



Health Reform and Local Health Departments:

Opportunities for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Matrix of Key Recommendations

PREPARED BY THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE
WITH FUNDS FROM THE CDC

MAY 2010



I. Develop and Promote a Compelling Case for Public Health's Crucial Role in the Nation's Health

Set national health care goals, formulate national health strategy, and align key stakeholders

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	CDC ACTION STEPS	IMPACT
<p>1. Articulate the optimal vision, role and brand recognition for public health within national health reform efforts.</p> <p>2. Frame and support public health priorities for a healthy country by selecting from over 1,300 emerging Healthy People 2020 objectives and strategies.</p> <p><i>Note: The national plan should represent a consensus vision of how medical care, public health, and communities strengthen each other to support people who live, work, and play in healthy communities.</i></p>	<p>Involve public health partners (SHDs, LHDs other organizations) in the creation of a public health vision and plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasize primary prevention in community context. - Support social determinants of health. - Address health equity and disparities. - Prioritize strategies that integrate "health in all policies." <p><i>Note: Engage multiple partners at all levels. Organize and effectively communicate the planning process in real time.</i></p>	<p>The plan provides an essential element of the National Strategic Plan for Health called for in PPACA and is developed by the National Council.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>The plan is developed by CDC and the public health community with select elements incorporated into the National Council's Plan to strengthen integration between medical services and public health.</p>
<p>3. Coordinate with federal partners and intensify national dialogue regarding opportunities for population health improvements through the National Health Council and the Prevention Fund.</p>	<p>Propose CDC leadership role in NHC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — CDC Director on NHC. — CDC senior staff support the NHC. - organize assessments and identify priority areas. - prepare robust testimony for executive leadership that supports and elevates NHC. - provide evidence based studies, best practices and reliable data to validate policy and program recommendations. - ensure public health experts are incorporated into internal and external sub-committees. 	<p>CDC strategic influence in Washington, DC is amplified.</p> <p>NHC is strengthened through integrated engagement with CDC and public health expertise.</p>

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	CDC ACTION STEPS	IMPACT
<p>4. Ensure that the strategic plan for the nation’s health represents the best thinking in public health, prevention and health promotion priorities and recognizes the contributions that public health can make.</p>	<p>Advocate for a broad health agenda in formulation of the NPHPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Foster cross-agency dialogue and collaboration to coordinate strategy and resource allocation. — Synthesize complex issues and diverse recommendations into the strategic plan. <p>Coordinate with Homeland Security on procedures for approval and delivery of medical care messages to local health providers using federal, state and local health departments.</p>	<p>NHC strategic plan represents a clear, integrated, practical and effective plan that incorporates the core public health functions of assessment, policy development and assurance.</p> <p>The NHC plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Reinforces HP 2020 goals to improve the determinants of health. — Articulates ambitious population health metrics. — Stimulates civic engagement. — Provides compelling data on health care cost savings, based on reliable public health and prevention based strategies.
<p>5. Promote acknowledgement and integration of LHDs’ role in the provision of medical care services into the national strategic plan and into other federal programs.</p> <p><i>Note: CDC, HRSA, Medicaid, Bureau of Primary Care, SAMSHA, NACO, ASTHO, NACCHO, NACHC, NGA are key partners.</i></p>	<p>CDC requests HHS establish a Work Group to articulate LHD role in the provision of health services in a reforming health care system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Clarify the role of public health specialty clinics vis a vis the role of PCPs and medical homes. — Integrate the 330 community clinic network and LHD services into a more collaborative safety net system. — Increase access to outpatient specialty care at the local level. — Develop a plan for CMS, HRSA (and HRSA grantees) to support public health goals and the national strategic plan. — Define an on-going partnership process for HRSA, CDC and CMS. 	<p>New federal policies are created that support LHDs role in the provision of safety net services.</p> <p>HRSA recognizes and works with LHDs as an essential component of the safety net system of care.</p> <p>HRSA removes barriers and encourages collaboration at the federal, state and local levels among the key public and non-profit providers serving large numbers of Medicaid and uninsured patients.</p> <p>Safety net providers work collaboratively at the state and local levels on the provision of prevention services and the adoption of policies that support individual and community health.</p> <p>The federal government and the states have a coordinated plan to meet the increased demand for primary care services that will be created by the expansion of Medicaid in 2014.</p> <p><i>Note: States may need to create plans using federal guidelines and instructions that include achieving public health objectives.</i></p>

