



2014

Public Health Improvement Plan

PUBLIC HEALTH
ALWAYS WORKING FOR A SAFER AND
HEALTHIER WASHINGTON

DOH Pub 822-033 | January 2015

From the Secretary of Health



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Wiesman".

John Wiesman,
Secretary of Health

“The core mission of public health is to reduce the leading causes of preventable death and disability, with a special emphasis on underserved populations and health disparities. But how we achieve that mission has to change dramatically, because the world in which we find ourselves is very different than just a few years ago, and it will continue to rapidly change.”¹ —

Today, we have an opportunity to lead a paradigm shift. We have an opportunity to build a community wellness system which is population based, community centered, and focused on health equity and the whole person, across the lifespan. In the community wellness system, many sectors come together actively seeking health, including: housing, education, law enforcement, hospitals, clinics, human services, public health, behavioral health, governments, tribes, non-profits, and business. The community wellness system recognizes that with a common agenda, shared measurement, mutually reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support organizations, our collective impact will create a culture of health in Washington.

In this wellness system we would see communities designed for social interaction and mobility—safe places to bike, walk, and run; places for people to gather and socialize; places for people to play and worship. We would see clinics that are community resources which focus on wellness delivery

and where teams of practitioners address physical, behavioral, nutritional, and oral health needs. Health departments will “be more likely to design policies than provide direct services; will be more likely to convene coalitions than work alone; and be more likely to access and have real-time data. The emphasis will be on taking actions that improve community well-being and will play a vital role in promoting the reorientation of the health care system towards prevention and wellness. Health departments will also be deeply engaged in addressing the causes underlying tomorrow’s health imperatives.”¹

Most importantly, in order for us to create a strong community wellness system we need strong partners; partners who can dedicate the time and resources necessary to lead this transformation in rapidly changing times.

To achieve this paradigm shift, I look forward to working together with you!

¹[The High Achieving Governmental Health Department in 2020 as the Community Chief Health Strategist](#), *Public Health Leadership Forum (RESOLVE)*, May 2014, 2-4.

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Executive Summary



The Public Health Improvement Partnership is a close alliance of public health experts directed by the legislature to guide and strengthen the governmental public health system in Washington State. Through the Partnership, leaders are able to align Washington's public health policies and programs in ways that emphasize population-based approaches, prevention, and health promotion.

Every two years the Washington State Department of Health, in consultation with other partners, develops a public health services improvement plan. *The Plan* has been a national model to strengthen the public health system through practical steps and coordinated activities carried out by local and state public health agencies.

The Partnership's work is supported by workgroups. Each workgroup helps shape and articulate the outputs, performance, and outcomes of public health work. During the past two years, Partnership efforts have been focused on the following areas:

- ➔ **Foundational Public Health Services** — A basic set of capabilities and programs have been identified and defined. This set must be present in every community in order to efficiently and effectively protect all people in Washington. In addition, a flexible cost estimation model and policies have been developed for funding these services.
- ➔ **Health Transformation and Innovation** — Work under health transformation and innovation has focused on establishing a new partnership between public health

and the health care delivery system. This collaboration has produced a comprehensive prevention framework and specific actions have been identified and recommended so both systems can work together to improve population health, improve individual outcomes, reduce costs, and improve health equity.

- ➔ **A State Health Improvement Plan** — The State Department of Health in concert with partners from various sectors has been developing Washington's first *State Health Improvement Plan*. It is a call to action for all to create a culture of health in Washington where everyone is actively seeking health. This culture will create family and community environments empowered and designed to provide opportunities for healthy childhoods and healthy choices throughout life.
- ➔ **Performance and Accountability** — The Public Health Improvement Partnership continues to guide and oversee a robust performance and accountability system that spans public health in Washington. Public health activities and services counts are collected and synthesized from state and local public health agencies annually. Local public health indicators providing a snapshot of health status, health behavior, and public health system performance have been updated and made available to all local public health jurisdictions. Public Health Accreditation Board standards are used to promote high performance and continuous quality improvement across the public health system.

The Public Health Improvement Partnership will work to identify emerging issues and priorities as the vision of a community health and wellness system evolves and new opportunities to proactively engage our state public health network arise. In the next two years, the Public Health Improvement Partnership will continue to provide oversight and guidance to the projects discussed in this report to ensure full implementation and alignment with the vision for community health and wellness system.

