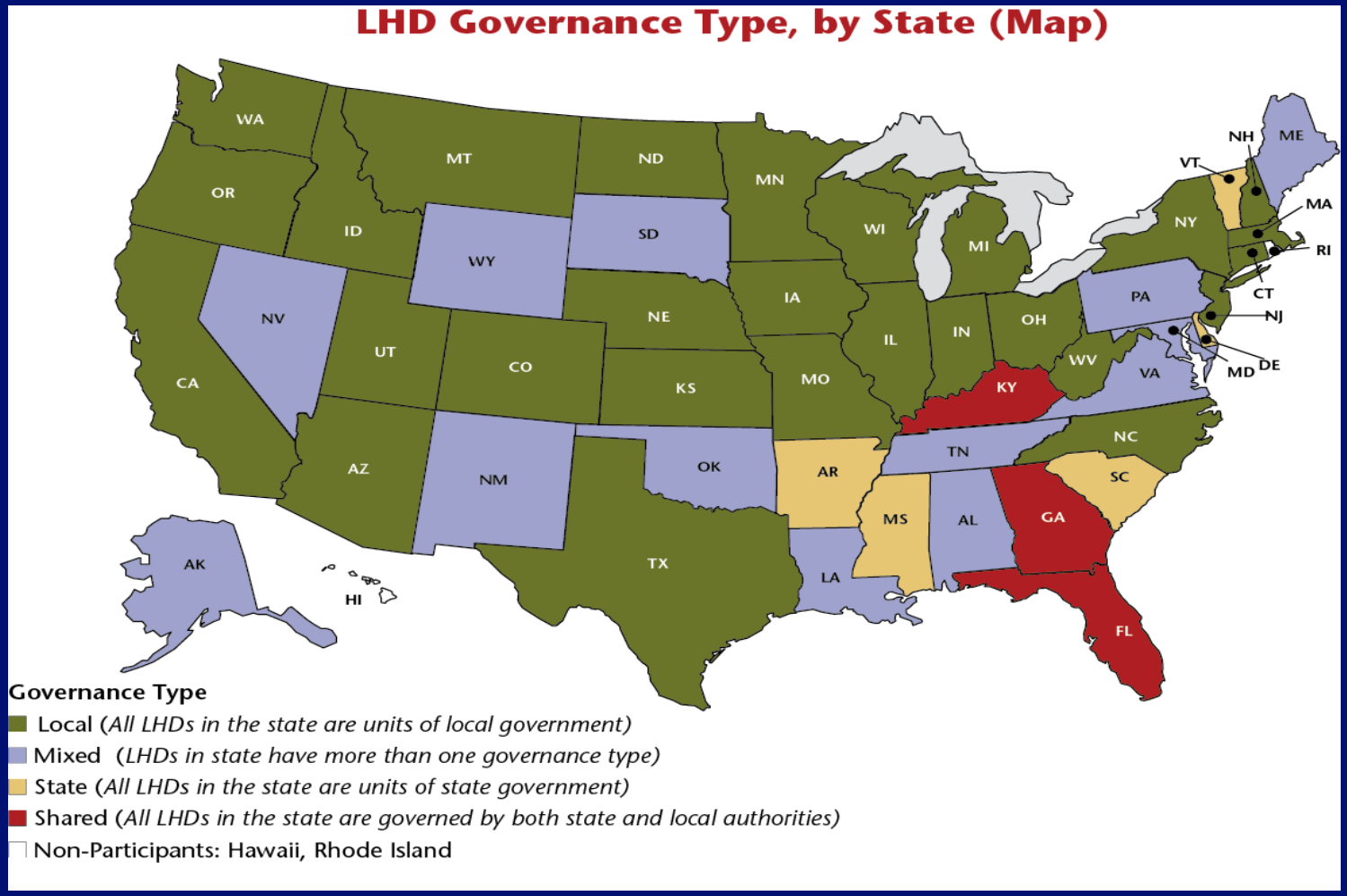
Roles and Responsibilities

State and Local Health Department Governance Classification System

- Local/Decentralized—Local health departments are units led by local governments, which make most fiscal decisions.
- Mixed—Some local health departments are led by state government, and some are led by local government. No one arrangement predominates in the state.
- State/Centralized—All local health departments are units of state government, which makes most fiscal decisions.
- Shared—All local health departments are governed by both state and local authorities.

