

An Agenda for Change

October 2010

Sustain our past successes • Confront our emerging challenges • Use our available resources most efficiently and effectively

The What – An Action Agenda for the Public’s Health

Focus our communicable disease capacity on and enhance the most effective and important elements of prevention, early detection, and swift responses to protect people from communicable diseases and other health threats

- Promote immunization
- Prevent, detect and respond to health threats
- Modernize informatics
- Improve communication

Focus on policy and system efforts to foster communities and environments that promote healthy starts and ongoing wellness, prevent illness and injury, and better provide all of us the opportunity for long, healthy lives.

- Policies, systems and environments that promote healthy starts and lives for everyone
- Address health disparities
- Partner and incorporate health into all policies
- Address the affects of social and economic factors on health

With healthcare reform, it is time for public health to more effectively and strategically partner with the healthcare system to improve access to quality, affordable and integrated health care that incorporates routine clinical preventive services and is available in rural and urban communities alike.

- Monitor health care access
- Forge a stronger relationship with the clinical care system to improve the delivery of clinical and community preventive services
- Assure that attention is paid to reducing substance abuse and promoting good mental health

The How – A Public Health Reform Agenda

Retrain the public health workforce to the skills and competencies needed for the new work

Re-prioritize work and modify business practices

Develop a long-term strategy for predictable and appropriate levels of financing

Guiding Principles and Criteria for Making Policy, Program, and Funding Choices

To implement the Agenda for Change we will use a common set of guiding principles and decision-making criteria

Guiding principles for the governmental public health system

1. We are accountable for all resources we are allocated – people, funding, and technology.
2. We will build upon our history of thinking and planning as a system while recognizing the diversity of our local communities, and we will hold each other accountable.
3. Science guides our work – epidemiology, biology, social science (including communications), and political science (an understanding of government).
4. We help communities find workable solutions to their health problems and leverage their resources.
5. We work to achieve equity so that all Washingtonian's have the opportunity to make the choices that allow them to live a long healthy life, regardless of their gender, income, education, racial or ethnic background, sexual orientation, or where they live.

Criteria for making policy, program and funding choices

1. Does this protect the public's health and public safety? As we respond to new challenges, we need to sustain our past successes in preventing and responding to communicable diseases, public health emergencies, environmental public health threats and chronic disease and injury.
2. Is this a responsibility of government or something people expect to be done by government? Is government in the best position to act? If government is in the best position, is it state, local, tribal or a combination of these entities? Or is there a viable community partner or should we be supporting the development of a viable community partner?
3. Do we have clear indication that the actions will improve health or improve the opportunity for people to make the choices that allow them to live long, health lives?
4. Does this have the greatest potential impact in increasing the years of healthy life lived and eliminate injustices in health inequity.