The Partnership recommends that the following steps be taken to assure a responsive and accountable public health system during the 2015-2017 biennium and beyond.

Foundational Public Health Services

- *Develop an allocation model and accountability structure*
- *Identify public health services that should be using a shared delivery system*
- *Define how the Foundational Public Health Services funding and delivery framework can serve the sovereign nations of Washington*

Health Transformation and Innovation

- *Develop and implement a Plan for Improving Population Health as part of the Healthier Washington initiative*

State Health Improvement

- *Develop an implementation plan for the two near-term goals in the State Health Improvement Plan and work with partners toward achieving its long-term priorities*

Performance and Accountability

- *Continue inventorying the important activities and services delivered by the public health system in Washington State and improve the collection process as well as use of data*
- *Improve data collected from the Budgeting, Accounting and Reporting System (BARS) and its use*
- *Continue refining local public health indicators for usefulness and actionable interventions*
- *Expand use of Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) standards across the public health system*

Public Health Improvement Partnership



Washington's Public Health Improvement Partnership leads our state's effort to transform its public health system. It supports policies that encourage healthy environments and lifestyles, protect people and their communities from health threats, and eliminate health disparities.

The Partnership is a close alliance of public health experts that provides a guiding vision for Washington's decentralized governmental public health system. The system includes tribal, state, and local public health agencies. Although each local health jurisdiction (LHJ) serves the needs of its own community, through the Public Health Improvement Partnership leaders are able to align Washington's public health policies and programs in ways that emphasize population-based approaches, prevention, and health promotion.

Partners

Department of Health

Local Health Agencies

Tribal Nations

State Board of Health

*WA State Association of
Local Public Health Officials*

*American Indian
Health Commission*

*U. S. Department of Health
& Human Services, Region X*

The Mission

The Partnership is directed by the legislature to guide and strengthen the governmental public health system in Washington State. To accomplish this, we are responsible for ensuring that our actions support a public health system that is accountable, continuously measures and improves performance and health outcomes, and reduces environmental and other health risks.

The Plan

Every two years the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), in consultation with other partners, is required by law ([RCW 43.70.520](#) and [43.70.580](#)) to develop a public health services improvement plan. Since its inception in the mid-1990s, the *Plan* has been a national model to strengthen the public health system through practical steps and coordinated activities carried out by local and state public health agencies.

Foundational
Public Health
Services
Workgroups

Public Health –
Health Care
Delivery System
Workgroup

State Health
Improvement
Plan
Workgroup

Performance
and
Accountability
Oversight

Foundational Influences for Our Work

The following core concepts guide our work and lay the foundation on how best to move the public health system forward. They illustrate the complexity and evolution in public health.

Socio-Ecological

These influences on health include relationships with other people; the policies and practices of organizations such as schools and worksites; community services and environment; and local, state, and national laws that impact our behavior. While helping individuals make healthy choices is important, we must also support these choices at all levels, from worksites to communities to state law.

Determinants of Health

The determinants of health are things that influence our health. These include: our biology/genetics, behaviors, physical environments, and socioeconomic environments, which are influenced by policy and interventions and access to health care. These factors also represent individual differences. The societal response to these differences has a significant impact on health outcomes.

Life Course Perspective

This perspective suggests that many factors, experiences, and exposures across our entire lifespan affect our health and development. For example, the stress caused by neglect or abuse experienced as a young child can result in illness or disability as an adult. This perspective also suggests that a baby's health is affected by not only his or her mother's health during pregnancy, but also her health prior to that pregnancy. With almost half of pregnancies unplanned, women's health during potential childbearing years becomes especially important.

Significance of Place

This concept refers to the conditions, policies, and practices where we live, learn, work, recreate, seek health care, and worship and how they influence our health. Our choices and behaviors are shaped by the places in which we spend our time.

Health in All Policies²

This is a collaborative approach that integrates and articulates health considerations into policymaking across sectors, and at all levels, to improve the health of all communities and people.

²[Health in All Policies: Strategies to Promote Innovative Leadership](#), Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), Jan 2013, 2.