Source: ASTHO Profile of State Public Health, Volume Two, 2011

National Profile of Local Health Departments



Source: 2010 National Profile of Local Health Departments—NACCHO

National Profile of Local Health Departments

Percentage of LHDs Providing the 10 Most Frequent Activities and Services Available Through LHDs Directly

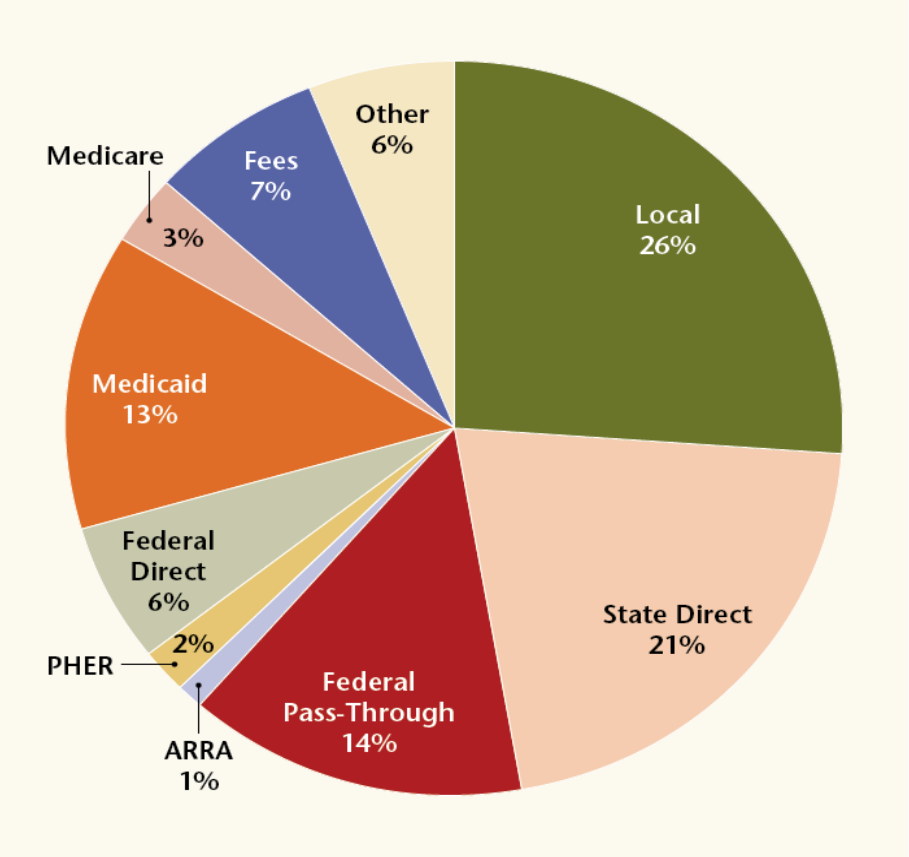
Rank	Activity or Service	Percentage of LHDs
1	Adult Immunization Provision	92%
2	Communicable/Infectious Disease Surveillance	92%
3	Child Immunization Provision	92%
4	Tuberculosis Screening	85%
5	Food Service Establishment Inspection	78%
6	Environmental Health Surveillance	77%
7	Food Safety Education	76%
8	Tuberculosis Treatment	75%
9	Schools/Daycare Center Inspection	74%
10	Population-Based Nutrition Services	71%

n ranged from 2,057 to 2,091

Source: 2010 National Profile of Local Health Departments—NACCHO

National Profile of Local Health Departments

Percentage of Total Annual LHD Revenues, by Revenue Source



n ranged from 1,427 to 1,480

Note: Due to rounding, percentages do not add to 100%.

