

An Equity-centered Public Health Ecosystem: Partnerships between Government and CBOs

Communities need solutions that are targeted, sufficiently-resourced, sustainable and meet their needs, cultural norms and styles of communication. But how can we accomplish this with the gaps in the public health system?

WHAT AN EQUITABLE PUBLIC HEALTH ECOSYSTEM LOOKS LIKE



HOW INTERMEDIARIES CAN HELP BRIDGE THE GAPS

The unique capacities of a knowledgeable partner ensures governmental public health can find, engage, partner with and fund community-based organizations —

intermediary nonprofits like PHI can form the bridge between governmental public health and community-based organizations, helping government identify and more effectively fund community-based organizations while giving CBOs the support, thought-partnership and guidance needed to access and succeed in public sector partnerships.

More specifically, intermediaries can:

- **Act more nimbly** than governmental public health in crucial, sometimes life-or-death, moments to administer much-needed funds that can be used flexibly to meet the most urgent needs of communities.
- **Quickly hire and recruit** for critical positions as well as connect government agencies and departments with community health workers from CBOs to address the shortage of public health capacity.
- **Process awards and contracts in days**, instead of weeks and months, and meet other legal, compliance and human resources guidelines that allow governmental organizations to get their funding directly where it is needed, rapidly and efficiently.
- **Provide direct technical assistance** to CBOs, connect CBOs to funds and resources they may not have been aware of or have access to previously, and create space for shared learning, creativity and collaboration between other CBOs and public health agencies or departments. They work across jurisdictions to connect communities who may be isolated but share common language or culture.
- **Develop and expand the capacity** of CBOs and governmental public health, ensuring they can continue to support health equity work far into the future and developing a public health workforce made up of community members who can understand and are trusted by their neighbors.
- **Serve as trusted collaborators** with CBOs, with whom they can communicate without the power imbalance inherent in funder-grantee relationships.

We will see a more robust and equitable public health sector if government public health agencies and departments include CBOs and intermediary nonprofits at the table to shape, implement and drive public health decisions.