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.

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
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.
Top 10 Causes of Death in the US

- Heart Disease
- Cancer
- Chronic Lower
- Accidents
- Alzheimer's disease
- Diabetes
- Influenza and
- Kidney disease
- Intentional self-harm

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)

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
- Public health workforce and leadership
- Access to care, link with primary care
- Enforcement, review of laws
- Strategic planning; community health improvement planning
- Identifying and sharing best practices; participation in research
- Community health assessment; registries
- Investigate infectious water-, food-, and vector-borne disease outbreaks
- Health education and health promotion
- Partnerships with private sector, civic groups, NGOs, faith community, etc.

Strategic planning; community health improvement planning

Community health assessment; registries

Health education and health promotion

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

Enforce Laws

Develop Policies

Mobilize Community Partnerships

Inform, Educate, Empower

Research

Diagnose & Investigate

System Management

Evaluate

Assure Competent Workforce

Link to / Provide Care

Enforce Laws

Access to care, link with primary care

Enforcement, review of laws

Strategic planning; community health improvement planning

Identifying and sharing best practices; participation in research

Community health assessment; registries

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

Health education and health promotion

Partnerships with private sector, civic groups, NGOs, faith community, etc.
Structure of Public Health in the United States
Framework for Improving the Performance of Public Health

Health Department + PH System + Community Partners + Workforce

Operational Capacity (Infrastructure)

Every Community Program and Public Health Activity (Chronic Disease, Inf. Disease, EH)

Better Health Outcomes
Reduced Disparities
Better Preparedness

Investments here

Pay big dividends here

**Governmental Public Health**

**State and Local Health Departments**
Retain the primary responsibility for health under the US Constitution

- 51** State and the District of Columbia Health Departments
- 2,565* Local Health Departments
- 8** Territorial Health Departments
- 51 Tribal Health Departments

* 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
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)

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)

Federal Funds: 45%
State General Funds: 23%
Other State Funds: 16%
Fees and Fines: 7%
Medicare and Medicaid: 4%
Other Sources: 5%
Fees and Fines: 7%

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

LHD Governance Type, by State (Map)

Governance Type
- Local (All LHDs in the state are units of local government)
- Mixed (LHDs in state have more than one governance type)
- State (All LHDs in the state are units of state government)
- Shared (All LHDs in the state are governed by both state and local authorities)
- Non-Participants: Hawaii, Rhode Island

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

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

*n ranged from 2,057 to 2,091*
National Profile of Local Health Departments

Percentage of Total Annual LHD Revenues, by Revenue Source

- State Direct: 21%
- Local: 26%
- ARRA Pass-Through: 14%
- Federal: 6%
- Medicaid: 13%
- Medicare: 7%
- Fees: 6%
- Other: 3%
- PHER: 2%

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Review public health regulations</td>
<td>93.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Recommend public health policies</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Recommend community public health priorities</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Recommend health department priorities</td>
<td>87.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Propose public health regulations</td>
<td>86.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Collaborate with health department for strategic plan</td>
<td>86.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Collaborate with health department to establish priorities</td>
<td>85.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Ensure that a community health assessment is completed</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Revise public health regulations</td>
<td>82.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Establish community public health priorities</td>
<td>82.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2011 Local Board of Health National Profile  
Top Fiscal Responsibilities

- Recommend Health Dept. Budget Approval: 74.6%
- Approve Health Dept. Budget: 70.8%
- Identify Sources of Funding: 56.2%
- Receive Fees: 53.4%
- Approve Grant Applications: 53.1%

Source: 2011 Local Board of Health National Profile
www.nalboh.org/pdffiles/2011_LBOH_National_Profile_FINAL.pdf
Public Health in the US Insular Areas
(Territories and Freely Associated States)
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
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.”

—I 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

EMS
Schools
Neighborhood Organizations
Civic Groups
Nursing Homes
Community Centers
Hospitals
Doctors
Drug Treatment
Public Health Agency
Laboratories
Mental Health
CHCs
Employers
Corrections
Tribal Health
Faith Institutions
Elected Officials
Fire
Transit

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

- Federal DHHS
- State Health Departments
- Local Health Departments
- Tribal Health
- Justice and Law Enforcement
- Community Coalitions
- Media
- Churches
- Schools
- Philanthropy
- Businesses
- Healthcare Providers
- Environmental Health
- Mental Health
- Transportation
- Community Services
- Schools
Our goal is an integrated system of partnerships.
Questions?

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

4770 Buford Highway NE, Mailstop E-70, Atlanta, GA 30341
Telephone: 1-800-CDC-INFO (232-4636)/TTY: 1-888-232-6348
E-mail: OSTLTSfeedback@cdc.gov  Web: http://www.cdc.gov/stltpublichealth

The findings and conclusions in this presentation are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.