WHAT IS PUBLIC HEALTH?

The World Health Organization defines public health as: “The science and art of promoting health, preventing disease, and prolonging life through the organized efforts of society.”

PUBLIC HEALTH VS MEDICAL CARE

Focus: on an entire population
Goal: To prevent disease

Focus: on the individual patient
Goal: To treat existing disease

THE PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE

The public health workforce is vibrant and diverse. A few of the roles within the Public Health Workforce include:
- Epidemiologists
- Community Health Planners
- Nurses & Physicians
- Social Workers
- Bioterrorism
- Registered Sanitarian
- Community Health Workers
- Vital Statistics Registrars

THE PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) works with local health departments (LHD) across the state as well as a variety of state and federal partners. Taken together, this broad network of public and private organizations working to advance population health is often referred to as the “public health system.”

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTIVITIES

ODH provides guidance to local health departments, and ODH has three divisions responsible for carrying out the ten essential services:
- Family and Community Health Services administers WIC & Help Me Grow.
- Prevention and Health Promotion administers Healthy Ohio & the environmental health bureau.
- Quality Assurance is responsible for licensure and regulation of facilities.

LHDs are responsible for environmental health services such as water and restaurant inspections, infectious disease reporting and surveillance, and provision of primary care services for the medically underserved.

THE 10 ESSENTIAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

1. Monitor health status to identify and solve community health problems.
2. Diagnose and investigate health problems and hazards in the community.
3. Inform, educate, and empower people about health issues.
4. Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.
5. Develop policies and plans to support individual and community health efforts.
6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
7. Link people to health services and guarantee health care is provided.
8. Assure a competent public health and healthcare workforce.
9. Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of health services.
10. Research insights and innovative solutions to health problems.

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THE PUBLIC HEALTH 3.0

In 2016, the US Department of Health and Human Services launched the Public Health 3.0 initiative, in which local health departments will build upon their historic achievements by focusing attention on the social determinants of health (SDH) — the conditions in which people are born, live, work, and age from education to housing and access to healthy foods.

ODH’s 2017–2019 State Health Improvement Plan aligns with PH 3.0 by including “Cross-cutting factors” alongside SDH:
- Health Equity
- Public Health Systems, Prevention and Health Behaviors
- Healthcare System and Access