Foundational Public Health Services



A New Vision

While Washington State's public health network has long been recognized as a national leader, to meet today's challenges in the rapidly changing world we must rethink which public health services are most important, how they should be provided, and how they should be funded. To do that John Wiesman, Secretary of Health, assembled a diverse group of policy leaders to define a new vision for Foundational Public Health Services in Washington State to meet 21st century needs.

Tribes are critical partners in Washington State's governmental public health network and the new vision. While tribal elected leaders and tribal public health representatives participated in the policy workgroup, tribal perspectives have not been incorporated in some key decision areas. We are intent on changing that.

The purpose of this work is to lay out the new vision for the governmental public health network in Washington State and a new funding model for state and local governments.

Public Health is a Basic Responsibility of Government

Most decision makers agree that public health is a basic responsibility of government. The Revised Code of Washington (RCW) declares that "the social and economic vitality of the state depends on a healthy and productive population" and charges government with the "life and health of the people," granting authority and responsibility for organizing public health services.³ The public expects Washington's public health network to work with health care providers, tribes, communities, and others to do what it can to improve health and reduce costs.

A new vision is needed to ensure consistent response to 21st century health challenges facing all people in Washington.



"We must continue our efforts to address public health funding which has eroded significantly, threatening basic services. No community should be without a defined set of public health services that must be equitably available to everyone and everywhere in Washington. These core services will provide a strong foundation on which the state and local communities can effectively and efficiently respond to emerging needs and local priorities."

John Wiesman, Secretary of Health

Photo courtesy of [The Evergreen State College](#)

³[Revised Code of Washington 43.70](#) and [70.05](#)

Foundational Public Health Services for All People in Washington

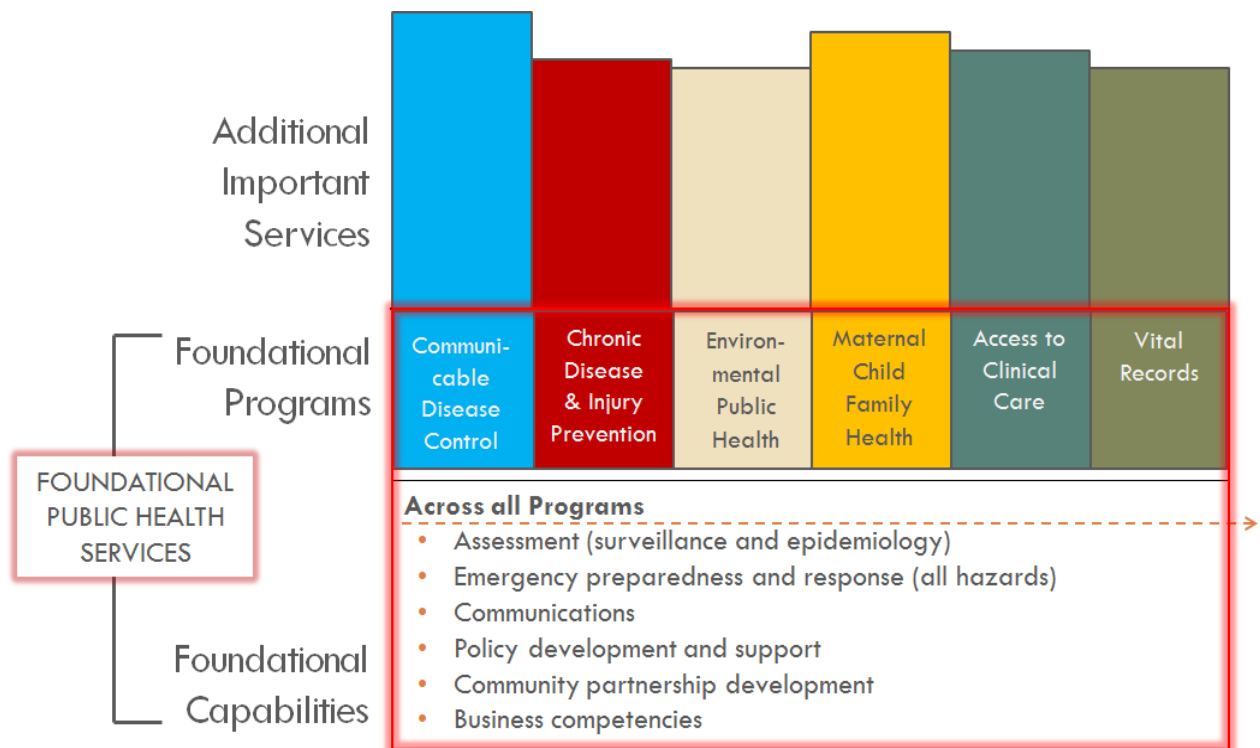
Like public safety (fire, police), public utilities (power, water), and other public infrastructure (roads, sewers), there is a foundational level of public health services that must exist everywhere for services to work anywhere. This foundation – the Foundational Public Health Services (FPHS) – is a subset of all public health services. FPHS includes foundational programs and supporting capabilities that must be available to all people in Washington

