



Portland Public Health

Strategic Plan Executive Summary

December 9, 2008

Introduction

These are particularly challenging times. Everyone feels the economic pinch and often the first things to be sacrificed are prevention and investment in needed infrastructure. However, these are exactly the kinds of times when the public's health is most vulnerable. It is critical that Portland Public Health ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of internal management as well as program development and delivery.

To that end, the Portland Public Health management team prepared this strategic plan with the assistance of Craig Freshley, Good Group Decisions. It is a tool to help guide our activities, sharpen our focus, and help our stakeholders (including the City Council, partner agencies and organizations, the public, and grantmakers) understand Portland Public Health's intentions, as well as provide a benchmark for measuring progress over time. When we refer to Portland Public Health throughout this document, we are referring to the Public Health Division of the Health and Human Services Department within the City of Portland.

Vision

To be a healthy community where all can enjoy a high quality of health in a clean environment, enjoy protection from public health threats, and access high quality health care.

Values

- **Inclusion**
 - Collaboration and partnerships (internal & external)
 - Serving the underserved
- **Quality**
 - Evidence-based, scientific practices
 - Ethical
- **Efficiency**
 - Do the most with the least

- **Learning**
 - Professional growth; set up for success
 - Learning organization – promoting competencies, leadership
- **Creativity**
 - Creative, innovative, new ideas
- **Flexibility**
 - Change is a given; growth is optional.
 - Expect change; nimble, proactive and responsive

Mission

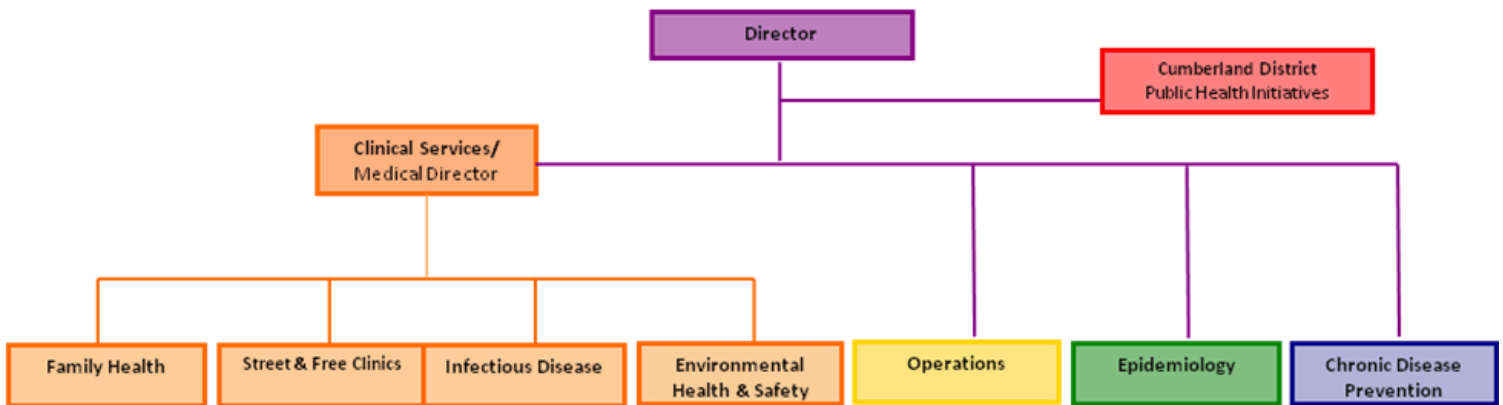
The mission of the Public Health Division of the Health and Human Services Department of the City of Portland is to improve the health of individuals, families, and the community through disease prevention, health promotion, and protection from environmental threats.

Strategic Focus

In addition to the ten essential public health services promoted by US Department of Health and Human Services, Portland Public Health is focused on the following:

1. Ensure access to essential public health services especially among underserved populations.
2. Collect and analyze data to monitor health status and evaluate public health programs.
3. Educate policymakers and the general public about health status trends and proven approaches to improve health status.
4. Partner with other agencies and organizations to establish a district-wide public health infrastructure as part of the statewide system.
5. Identify and prioritize existing and emerging district-wide public health issues in collaboration with community and state partners.
6. Develop our organizational capacity and increase awareness about public health efforts.