Source: 2010 National Profile of Local Health Departments—NACCHO

Local Boards of Health

A Local Board of Health

- Is a legally designated body whose role is to protect and promote the health of its community

- Most
  - Provide oversight to the public health agency
  - Foster activities such as community health assessment, assurance, and policy development

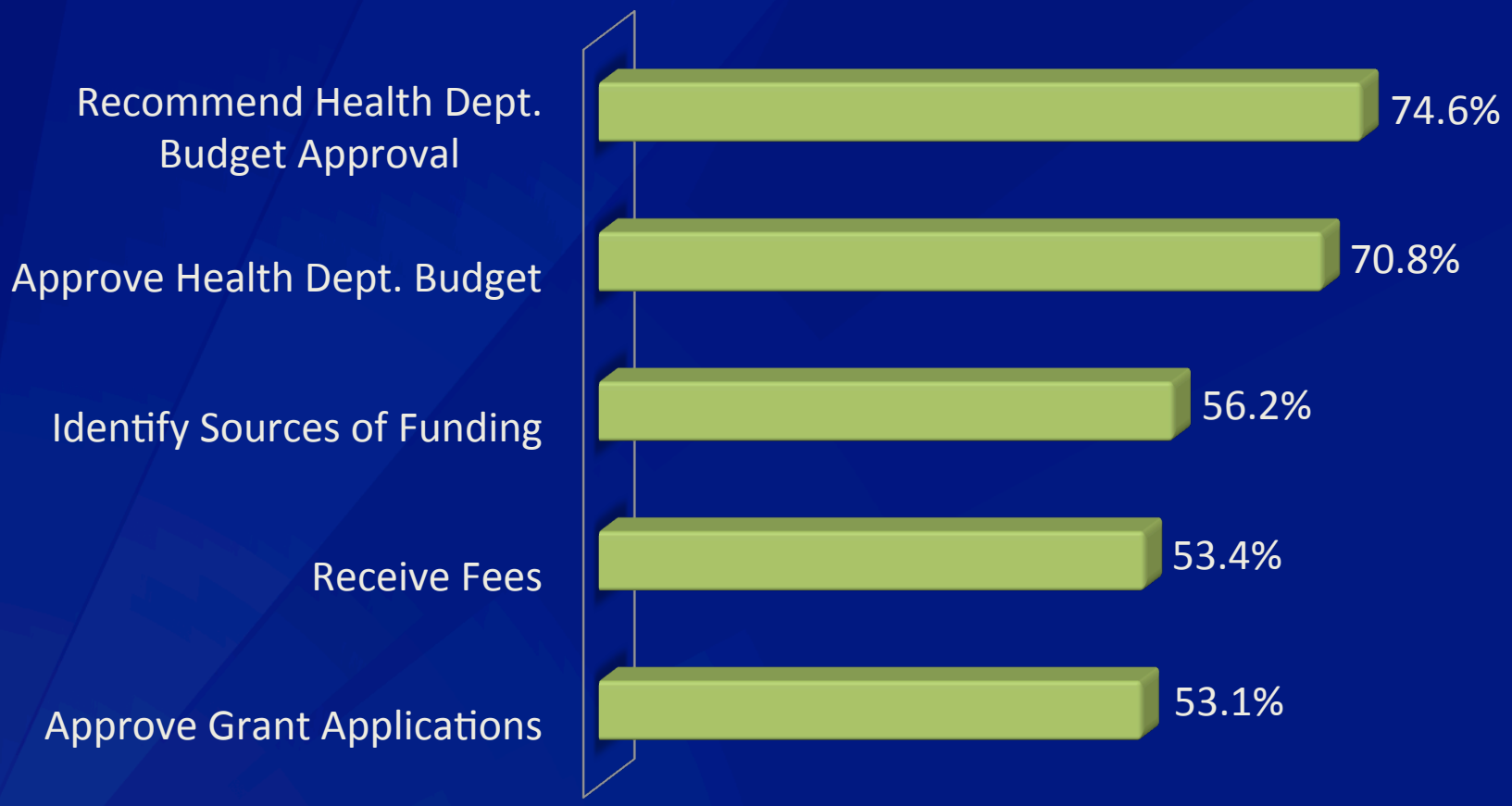
Source: 2011 Local Board of Health National Profile
www.nalboh.org/pdffiles/2011_LBOH_National_Profile_FINAL.pdf

