Crossing sectors for public health: tackling tough questions & messy stuff

Hawaii Public Health Association Annual Meeting
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President-elect, American Public Health Association

OVERVIEW

GREETINGS FROM APHA:
the voice of public health

The value of strong affiliates
APHAs and Affiliates

Regardless of where we practice, we all live locally - ultimately, strong APHA affiliates, united with strong APHA sections - strengthen our collective voice.

This is our greatest strength
We can build on where we have a shared vision

GREETINGS FROM EMORY

GREETINGS FROM EMORY: School of Medicine

EMORY - 4
EBOLA - 0

MAHALO
What determines health?

Health is about more than healthcare

- Health care only accounts for some 10-20% of the determinants of health
- Socioeconomic factors and factors related to the physical environment are estimated to account for up to 50% of the determinants of health

**Table: Determinants of Health**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Determinants</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Health Care Facility</th>
<th>Household Income</th>
<th>Social Cohesion</th>
<th>Quality of Life</th>
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**Health Outcomes**

- Mortality, Morbidity, Life Expectancy, Health Care Expenditures, Health Status, Functional Limitations

Geographic disparities in life expectancy

Place matters

- At the county level, there are “large and increasing” disparities – “Socioeconomic and race/ethnicity factors alone explained 60% of the variation”.
- Gap “between the richest and poorest Americans is about 20 years”.
- This difference can be seen in neighborhoods just a few miles apart...

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Opportunity Atlas

Impact of where a child grows up: a single mile counts

- Use:
  - Online, free to use
  - Explore interactively
- Data:
  - Children’s socioeconomic status
  - Household income
  - Big data, small places
  - Easy US Census tract
- Facts:
  - Positive factors only help when found in the immediate neighborhood
  - Data shows these factors don’t have much impact if they are a mile away

“...direct line from opportunity to equity to health”

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“...direct line from opportunity to equity to health”

“When those resources are unevenly distributed across neighborhoods – and sometimes within the same few blocks, as the Atlas illustrates – health outcomes are certain to be inequitable as well.”
Your zip code determines your health?

**Today, a person’s zip code may be a stronger determinant of health than his or her genetic code.**

90210

It shouldn’t be true that circumstances such as zip code predict a child’s future – or an adult’s.

& yet...

**Your zip code determines the quality of and access to:**
- schools,
- jobs,
- housing,
- grocery stores,
- community safety, and
- green space**

Effect of poverty on our genes

- Long known that socioeconomic status predicts health outcomes
- Recent evidence: “poverty leaves a mark on nearly 10% of the genes in the genome”
- This matters because: “Poverty can have a lasting impact on a wide range of physiological symptoms and processes...related to immune responses to infection, skeletal development and development of the nervous system”
- Future research is needed to determine implications for health

Dr. Bill Foege

Former CDC Director and public health hero

- Played a key role in the global eradication of smallpox in the 1970s
- Increased rates of immunization in developing countries in the 1980s
- Still changing the world through public health

Asked at the Decatur Book Festival – If he had it to do all over again, what would he focus on?

“Poverty”
Because of its dose-response relationship to health

We cannot do this alone

Public Health 3.0:
Crossing sectors for public health
“Primary primary prevention”
Social determinants of health

IF
- avoiding smoking,
- avoiding obesity,
- increasing physical activity, and
- improving nutrition
are primary prevention…

What are the activities before these?
“Primary primary prevention” = Social determinants

Intervening at the community level
Making use of the data

Communities have to determine how to use the data in their own backyards

“The right solution often depends on very specific
local conditions, resources, and preferences.”

Public Health 3.0
Capacity building to address the social determinants of health as well as other traditional public health challenges

Public Health 3.0 - at the core
- Local public health has the capacity to address policy, environmental and system-level drivers of health challenges
- Public health brings stakeholders to the table - or to many tables*

Convening cross-sector stakeholders to increase access to positive social determinants**

Cross-sector synergy
Creating the conditions in which everyone can be healthy

Making the healthy choice the easy choice
“Not about supporting a single individual - as important as that is - it’s about creating a healthier context that allows a person to make healthy choices”
Achieving PH 3.0 Recommendations

1. Form unexpected cross-sector partnerships with community stakeholders
2. Embrace the role of Chief Health Strategists throughout communities (from PH or from partners)
3. Build infrastructure: From PH dept accreditation to umbrella structures that share funding and governance
4. Enhance and modify public health funding
5. Make available timely, reliable, and actionable data for communities

De Beaumont Foundation

The Practical Playbook II: Building Multisector Partnerships That Work

“A roadmap for health-improving partnerships”

PracticalPlaybook.org

De Beaumont Foundation

The future of public health

Working with people outside of traditional public health to frame and address community concerns

Working cross-sector on commonly shared concerns – with everyone doing the part they do best

Bringing together those responsible for the different parts of the social determinants of health to talk about how it’s all linked