and meet one or more of the following criteria:

- ➔ Services for which governmental public health is the only or primary provider of the service, statewide
- ➔ Population-level services (versus individual services) that are focused on prevention
- ➔ Services that are mandated by federal or state laws

Foundational Public Health Services are a defined, basic set of capabilities and programs that must be present in every community in order to efficiently and effectively protect all people in Washington. These services provide a strong foundation, from which the state and local communities can deliver additional important services that respond to and are local community priorities.

Additional important services are those services which are critical locally and do not necessarily need to be provided by governmental public health for all people throughout Washington. These are a shared responsibility of federal, state, and local governmental public health and other partners.



Delivering on the Vision

Recommendations

1. State funding for public health should ensure the costs of Foundational Public Health Services are covered in every community
2. Foundational Public Health Services should be funded with statutorily-directed revenues placed in a dedicated Foundational Public Health Services account
3. Allocation determinations should be a collaborative process between state and local stakeholders
4. A robust accountability structure that aligns with the Foundational Public Health Services framework should be collaboratively developed by state and local stakeholders to ensure accountability and return on investment
5. Tribal public health, with support from the Department of Health, should convene a process to define how the Foundational Public Health Services funding and delivery framework will apply to tribal public health, and how tribal public health, the Department of Health, and local health jurisdictions can work together to serve all people in Washington
6. Local spending on additional important services should be incentivized

Legislative Action

Recommended legislative actions 2015-2016:

- Adopt the Foundational Public Health Services framework and definitions
- Incorporate Foundational Public Health Services into state public health statutes
- Establish a dedicated account for Foundational Public Health Services funds
- Begin to statutorily dedicate funding to the Foundational Public Health Services account

Recommended legislative actions after 2016:

- Fully fund Foundational Public Health Services with statutorily-directed funds

LHJ and DOH Action

- DOH and WSALPHO will collaboratively develop an allocation model and accountability structure that aligns with the Foundational Public Health Services framework
- DOH and WSALPHO need to continue to identify public health services that should be using a shared delivery system

Tribal, DOH, and LHJ Action

- Tribal public health, in collaboration with the state and with support from DOH, should review Foundational Public Health Services definitions, gather and analyze current spending, and develop an estimate for future costs for delivery of these services
- Tribal public health and DOH shall work together to define how the Foundational Public Health Services funding and delivery framework can serve the sovereign nations of Washington

Policy Workgroup Charge

- Members should educate their constituents and communities about Foundational Public Health Services
- Members and their organizations should educate local and state policy makers about Foundational Public Health Services

A Long-Term Strategy for Predictable & Appropriate Funding for Public Health

2002 – 2004

Published a model to estimate the cost of delivering local public health services in compliance with the public health standards

2005

- Published a funding methodology and allocation principles
- Published white papers on financing local public health
- Legislature passed EHCR 4410 and created the Joint Select Committee on Public Health Funding

2006

- Published *Creating a Stronger Public Health System: Statewide Priorities for Action* – a prioritized list of state and local public health services to be funded with new investments, and presented to the Joint Select Committee on Public Health Funding
- The Joint Select Committee on Public Health Funding recommended:
 - “The state provide additional funding of about \$50 million annually during the ‘07-‘09 biennium as an initial investment”
 - The funding for this ‘initial investment’ should come from tobacco tax revenues deposited to the General Fund
 - Four prioritized concepts as the base for the distribution formula

2007

Legislature passed E2SSB 5930, allocated \$20 million for the ‘07-‘09 biennium to local public health, required performance measure for the new funds and a prioritized list of core public health functions of statewide significance. In subsequent biennia, the Legislature reduced the funding: \$16 million for ‘09-‘11 and \$10 million for ‘11-‘13 where it remains today as a part of the County Public Health Assistance fund.

