Supporting A Resilient and Healthy Public Health Workforce: Public Health in a Post-COVID Era

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GREEETINGS FROM THE APHA EXECUTIVE BOARD AND FROM THE MSPHA BOARD
Session Overview

To say that COVID19 has been difficult for public health and its workforce is a major understatement. Now that the pandemic is appearing to be under better control, the public health workforce is returning to a focus on its comprehensive, pre-COVID duties as well as staying vigilant for future outbreaks.

This session will focus on the resiliency of the public health workforce and the organizations in which they work with a view toward the post-COVID era. Participants in this session will acknowledge the long and complex work that COVID19 has placed on public health; discuss some current key national initiatives to strengthen public health; and imagine the role of public health in a post COVID19 era.
WHAT WERE PUBLIC HEALTH’S KEY CHALLENGES BEFORE COVID?
WHAT WAS PUBLIC HEALTH LIKE BEFORE COVID?

Workforce
- Retention and recruitment
- Limited staff bandwidth
- Need for resources to provide training for 21st century skills

Foundations
- Underfunding of core public health capabilities and programs
- Insufficient resources to maintain cross-sector partnerships

Technology
- Gaps in funding and support
- Outdated infrastructure
- Lack of interoperability

Emergency
- Cuts to emergency preparedness programs
- “Boom and bust” funding cycle

FIGURE 3 | Pre-Pandemic Challenge Areas for the Public Health Sector

Public Health COVID-19 Impact Assessment: Lessons Learned and Compelling Needs
By Karen DeSalvo, Bob Hughes, Mary Bassett, Georges Benjamin, Michael Fraser, Sandro Galea, J. Nadine Gracia, and Jeffrey Howard
April 7, 2021 | Discussion Paper
Key Challenges for Health Departments During COVID

**Clarifying Roles and Lines of Authority**
Clear decision-making, need for federal leadership, importance of consistent messaging

**Funding Gaps for Foundational Needs**
Going beyond temporary funding boosts; investing in minimum capabilities; improving the flexibility and timeliness of disbursement

**Addressing Systemic Health Inequities**
Investing in vulnerable populations; supporting social needs during COVID-19

**Leadership & Workforce**
Support from elected officials for the public health workforce; implementation of Chief Health Strategist role

**Data Sharing & Technology Platforms**
Bridging public health and care delivery; supporting surveillance and case reporting

**Partnerships & Community Engagement**
Developing mechanisms for shared decision-making; using private sector capabilities

FIGURE 4 | Key Challenges for Local and State Health Departments During COVID-19

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COVID-19 provides a stark reminder of the tremendous social value of robust public health systems and the harrowing consequences when those capabilities are allowed to atrophy.

nam.edu/Perspectives
Symptoms of Depression, Anxiety, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, and Suicidal Ideation Among State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Public Health Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic — United States, March–April 2021

Summary

What is already known about this topic?

Increases in mental health conditions have been documented among the general population and health care workers during the COVID-19 pandemic; however, data on public health workers are limited.

What is added by this report?

Among 26,174 surveyed state, tribal, local, and territorial public health workers, 53.0% reported symptoms of at least one mental health condition in the past 2 weeks. Symptoms were more prevalent among those who were unable to take time off or worked ≥41 hours per week.

What are the implications for public health practice?

Implementing prevention and control practices that eliminate, reduce, and manage factors that cause or contribute to public health workers’ poor mental health might improve mental health outcomes during emergencies.

THE IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Rising Stress and Burnout in Public Health

VISIT PHWINS.ORG TO LEARN MORE
How Do You Feel About Where Our Public Health Workforce Is Now?
THE PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE

Fundamentally, public health services are only as good (and strong) as the workforce that delivers them.
We Have Walked Some of This Path Before – What Can Our History Tell Us
Key Reports Impacting Public Health
PUBLIC HEALTH AS A PROFESSION

• Public Health Credentialing of Individuals in the Workforce
• Accreditation of Schools and Programs in Public Health
• Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals
Accreditation of Schools and Programs
Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals

Updated October 2021

Available from: apha.org/corecompetencies
Certified in Public Health (CPH)

Created to Professionalize the Field of Public Health

• Common body of knowledge
• Assurance of a competent workforce
• Establish profession-wide standards
12 Years of Testing
11,113 Examinees
95 Countries with CPH
Graduate students of CEPH-accredited and CEPH-applicant schools and programs of public health

All graduates of CEPH-accredited and CEPH-applicant schools and programs of public health
Minimum of THREE years of public health experience and graduate-level related-degree or CEPH-accredited certificate program

OR

Minimum of FIVE years of public health experience and at least a bachelor’s degree
What Do You Think About Public Health As A Profession Now Compared To When You Started Your Work?
PUBLIC HEALTH AS A SYSTEM

• Refreshed Ten Essential Public Health Services
• NAM Post-COVID Recommendations
• Public Health Forward: Modernizing the US Public Health System
• National Consortium for Public Health Workforce Development
• APHA
Figure 2 | Frameworks for Essential Services and Foundational Capabilities in Public Health
About the NAM series on Emerging Stronger After COVID-19: Priorities for Health System Transformation

This discussion paper is part of the National Academy of Medicine’s Emerging Stronger After COVID-19: Priorities for Health System Transformation initiative, which commissioned papers from experts on how 9 key sectors of the health, health care, and biomedical science fields responded to and can be transformed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The views presented in this discussion paper and others in the series are those of the authors and do not represent formal consensus positions of the NAM, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, or the authors’ organizations.

