
The changing landscape of governmental public health in Oregon

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PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

Office of the State Public Health Director

Overview

- Structure of Oregon's public health system
- Ten Great US Public Health Achievements
- Challenges to the current system
- Public health delivery models

Objectives

At the end of this presentation, participants will be able to:

1. Describe the general structure of the public health system in the US and Oregon;
2. Describe the pros and cons of different local public health delivery models

Health is...



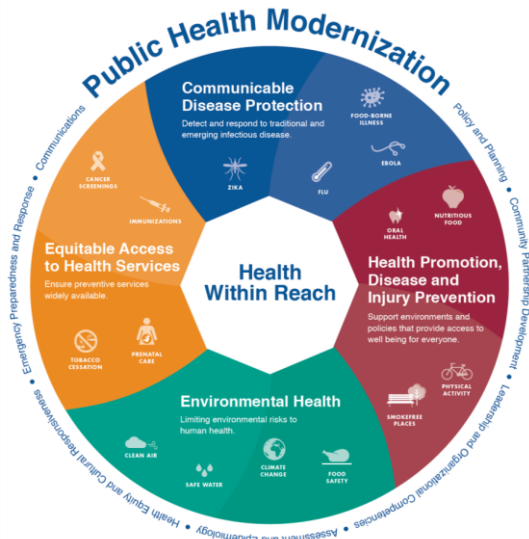
....a dynamic state of complete physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. *WHO, 1998*



....Public health is what we as a society do collectively to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy. *IOM, 1988*

Public Health

- **Prevents** epidemics and the spread of disease
- **Protects** against environmental risks
- Prevents injuries
- **Promotes** and encourages healthy behaviors
- Responds to disasters and assists communities in recovery
- Assures the quality and accessibility of health services



What is governmental public health?

- Governments at every level—federal, tribal, state, and local—play important roles in protecting, preserving, and promoting the public's health and safety
- State and local governments have a responsibility for the health of its citizens.
 - Health Officials are accountable to ensure that the government is able to **monitor the population's health** and intervene when necessary **through laws, policies, regulations, and expenditure of the resources** necessary for the health and safety of the public.

Governmental Public Health in Oregon

Decentralized public health structure

State public health =
OHA Public Health Division

Local public health=
33 local public health authorities (one
three-county health district)

Who Has Public Health Authority in Oregon?

- State Public Health Division, Public Health Director
- Local Public Health Authorities
- Local Public Health Administrators
- State and local health officers
- Federally-recognized tribes

Ten Great Public Health Achievements--- United States, 1900--1999

1. Vaccinations
2. Safer workplace
3. Safe and healthier food
4. Motor vehicle safety
5. Control of infectious diseases
6. Decline in deaths from coronary heart disease and stroke
7. Family planning
8. Tobacco Control
9. Healthier mothers and babies
10. Fluoridation of drinking water

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/00056796.htm>

Why would we want to change?

BOB DANNENHOFFER, MD

Douglas

Public Health

621 West Madrone | Roseburg, Oregon

541-440-3571



Public health realities

- The landscape of the medical safety net has changed
- Hard for public health departments to recruit
- Health departments have struggled to get paid for their services
- Some counties are financially strapped and public health competes with sheriffs and roads
- The reality of PERS