10 Responsibilities Boards Have Authority To Perform

1.	Review public health regulations	93.5%
2.	Recommend public health policies	88.7%
3.	Recommend community public health priorities	88.5%
4.	Recommend health department priorities	87.7%
5.	Propose public health regulations	86.8%
6.	Collaborate with health department for strategic plan	86.6%
7.	Collaborate with health department to establish priorities	85.6%
8.	Ensure that a community health assessment is completed	83.3%
9.	Revise public health regulations	82.5%
10.	Establish community public health priorities	82.3%

Source: 2011 Local Board of Health National Profile
www.nalboh.org/pdffiles/2011_LBOH_National_Profile_FINAL.pdf

Top Fiscal Responsibilities



Source: 2011 Local Board of Health National Profile
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Public Health in the US Insular Areas

(Territories and Freely Associated States)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support

What are the US Insular Areas?

- The 5 US territories
  - Puerto Rico
  - Guam
  - US Virgin Islands
  - American Samoa
  - Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
- The 3 Freely Associated States (sovereign nations in a Compact of Free Association with the US)
  - Republic of the Marshall Islands
  - Federated States of Micronesia
  - Republic of Palau

Public Health Challenges in the US Insular Areas

- Geography
- Culture
- Economy
- Education
- Morbidity and mortality

How can federal public health address the unique challenges of the Insular Areas?

- Work with Insular Area public health leadership to better tailor our assistance to meet their needs
- Work within and between agencies to better coordinate public health support
- Place more federal personnel in the region

How can federal public health address the unique challenges of the Insular Areas? (continued)

- Explore and pilot more initiatives that are better suited to small, limited resource jurisdictions
  - Program integration and coordination
  - Regional collaboration
  - Peer-to-peer sharing of best/promising practices
  - Grants and program management capacity

Public Health in American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes

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Tribal Public Health

- **Tribal Health Department**—a corporation or organization operated under the jurisdiction of a federally recognized tribe, or association of federally recognized tribes, and is funded by the tribe(s) and/or contract service(s) from the Indian Health Service (IHS).

- **Tribal Health Organizations**—include Tribal Health Departments, Indian Health Service Units, Area Indian Health Boards and Urban Indian Health Centers (a much broader group, and relates to a variety of entities that might provide health services in a tribal setting).

Nongovernmental Organizations

Roles and Responsibilities

"…The determinants of health are beyond the capacity of any one practitioner or discipline to manage….We must collaborate to survive, as disciplines and as professionals attempting to help our communities and each other."

—Institute of Medicine, 1999

"It is logical to expect that there is strength in numbers and that partnerships can mobilize material and human resources and be more effective at achieving desired goals than individuals working alone."

– Karen Glanz, *Health Behavior and Health Education*, 2002

A Well-Functioning Public Health System Has

- Strong partnerships where partners recognize they are part of the public health system
- Effective channels of communication
- System-wide health objectives
- Resource sharing
- Leadership by governmental public health agency
- Feedback loops among state, local, tribal, territorial and federal partners

Public Health System

Source: Public Health Practice Program Office, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention , National Public Health Performance Standards Program, User Guide (first edition), 2002. (Current version available at www.cdc.gov/nphpsp)

A system of partnerships that includes, but is not limited to . . .

