Orientation to Local Public Health in Massachusetts
Job Aid

What is Public Health?

Public health is a multidisciplinary field whose goal is to:
• Prevent disease
• Promote health
• Improve the quality of life in communities through
  o Education
  o Promotion of healthy lifestyles
  o Research

Medicine and public health overlap, but medicine focuses on the health of individual patients and public health focuses on the determinants of health and disease to promote health in the population.

What were the major public health achievements in the 20th century?

1. Immunizations
2. Workplace Safety
3. Declines in Deaths from Heart Disease and Stroke
4. Healthier Mothers and Babies
5. Fluoridation of Drinking Water
6. Motor-Vehicle Safety
7. Control of Infectious Diseases
8. Safer and Healthier Foods
9. Family Planning
10. Tobacco as a Health Hazard

What is Healthy People 2020?

A vision of a society in which all people live long, healthy lives.
HP 2020 goals are to:
✓ Identify nationwide health improvement priorities
✓ Increase public awareness and understanding of the determinants of health, disease, and disability
✓ Provide measurable objectives and goals that are applicable at the national, state, and local levels
✓ Engage multiple sectors to take actions to strengthen policies and improve practices that are driven by the best available evidence and knowledge
✓ Identify critical research, evaluation, and data collection needs
What is the framework for public health?

Three core functions
- Assessment, Policy Development, and Assurance

Ten Essential Services
1. Monitor Health
2. Diagnose and Investigate
3. Inform, Educate and Empower
4. Mobilize Partnerships
5. Develop Policies and Plans
6. Enforce Laws
7. Link to/Provide Care
8. Assure Competent Workforce
9. Evaluate
10. Research

How is local public health organized in MA?

351 towns and cities
- Board of Health (appointed, elected, or Board of Selectmen) or Commission
- Staffing determined by municipality
- MA does not mandate minimum staff qualifications or credentials but many local communities do
- Public health services can be shared across municipalities

What are the primary LBOH Program Areas and cross-cutting competencies for LBOH to perform their duties?

Primary LBOH Program Areas
1. Air Quality
2. Animal Control
3. Body Art
4. Disease Case Management
5. Disease Surveillance, Investigation and Follow-up
6. Drinking Water
7. Food Protection
8. Hazardous and Medical/Biologic Waste
9. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
10. Housing
11. Nuisance Control and Noisome Trades
12. Recreational Camps for Children
13. Recreational Waters (Bathing Beaches and Swimming Pools)
14. Solid Waste
15. Tanning Establishments
16. Vaccine Management
17. Wastewater

Cross-cuttting competencies
- Advocacy
- Analysis, Problem Solving, and Risk Management
- Communication
- Community/Public Health Assessment
- Cultural Competency
- Emergency Preparedness
- Health Education
- Legal Issues
- Project Development, Planning, and Management

A report on the cross-cutting competencies of a public health workforce is available on the Institute website.

How can I learn more?

LPHI On Your Time modules and Resources
- http://sites.bu.edu/masslocalinstitute/training/on-your-time-trainings/
- http://sites.bu.edu/masslocalinstitute/resources/

Manual of Laws and Regulations Relating to Boards of Health