Learn more: nam.edu/TransformingHealth
Recommendations from NAM

1. Transforming public health funding;
2. Affirming the mandate for public health;
3. Promoting structural alignment across the public health sector;
4. Investing in leadership and workforce development;
5. Modernizing data and IT capabilities; and
Bipartisan Policy Center
Call to Action for State, Territorial, and Local Public Health Departments to Move Public Health Forward

THE OPPORTUNITY

COVID-19 exposed numerous, long-standing, and deep fractures in our public health system and highlighted pervasive disparities among communities regarding factors that affect an individual’s physical and mental health – including factors that impact the health system. The infusion of federal, state, and local funding provides policymakers with a historic opportunity to correct those imbalances and set new courses for health in the United States that advance health equity and leave no person or community behind. This report provides a framework and concrete actions for policymakers and public health officials to guide strategic and bold investments in public health for health in the 21st century.

A disproportionate amount of attention is placed on medical care and the hospital as the principal pathway to good health. Health behaviors, social and economic factors, the physical environment, and other factors account for 80% of health outcomes, while medical care is responsible for only 20%. Through such activities as promoting clinical care, eating and active living, controlling infectious disease outbreaks, and preventing injuries, public health efforts allow Americans to live longer and healthier lives and is essential to the viability and prosperity of communities across the country. The infusion of federal, state, and local funding provides policymakers with a historic opportunity to correct those imbalances and set new courses for health in the United States that advance health equity and leave no person or community behind. This report provides a framework and concrete actions for policymakers and public health officials to guide strategic and bold investments in public health for health in the 21st century.

Bipartisan Policy Center
Advance **health equity** through a 5-year plan directed at policymakers and health officials that reimagines the way public health departments work.

- **Financing**: Maximize the social and economic impact of public health programs through flexible funding.
- **Laws and Governance**: Evaluate and modernize public health governance structures to meet threats and challenges and restore faith in public health.
- **Data and Information Technology**: Modernize systems to collect, analyze, and share data on health and health inequities.
- **Workforce**: Recruit and retain a diverse public health workforce specifically trained to advance health equity.
- **Community Engagement**: Build long-term relationships with community members to deliver culturally relevant interventions and practices.
- **Partnerships**: Leverage multi-sector partnerships to enhance community conditions for all to achieve their fullest potential for health.
The Commonwealth Fund Commission on a National Public Health System will identify key steps for strengthening the public health infrastructure at the federal, state, and local levels. We will review the evidence, engage with experts and public health leaders, and develop a report with specific policy recommendations, written in plain language. This report is intended to inform the transition to a national public health system through more directed use of grant and other federal funds, the resetting of roles and expectations, and reform of legal authority. Expect to release the report in late spring 2022.
National Consortium for Public Health Workforce Development

Building Skills for a More Strategic Public Health Workforce: A Call to Action

National Consortium for Public Health Workforce Development

de Beaumont Foundation
GOALS

1. Achieving Health Equity
   Support the public health workforce to become more diverse and inclusive, with the knowledge, insight, and structures they need to help their communities overcome systemic barriers to health equity.

2. Recruitment and Retention
   Recruit and retain a diverse, skilled public health workforce that is well-prepared to achieve health equity in their communities.

3. Building Robust and Equitable Pathways
   Support a diverse public health workforce to continue to learn and develop professionally throughout their careers to be able to respond to the unique and always-evolving needs of their communities.
APHA 2022 Advocacy Priorities

• INCREASE AND PROTECT FUNDING FOR VITAL PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCIES AND PROGRAMS AND STRENGTHEN THE NATION’S PUBLIC HEALTH INFRASTRUCTURE

• UPHOLD THE ACA AND EXPAND HEALTH CARE COVERAGE

• ADVANCE RACIAL AND HEALTH EQUITY

• ADDRESS THE HEALTH IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

• UPHOLD AND STRENGTHEN CRITICAL PUBLIC HEALTH LAWS AND REGULATIONS AND REVERSE DAMAGING ROLL BACKS

• ADDRESS THE NATION’S GUN VIOLENCE EPIDEMIC
Recipe for Future Public Health Success

- Heaping Portion of Dedicated and Talented Public Health Professionals
- 1 cup of great Partnerships
- 1 cup of Funding
- 2 Tablespoons of Flexibility
- 1 Tablespoon of Political Support
- Must have...
- COMPELLING MISSION / SENSE of PURPOSE
- Must minimize addition of any Bureaucracy and Inefficiency

By: MSDH
APHA PREPARES FOR 150TH YEAR CELEBRATIONS

As we celebrate APHA’s 150th anniversary, we recognize past accomplishments, acknowledge the impact of Sections and Affiliates on public health accomplishments and look forward to even more success as we work together to improve the health of the public and achieve equity in health status.

We’ll be holding a variety of special events throughout the year, culminating with the APHA Annual Meeting in Boston, Nov. 6-9, 2022.

Check out www.apha.org/APHA150 monthly for updates on events, activities and resources to celebrate APHA’s 150th anniversary.

Join us for this year-long anniversary celebration. We’ll be exploring APHA’s lasting impact on the nation’s health and charting our course for the future.
Thank You!
About APHA

The American Public Health Association champions the health of all people and all communities. We strengthen the public health profession, promote best practices and share the latest public health research and information. We are the only organization that combines a 150-year perspective, a broad-based member community and the ability to influence policy to improve the public’s health. Learn more at www.apha.org.