New Organizational Structure



New Strategic Directions

These are the general ways in which we expect things to improve.

1. Increased emphasis on policy priorities

Portland Public Health intends to place more emphasis on planning and developing policies designed to achieve the goals. For instance, PPH intends to identify and convey top public health priorities to policy makers and the public. In order to identify top priorities, PPH will place more emphasis on data collection and analysis.

2. Assure services and increase collaboration

While PPH has a good track record of program delivery, we intend to more actively support other organizations and agencies that may be better suited to deliver services. This will require working more closely with partners to ensure that key public health needs are met. To emphasize our desire to work more effectively with others, we have identified specific program-by-program intentions for partnership opportunities (see Priority Objectives, below).

3. More research and data

In keeping with increased emphasis on establishing public health priorities, Portland Public Health intends to elevate the role of research and data within PPH and grow the Research and Data Program.

4. Better communications

Portland Public Health intends to do a better job communicating with external stakeholders (partners, policy makers, etc.) and the general public about our role. Further, we intend to improve internal communications among staff via more effective meetings and better staff orientation.

5. More unified

Portland Public Health staff currently operates out of several locations, making internal coordination and communication challenging. We intend to move toward bringing all Portland Public Health staff together in a single location along with local staff of Maine CDC.

Anticipated Changes by Area of Work

Division-Wide

As Portland Public Health continues to grow, it is critical to ensure collaboration and cross-fertilization among all programs, as well as to realize significant efficiencies during this challenging economy. Thus, it is a priority to consolidate operations at one site (excluding school-based health centers). It is also important to develop additional regional public health efforts (via the Cumberland District Public Health Council, which leverages resources, builds partnerships, provides information, and advocates for all towns in Cumberland County) in order to better manage diseases, as well as more proactive population health services to realize improvements in quality of life and avoidable health care expenditures.

Research and Data

Anticipated changes include an increase in staff and resources in order to meet the stated objectives of building a robust Research and Data Program that offers an array of services to Portland Public Health and the towns in the Cumberland District. Additionally, the program will rely increasingly on informatics tools such as electronic medical records and early detection surveillance systems to carry out its work.

Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention

The two primary goals of the Health Promotion and Chronic Disease Prevention Program are to:

1. Use local data to describe the impact of chronic disease in the towns of the Cumberland District (some local data are not currently available).
2. Ensure community-focused primary prevention strategies exist for the five most prevalent chronic diseases identified in the towns of the Cumberland District.

Family Health

We anticipate more efficiency in clinical operations that will result from the organizational structure change within PPH with increased coordination of clinical programs. We also foresee that there will be less funding from traditional sources at the local, state and federal levels in

the future. This will necessitate a greater focus on program priorities and emphasis on collaboration with community partners where possible. In response to a growing ethnic diversity within our program areas, we will be tailoring services to meet the identified need of these varied populations.

Street and Free Clinics

Both components of the Street and Free Clinics program, the Portland Street Clinic (also known as Health Care for Portland's Homeless) and the Portland Community Free Clinic, will continue to provide quality, culturally-appropriate health care as part of the safety net services. We anticipate increased attention to quality improvement programming and assuring our continued success by participating in a nationwide project, the Access and Redesign Collaborative, to improve our efficiency in both clinical and fiscal areas.

Infectious Disease

We anticipate that congressional reauthorization of the Ryan White Act may result in a program that is substantially different from our current program. The grant that provides base funding for Positive Health Care has been renewed through December 2009 and at that point we may see a change in our funding level, staffing and scope of work. Also, with cutbacks in federal funding for vaccine purchase, new eligibility restrictions, and financial burden on medical practices, we may be called upon to play a new role in immunization service delivery.

Environmental Health and Safety

By assessing the gaps in environmental health, we will have a roadmap for our future towards enhancing the well being of the community. This will be done by:

- Completing environmental health gap analysis assessment.
- Educating the public and policy makers about environmental health hazards and prevention measures.
- Preventing environmental health hazards by advocating for effective policies and educating the public. Environmental justice is a specific area of interest.
- Implementing and evaluating a range of interventions recommended by the 2008 Food Safety assessment.
- Evaluating our capacity to respond to public health disasters on a more frequent basis and implementing corrective actions to lessen the impact on residents and help them recover more quickly.