II. Focus and Align Research, Practice and Priorities

Set public health priorities that reflect the best science, research, and practices

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	CDC ACTION STEPS	IMPACT
<p>6. Focus priorities for achieving health at the federal, state and local levels; align resources to support priorities.</p>	<p>CDC supports the NHC to set national goals and priorities.</p> <p>— Use HP 2020 to identify the priority goals most important for the nation’s health.</p> <p><i>Note: For some entities (and some funds) one or more goals will be primary. In other cases, achievement of the specific goals will be a secondary objective.</i></p>	<p>National transformation grants reflect stated priorities.</p> <p>CDC identifies clear, well-defined goals that are supported across all levels of government.</p> <p>Focused input from a representative working group and/or public input to select priorities that 1) improve education; and 2) align priorities with resources.</p>
<p>7. Focus existing governmental public health resources to achieve the goals including but not limited to the Community Transformation grants and the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant.</p>	<p>Identify new and existing federal, state and local funding to support priority goals including the Community Transformation funds, the Preventive Block grant funds, related HRSA funds and program and Grant funds in other agencies.</p> <p>Examine creative strategies to support priority goals (e.g., Can WIC funds contribute to the goal of reducing obesity? Can Medicaid fund contribute to the reduction of alcohol dependence?)</p>	<p>Increased collaboration across programs and agencies to achieve key goals.</p> <p>Increased public awareness of health goals and relevance to improved individual and community health.</p> <p>Increased opportunities for States, counties, cities, schools, the faith community, labor, business and others to strengthen engagement to meet national health goals.</p>
<p>8. Continue to update and implement a public health research agenda consistent with the needs and challenges in the field, including the new requirements of health reform.</p>	<p>Update the existing public health research priorities based on health reform legislation.</p> <p><i>Note: Consider partnership with ASPH, the network of National Public Health Foundations, ASTHO and NACCHO.</i></p>	<p>Increased level of awareness among policy makers, academics and state and LHDs regarding the importance of public health research.</p> <p>Public, private and philanthropic opportunities align funding opportunities with identified research priorities.</p>
<p>9. Develop a translational research strategy that quickly moves scientific research findings into actionable local strategies.</p>	<p>Improve the linkage between research outcomes, national policies and state and local programming.</p> <p>Identify funding streams to support timely strategies that uplift research and promising practices.</p> <p><i>Note: Consider the annual publication of innovative research; a web site to accumulate research; and designation of national centers for specific topics.</i></p>	<p>Research agenda includes policies and resources to assure the distribution of the most important studies and conclusions.</p>

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	CDC ACTION STEPS	IMPACT
<p>10. Develop a process to identify, evaluate and disseminate best practice models that address national health priorities, and public health research priorities.</p>	<p>Contract out or establish an advisory work group to support CDC leadership to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Define the categories and criteria for a best practice models (topic, duration, evaluation). — Identify dissemination strategies. — Communicate process and protocol broadly. <p>Publicize request or establish grant requirements for foundations, non-profits, academic institutions and partner federal agencies to funnel best practices to the CDC “Models that Work Hub” for collection, review and promotion.</p> <p><i>Note: The original Models that Work concept was elevated by HRSA several years ago. Extensive communication and collaboration between LHDs, community partners and the national entities involved in cataloging best practices is essential.</i></p>	<p>Publicizing and branding successful approaches reduces fragmentation and increases the coherence of a national public health system.</p> <p>Development of a CDC recognized “Models that Work Hub” best practice and distribution site that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Promotes coordinated shared learning. — Encourages replication of promising models. — Simplifies the entry point for community and research engagement. — Enhances strategic opportunities to bundle research and community strategies that save money and improve population health.
<p>11. Develop a standardized resource tool kit for local health departments that reduces redundancy and avoids duplication of effort.</p>	<p>Coordinate with “Models that Work Hub” to add “recipes and tools” for implementing best practice models.</p>	<p>Increased standardization among LHDs and their partners.</p> <p>Promotion of effective programs and implementation.</p> <p>Increased ability of lower resourced LHDs to move into new areas.</p> <p>Increased political and partnership support for evidence-based programs and activities.</p>
<p>12. Develop accountability measures that demonstrate performance improvements through investments in public health.</p>	<p>Convene a nationally recognized advisory group to identify and elevate return on investment metrics associated with public health investments.</p> <p>Use the “Models that Work Hub” to advance dialogue around investment and impact metrics.</p> <p><i>Note: The current practice of expecting public health interventions to be cost neutral should shift to a more realistic, equitable measurement system to define effectiveness.</i></p>	<p>National recognition of effective public health and policy interventions.</p> <p>Increased willingness by state and local entities to invest in public health interventions.</p>