2010

Published an *Agenda for Change* by the Reshaping Governmental Public Health workgroup

2012

Published an *Agenda for Change Action Plan* and included the Foundational Public Health Services framework

2013

Published Foundational Public Health Services technical reports

2014

Published *Foundational Public Health Services: A New Vision for Washington State*



A New Partnership

In 2013, Washington State received a one million dollar Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) Pre-Testing grant to develop a *State Health Care Innovation Plan*. The five-year *State Health Care Innovation Plan (Plan)* created a framework and system supports for health system transformation. The Plan outlined core strategies for achieving better health, better care, and lower costs for at least 80% of Washingtonians.

In response to stakeholder feedback showing a lack of attention to population health in an earlier pre-testing grant, the Department of Health and the Health Care Authority partnered with representatives from public health and the health care delivery system to identify and recommend specific actions both systems can work on together to improve population health, improve individual outcomes, reduce costs, and improve health equity. The goal was to

develop a comprehensive *Prevention Framework* that outlined action steps for the State Health Care Innovation Planning and Implementation process across the state.

The *Prevention Framework* effort was under the executive sponsorship of the Secretary of Health and the Director of the Health Care Authority.

The development of the *Prevention Framework* was driven by available state health data research reflecting disease rates, underlying causes of disease, and preventable death; synthesis and alignment of existing state health improvement plans; and review of public health departments and non-profit hospital community health needs assessments.

The core elements of the *Prevention Framework*—vision, goal, principles, objectives, and strategies—

were driven and informed by this research and the *State Health Care Innovation Plan*. Additionally, the *Prevention Framework* proposed preliminary performance measures.

This collaborative effort forged stronger linkages between public health, health service delivery, and systems influencing the social determinants of health. The work positions our state well to develop a *Plan for Improving Population Health* which is required by the State Innovation Model Testing grant. The Department of Health and the Health Care Authority together with a designated *Prevention Framework* group will lead and govern the state's continued work on the *Plan for Improving Population Health* which is slated for completion in January 2016. Ultimate accountability for the final *Plan for Improving Population Health* will be placed with the Secretary of Health.

Prevention Framework

Vision

The people of Washington embrace and sustain a culture of health

Goal

The people of Washington will be healthier at every stage of life

Principles

Alignment | Balance | Collective Action | Health | Health Equity | Participation | Quality

Priority

Prevention and management of chronic disease and behavioral health issues, while addressing root causes

Focus Areas

- Cardiovascular disease and diabetes
- Healthy eating, active living, tobacco free living, and obesity prevention
- Mental illness, substance abuse/use (opioids)
- Trauma informed practices (e.g., Adverse Childhood Experiences)

Objectives

By December 31st, 2018, Washington State will:

- Increase the proportion of the population who receive evidence based clinical and community preventive services that lead to a reduction in preventable health conditions
- Increase the proportion of the population with better physical and behavioral health outcomes by engaging individuals, families, and communities in a responsive system that supports social and health needs
- Increase the number of communities with improved social and physical environments that encourage healthy behaviors, and that promote health and health equity
- Increase the number of integrated efforts between public health, the health care delivery system and systems that influence social determinants of health to lower costs, improve health, improve the experience of care, and contribute to the evidence base

Strategies

- Engage and influence health and other systems to improve health, reduce cost, and improve experiences for those who use and provide services that support health
- Align funding and resources to incentivize prevention and health improvement
- Engage and activate people, communities, and systems to create and foster health promoting environments

State Health Improvement Plan



A New Path toward Good Health

Creating a Culture of Health

The *State Health Improvement Plan* is a call to action for all based on a future where everyone is actively seeking health.

To achieve this, we need a culture of health in Washington. This culture will create family and community environments empowered and designed to provide opportunities for healthy childhoods and healthy choices throughout life.

Rapid change is taking place in both public health and health care services and we must seize the chance to collaboratively create a community wellness system where we live, learn, work, play, and worship. The system we envision will close gaps that affect the most vulnerable among us, and eliminate disparities in health status, educational attainment, and neighborhood safety.