De Beaumont Foundation

Creating healthier contexts

• Govt, non-profit, and tech
• Electronic inhaler sensors
• Crowd-sourced, real-world data
• Created a heat map of areas of concentrated pollution
• Changed care plans

AIR Louisville

Led to –
1. Policy changes
2. Planted trees
3. Changed zoning
4. Re-routed trucks

The future of public health

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Building a cross-sector public health workforce
Public health workforce and trainees

Current state

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<td>• About 200k people in local and state public health</td>
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<td>• PH workforce median age = 47 (US median age = 42)</td>
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<td>• &gt; people than the general public eligible to retire in the next few years</td>
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<td>• 24% thinking of leaving for reasons other than retirement</td>
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<td>• The MPH isn’t the entryway to the PH workforce—Half do not have an MPH</td>
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<td>• Only 14% of governmental PH have formal PH training</td>
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<td>• Schools of Public Health graduate 30k PH students/year—most aren’t going into governmental roles</td>
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Where are our public health grads going?

Academia  Hospitals  Not-for-profits  For-profits  Technology

Cross-sector public health workforce?

What this means for the future

Cross-sector means folks who don’t live and breathe public health (or don’t know that they do…)

Public health trainees working in sectors where we desire partnership + Shared concerns = Cross-sector workforce (shared public health lens)

Be a “connector”

Mixing non-traditional partners - expanding the public health team

Public health is collaborative—we should reach out to departments of religion, political science, psychology, and others, and ask:
1. Are you interested in social justice?
2. Are you interested in applying science for practical solutions to problems?
3. Have you thought about a career in public health? or about partnering with people in public health?

I understand how to reach out to non-traditional partners:
• I’m a public health person working in a school of medicine
• I’m a practitioner working in an academic environment
• I’m often the non-researcher working to steer good research

Where are your connections in your community?

Be the organization that connects all kinds of people to public health.

Speaking of working cross sector: Tough questions and messy stuff
My **vision** for public health

- Universal **access to quality** healthcare
- Strong, well-funded and responsive **public health infrastructure**
- Protection of our **natural resources**
- Mental health recognized as **essential** to public health

Public health is **not easy**

**We got into public health, knowing there may be messy work to be done.**

“**A career in public health ought to come with a trigger warning.**”

(Prof. Alan Hinman)

**No health without mental health**

“**Median years of potential life lost (due to mental disorders) was 10 years (n = 24 studies)**”

**Estimate: 14.3% of deaths worldwide (8 M per year) are attributable to mental disorders.**

**Mental health and physical health are connected**

Health is not a single factor

**HALF A CENTURY AGO**

“Without mental health there can be no true physical health.”

TODAY

Strong evidence of the link (bidirectionally) between mental health and physical health outcomes

Yet... Most of us know someone who’s struggled

- > **20% of US adults experience mental illness** in a year*
  - 42 million living with anxiety disorders
  - 16 million living with major depression
  - < 5% have severe problems like bipolar disorder or schizophrenia
- **15% of US adults struggle with a substance abuse disorder**
  - Number **on par with those who have diabetes**
  - Incidence is > **1.5x annual prevalence of all cancers combined**

Highly stigmatized health concerns

**A physical health diagnosis like cancer “might garner sympathy”**

**A mental health diagnosis “might elicit judgment, fear and avoidance.”**

8 in 10 workers with a mental health condition don’t get treatment because of the shame and stigma associated with it.

The impact is even larger when we include impact on communities, families and society
Why I am passionate

Like many others, I have family experience with:
- mental health challenges;
- the inequity of our health care system with regard to mental health;
- and the stigma that unfortunately and unjustly often surrounds mental health issues.

Maximizing physical and mental health

- Mental and physical health are impacted positively and negatively by the same factors.

The same social determinants...

- The same factors and social determinants are the concerns of mental health and physical health alike.
  - #ThisIsPublicHealth
  - Public health is the right group to promote discussions about these links and initiate cross-sector partnerships.

How do we lead?

- Expect the unexpected
- Trust that it's never too late to change
- Own your mistakes
- Seek mentors and get help when you need it
- Explore your options
- Become a good communicator
- Find joy at work
- Push boundaries

...and cross sectors for public health!
I’ll leave you with this…

If you want to have a GOOD career, meet 4 conditions:

1. Find something that you like to do…
2. That you’re good at
3. That helps others
4. That puts food on the table

If you want to have a GREAT career, add a 5th condition:

5. Work with people you like to work with.

Best public health advice I’ve received

Please share with others...

With sincere thanks

It’s about family.

APHA Affiliates
For the hospitality of your affiliate family

APHA Leaders
For the tremendous honor to serve as President-elect
For our collective commitment to do good for APHA and public health
For being public health family

APHA Staff
For awesome support

Emory School of Medicine and Rollins School of Public Health
For time away from the office
For being both professional family and good friends

My wife, Johanna Hinman
For time away from home
For leaving APHA and GPHA as much as I do
For being the heart and soul of my family

Engage with me on Twitter! @carlsonlisam

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 nearly 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.