III. Strengthen the Foundation of the Public Health System

Prioritize system approaches that support local health department infrastructure development and capacity building

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	CDC ACTION STEPS	IMPACT
<p>13. Recognize the importance of LHDs and define opportunities, policies and program changes to support capacity building.</p>	<p>Consider requirements for LHD concurrence and/or input into CDC required documents prepared by SHDs.</p> <p><i>Note: The new CDC Office of State and Local Support is an excellent start but must impact the work of other CDC offices and programs.</i></p>	<p>CDC leadership strengthens the overall public health system and builds capacity to address the challenges of the future.</p>
<p>14. Systematize consistent communication with State and LHDs.</p>	<p>Evaluate communication options for consistent communication from CDC to the broad national public health community.</p> <p>Identify opportunities for CDC leadership’s engagement in national public health conferences.</p>	<p>Improved collaboration between CDC leadership and public health representatives across all levels of the system.</p>
<p>15. Define and address the challenge of very small local “health units” that lack the capacity to function in expanded roles that are emerging under a reforming health system.</p>	<p>Coordinate a task force with multiple partners such as NACCHO, ASTHO, RWJF, Office of Rural Health to identify opportunities and practical solutions that support states with multiple small, local “health units” to build capacity.</p>	<p>CDC and state agreements to regionalize, consolidate and/or by-pass small “health units.”</p> <p>All US residents are served by local public health entities capable of performing key duties and responsibilities of public health.</p>
<p>16. Evaluate the option of working directly with large urban health departments.</p>	<p>Plan and implement new CDC policies to engage in direct contracting with large local health departments (with concurrence and coordination from SHDs).</p>	<p>More large urban health departments relate directly to CDC.</p> <p>Improved communication, alignment, coordination and promotion of best practices between CDC and urban communities.</p>
<p>17. Develop a plan to articulate how to fund local public health functions and delineate the roles and responsibilities of local, state and federal agencies.</p> <p><i>Note: This plan is necessary to 1) assure a minimally adequate public health system in all parts of the country; 2) create a strong foundation for future federal investment; and 3) stimulate incentives for state and local investment.</i></p>	<p>Convene a national work group to agree upon new, more coherent and consistent financing mechanisms for LHD core functions that delineate and quantify the roles of the local, state and federal governments.</p> <p><i>Note: Consider ways to implement this plan over time. Consider options for new stable funding including dedicating a mandatory percentage of medical care expenditures to prevention and public health.</i></p>	<p>ASTHO, NACCHO and possibly other federal partners including CMS, HRSA, and Congress agree on a base level of public health funding and programming and how that will be achieved.</p> <p><i>Note: New federal investments in public health will supplement and/or match local funds (not supplant them) based on performance and quality standards.</i></p>

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	CDC ACTION STEPS	IMPACT
<p>18. Revise existing federal contracting and subvention funding mechanisms to shrink waste, bridge silos and link LHDs.</p>	<p>Develop internal policies on contracting and granting of CDC (and other federal) funds.</p> <p>Consider alternatives to administratively demanding competitive grants (e.g., Could LHDs be pre-qualified to receive certain categories and types of funds?).</p> <p><i>Note: Recognize the need for adequate planning and response time by LHDs to new funds.</i></p>	<p>Reduced administrative overhead spent on applying for and reporting on competitive grants.</p> <p>Increased ability by LHDs to build on-going programs and systems that last longer than a short grant cycle.</p> <p>Increased ability to distribute funds more broadly.</p>
<p>19. Introduce quality improvement and accountability measures that provide system-wide tracking and build the credibility of the public health system.</p>	<p>Standardize practices that provide accountability and demonstrate performance impact.</p> <p><i>Note: This is an important area for professional education and training.</i></p>	<p>Public health and prevention are recognized as effective investments and important complements to medical care services and spending.</p>
<p>20. Expand and redefine federal efforts to plan, coordinate and fund a stable national network of public health laboratories.</p> <p>21. Consider options for an on-going planning and governance process for the national public health laboratory system.</p>	<p>Convene a systems development approach; identify planning participants and resources.</p> <p><i>Note: The planning process should address 1) regionalization; 2) consolidation; 3) use of electronic reporting; 4) priorities for future research and test development; 5) capacity mapping; and 6) recruitment and education of laboratory-based scientists.</i></p>	<p>Public health is strengthened when federal, state and local health departments responsibly plan for laboratory services.</p>
<p>22. Provide leadership to keep LHD's involved in the Community Transformation Grant funding process.</p>	<p>Coordinate with HHS Secretary to ensure Community Transformation Grants are directed to achieve national health priorities.</p> <p><i>Note: Consider providing LHDs the right of first refusal on these grants (provided they meet requirements for community involvement and partnerships) or require that any applicant must have LHD support.</i></p> <p><i>The grants should build on-going collaborations at the local level between LHDs, other local government entities and key community and business partners.</i></p>	<p>Transformation Grants are focused and effective.</p> <p>Grants take advantage of LHDs' skills, knowledge and experience in assessment, best practices, use of data for evaluation and ability to support legislation.</p>