Health Challenges

Only about twenty percent of health is impacted by medical care.⁴ The rest is due to the food we eat, air we breathe, our physical activity, education level, our genetics, and the many circumstances influencing choices we make about our behaviors.

- ➔ The leading causes of death before age 65 in Washington are heart disease, stroke, cancer and lung disease, unintentional injury, substance abuse, suicide, diabetes, and Alzheimer's disease.
- ➔ The leading causes of poor health in Washington are tobacco use, diet, lack of exercise, alcohol misuse and drug use.

For these leading causes, longstanding disparities exist by race, class, gender, and place. To raise the bar for everyone, we must work together in the context of our communities.



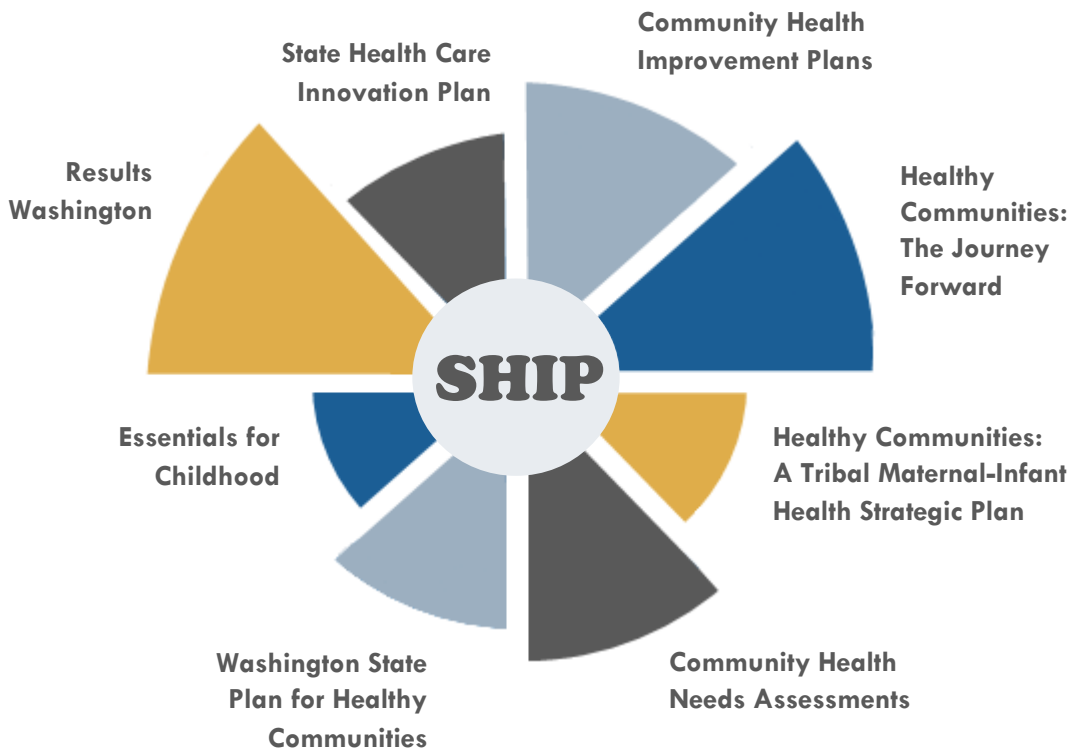
“Wellness is something we nurture, something we build into our environments, something we build into our policies, something we come together to create as public health professionals, doctors, nurses, lawyers, transportations planners, neighborhood advocates, Parent-Teacher Associations, and others.”

John Wiesman, Secretary of Health

⁴[Social Determinants of Health](#), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Plan Development

Over the course of a year, a workgroup composed of state, tribal, and local representatives developed the first *Washington State Health Improvement Plan* with the input from professional associations, academia, tribes, educational organizations, hospitals, state agencies, and many others. The plan captures, aligns, and builds on many improvement plans and initiatives:



The *State Health Improvement Plan* embodies these principles:

- Raising the bar for everyone by improving education, access to nutritious food and healthy activities, awareness of health issues, as well as access to health care
- Increasing collaboration, coordination and partnerships



"To address the social, behavioral, and physical determinants of health, we must fully engage in the state's health transformation and innovation work and the development and implementation of Accountable Communities of Health. By bringing together the whole wellness system and focusing on community needs assessments and improvement plans, we can best leverage the knowledge, relationships, and resources of the entire wellness system."

