

Strengthening Governance through the FPHS

Overview

Health departments provide public health protections in several areas, including: preventing the spread of communicable disease, ensuring food, air, and water quality are safe, supporting maternal and child health, improving access to clinical care services, and preventing chronic disease and injury. In addition, public health departments provide local protections and services unique to their community's needs.

The infrastructure needed to provide these protections strives to provide fair opportunities for all to be healthy and includes seven capabilities: 1) Assessment/Surveillance, 2) Emergency Preparedness and Response, 3) Policy Development and Support, 4) Communications, 5) Community Partnership Development, 6) Organizational Administrative Competencies and 7) Accountability/Performance Management. Practically put, health departments must be ready 24/7 to serve their communities. That requires access to a wide range of critical data sources, robust laboratory capacity, preparedness and policy planning capacity, and expert staff to leverage them in support of public health protections.

Staff Contacts

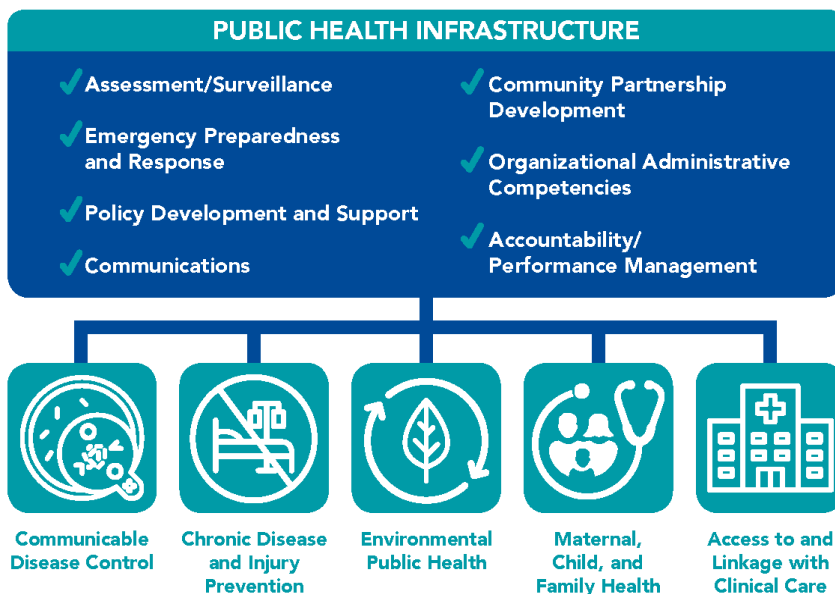
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Based on the Institute of Medicine report, *For the Public's Health: Investing in a Healthier Future*, the foundational public health services (FPHS) were developed to describe both the foundation and programs that no health department should be without. This body of work is now housed at PHNCI and is being expanded upon based on several years of work by 21st century states and others in the field.

By implementing the FPHS, health departments can provide public health protections that ensure fair opportunities for all to be healthy. The FPHS framework is made up foundational capabilities (public health infrastructure) and foundational areas (public health programs) and may include local protections and services unique to a community's needs. More information on the FPHS is available at www.phnci.org/fphs.

Governance Connections

The foundational capabilities related to governance are defined as the:

- Ability to lead internal and external stakeholders to consensus, with movement to action, and to serve as the public face of governmental public health in the department's jurisdiction.
- Ability to directly engage in health policy development, discussion, and adoption with local, state, and national policymakers, and to define a strategic direction of public health initiatives.
- Ability to engage with the appropriate governing entity about the department's public health legal authorities and what new laws and policies might be needed.

The Public Health Accreditation Board standards and measures and FPHS were developed for different reasons. Accreditation was developed as a tool to improve the performance and quality of public health departments, while FPHS was developed to represent a minimum package of public health services to make the case for sustainable funding and to describe what is needed everywhere for public health to function anywhere. Despite this difference, the accreditation standards and measures and FPHS were both developed by the field for the field and describe core elements of governmental public health practice. There is significant alignment between the two – all elements of the FPHS are embedded in to the accreditation standard and measures. Learn more about this alignment by reading *Aligning Accreditation and the Foundational Public Health Capabilities* available at www.phnci.org/fphs.