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	CDC ACTION STEPS	IMPACT
<p>23. Expand the capacity of public health leaders to work effectively and increase understanding of collegial challenges at the local, state and federal level.</p>	<p>Consider strategies to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Pilot a CDC Senior Fellowship program with CDC staff, who are placed in state and local public health programs for three month sessions. — Develop a mid-level Training Fellowship program that exposes state and local public health managers to federal agencies. — Improve integration of LHD representatives on CDC and other related federal planning and program development committees, grant award committees. — Address commissioned corps' retirement system that locks CDC professionals into working only at the federal level. 	<p>Cohort training and capacity building leads to increased knowledge, skills and understanding across all levels of governmental public health.</p> <p>Mid-level and senior public health leaders improve communication that contributes to system innovation.</p>
<p>24. Improve the confidence and capacity of local, state and federal public health leaders to work with medical care systems and providers.</p>	<p>Identify elements of CDC's work that supports effective partnerships with the medical care system and considers ways to expand them further.</p>	<p>Effective collaboration between public health leaders and local and state medical care systems.</p> <p>Improved coordination between the medical care and public health systems.</p>
<p>25. Develop training and education resources to support local health departments in leadership, management, and workforce development.</p>	<p>Establish learning networks and communities and provide resources and toolkits.</p> <p>Invest in training programs for local and state public health officials and program leaders.</p>	<p>Improved leadership, management effectiveness and skill development to address complex issues in public health.</p>
<p>26. Develop an integrated interoperable data network and information system in public health and across health systems.</p>	<p>Identify a senior level public health task force with CDC leadership to advise and engage directly with the emerging federal Community Health Data Initiative.</p> <p>Identify metrics to evaluate program interventions and population impact.</p>	<p>Timely, reliable and coordinated data at the local level to support decision making and community outreach.</p> <p>Improved and recognized metrics to better assess population health at the local level, with particular emphasis on the social determinants of health.</p> <p>Increased ability of LHDs to use data effectively to design and evaluate interventions.</p> <p>Increased ability of communities to understand key local health problems and how they rank in comparison with other communities.</p>

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS	CDC ACTION STEPS	IMPACT
27. Identify and promote the best information systems for LHD's.	<p>Provide matching funds for local acquisition of improved information systems.</p> <p>Identify and publicize a process to evaluate the capacities of data systems currently in use for LHDs.</p>	<p>LHDs and SHDs benefit from CDC expert technical guidance on effective information systems.</p> <p>LHDs and SHDs minimize likelihood of "expensive mistakes."</p>
28. Explore and evaluate e-government technologies for LHDs.	<p>Identify existing best practices in the use of e-government in public health and facilitate adoption by other LHDs.</p> <p>Identify functions that may be executed with web support and identify models for implementation.</p>	LHDs are more efficient through web based programs to carry out reporting, licensing and other business functions.
29. Strengthen electronic disease surveillance and reporting systems.	<p>Include public health in the planning for Health Information Exchange systems.</p> <p>Ensure that funds are specifically targeted to public health incorporation into the system.</p>	CDC states specific goals and timelines for widespread utilization and adoption.
30. Provide leadership to assure that public health needs for data will be met by developing HIE.	<p>Engage public health leaders in the definition of "meaningful use" and clarify system parameters, privacy and data ownership.</p> <p>Develop education modules and use widespread distribution of an e-curriculum to train public health leaders in HIE.</p> <p>Consider progressive e-training certificates as a prerequisite for CDC funding in specific areas of HIE grant support and technical assistance with implementation.</p>	<p>Health Information Exchanges facilitate the collection and transmission of public health data.</p> <p>CDC is recognized as a leader in e-curriculum related to HIE.</p>