John Wiesman, Secretary of Health

Near Term Impact

In the near term, the *State Health Improvement Plan* addresses two key issues the public health system will improve in the next three years.

- *Nutrition, physical activity, and obesity* —
Measure the increase in the proportion of middle and high school youth who have a healthy weight
- *Access to Care* —
Track the increased number of LHJs that are actively participating in the Accountable Communities of Health – regionally based, voluntary collaborative groups aligned to achieve healthier communities and populations, improve health care quality, and lower costs

Long Term Shift

Far broader than the public health system, the framework involves a long term shift from a focus on individual health to population health, creating a culture that values health for everyone. It involves many partners from the health care system as well as schools, early learning, transportation, business, and others. It includes three long term priorities that look upstream, toward ways to create environments that encourage good health from the beginning.

- *Invest in the health and well-being of our youngest children and families* —
Ensure that families and communities build a strong foundation in the early years for a lifetime of good health, educational success, and economic prosperity
- *Support development of healthy neighborhoods and communities* —
Create communities that promote positive social connections and support health-promoting behaviors. Healthy and safe communities foster stability and increase quality of life for all.
- *Broaden health care to promote health outside the medical system* —
Elevate consideration of social and environmental factors impacting health and place an emphasizing on community health promotion and disease prevention strategies across the lifespan



Photo courtesy of the [Safe Routes to School National Partnership](#)

Performance & Accountability



Together, the following information sets provide a picture of the public health system, what public health does, how healthy we are as a state, and the processes we use to improve public health.

Activities & Services

The Public Health Improvement Partnership was charged by the 2007 legislature to identify and develop a way to count public health activities consistently and over time. The purpose was to answer basic questions on what public health does in Washington State.

The inventorying of public health activities and services began in 2008 and it is now done on an annual basis. Results from these annual measurements are used to help evaluate and assess the performance of the system.

To see the complete data sets, please visit <https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/hip>

Indicators

Local public health indicators help measure the health of Washington communities and inform the programs and policies of state and local public health agencies. Together, they provide a snapshot of health status, health behavior, and public health system performance.

Local public health jurisdictions can use these data to identify or confirm health issues, develop action plans, evaluate progress, decide where to invest limited public health resources, and provide community outreach.

To see the complete data sets, please visit www.doh.wa.gov/phi

Accreditation

In 2011 our state adopted the national Public Health Accreditation Board's set of standards for accreditation.

The goal of public health accreditation is to advance the quality and performance of health departments across the country. In Washington State, since 2012, the State Department of Health and Spokane Regional Health District achieved accreditation status. Eleven other local health jurisdictions are actively working toward accreditation, and others are working to align with the standards.

To see a detailed state map please visit www.doh.wa.gov/accred

For accreditation information please visit www.phaboard.org



"We also need to dramatically improve our use of technology and our data capacities. We need to examine the data we own and systems we use to collect it and implement new ways of obtaining better information. The frontier for public health is real time data which can influence real time decision making and can impact the course of health emergencies as well as determine if our interventions are making a difference."

John Wiesman, Secretary of Health

The Work Ahead



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Resources

Public Health Improvement Partnership

[Partnership and Workgroups Membership](#)

Foundational Public Health Services

[Foundational Public Health Services Resources](#)

Health Transformation & Innovation

[Health Transformation and Innovation Resources](#)

State Health Improvement

[2014 – 2017 State Health Improvement Plan](#)

Performance & Accountability

[Public Health Activities and Services Database](#)

[Local Public Health Indicators Database](#)

[Washington State Local Health Agencies Accreditation Status](#)

[Budgeting, Accounting and Reporting System \(BARS\) Resources](#)

The Work Ahead

[The High Achieving Governmental Health Department in 2020 as the Community Chief Health Strategist](#)

[Public Health 2030: A Scenario Exploration](#)

PUBLIC HEALTH
ALWAYS WORKING FOR A SAFER AND
HEALTHIER WASHINGTON

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To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TDD/TTY call 711).