Media

Churches

Schools

Businesses

Philanthropy

Federal DHHS
State Health Departments
Local Health Departments
Tribal Health

Healthcare Providers

Justice and Law Enforcement

Environmental Health

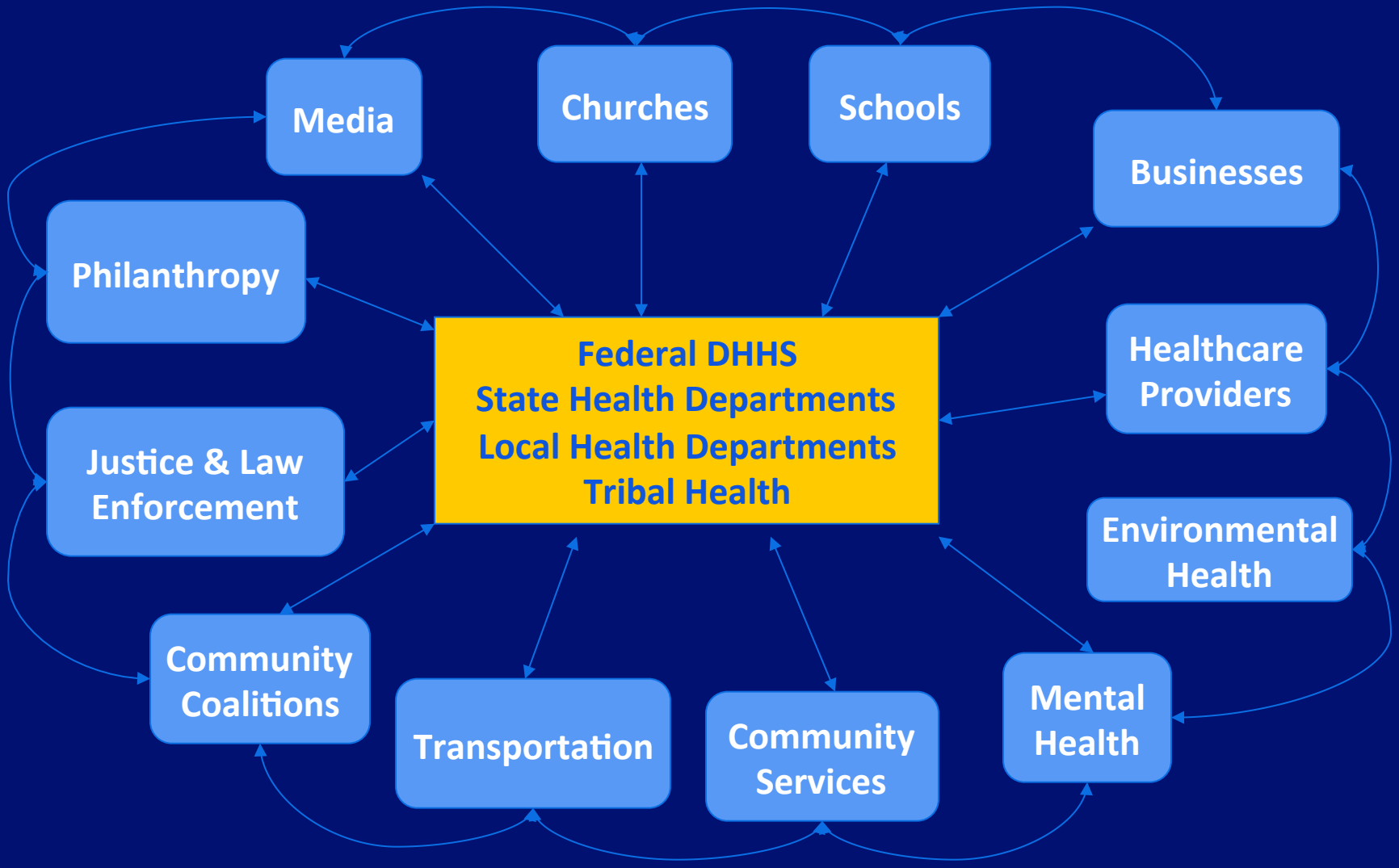
Community Coalitions

Transportation

Community Services

Mental Health

Our goal is an integrated system of partnerships



Questions?

For more information, please contact CDC's Office for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Support

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