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Other models

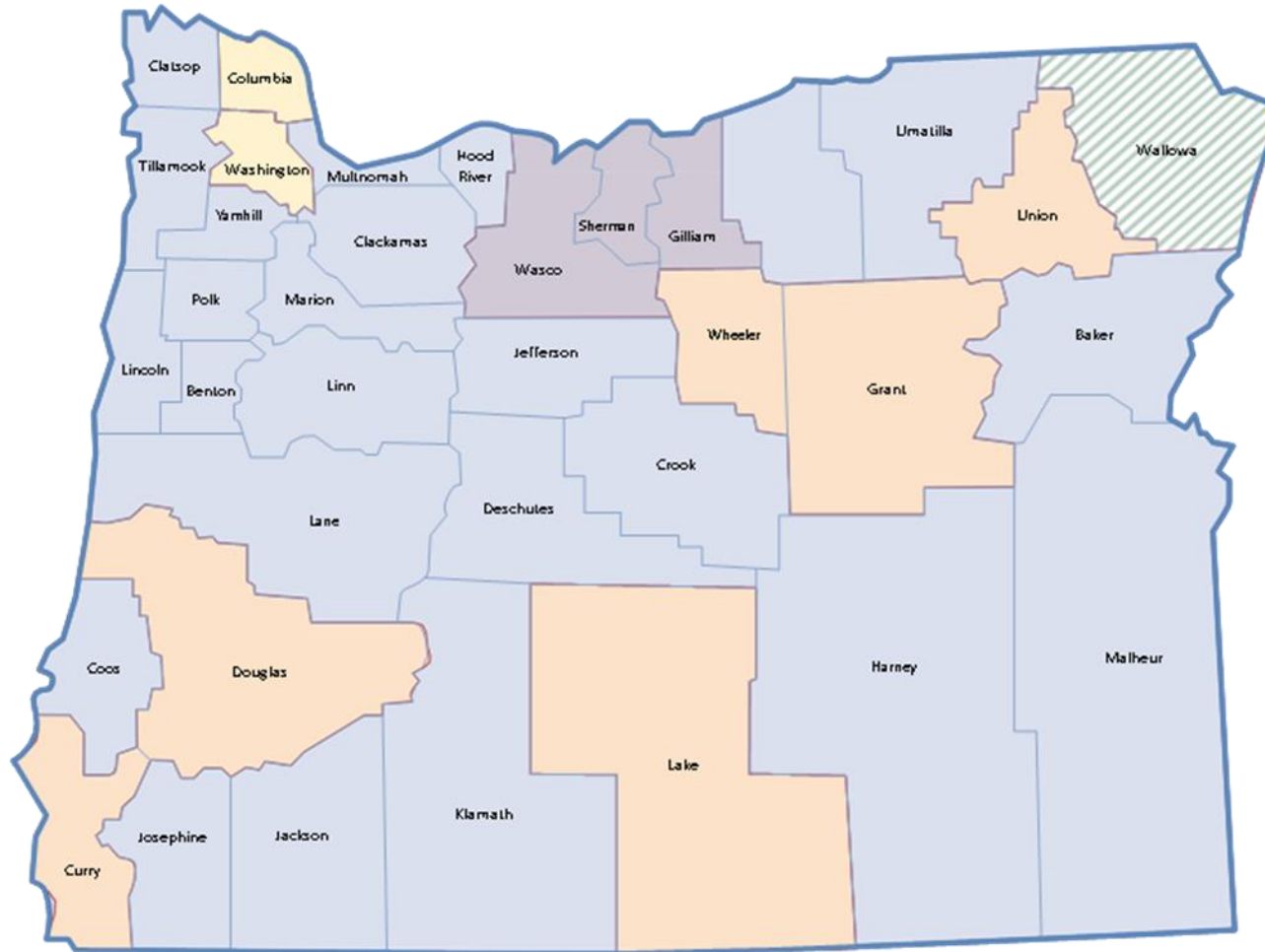
- Counties forgoing their public health authority
- Counties contracting for clinical services
- Counties contracting for all (or nearly all) of the public health services- Douglas County story
- Counties entering into intergovernmental partnership agreements for public health services

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LPHA structures map



LPHA structures

- LPHA operates most public health services within the LPHA governmental structure. 100% of non-governance public health services are contracted to other entities.
- LPHA contracts for most clinical public health services and operates most non-clinical core public health services within the LPHA governmental structure.
- Cross-jurisdictional health district.

No perfect (or even really good solution)

- Hard to reconcile the private not for profit financial systems
- Clunky contracting process
- Monitoring and sub-monitoring is hard
- New models may not be durable

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The future?

- It is very hard to predict, especially about the future- Niels Bohr
- The pressures are unlikely to abate- thus expect continuing evolution

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A Well-Functioning Public Health System

- Strong partnerships where partners recognize they are part of the public health system
- Effective channels of communication
- Accountability to system-wide health objectives
- Resource sharing
- Leadership by governmental public health agency
- Feedback loops among state, local, tribal, territorial, and federal partners



Discussion question

- What are some challenges and opportunities for delivering public health services within and outside of a governmental structure?

For more information

Kim La Croix

Kimberly.w.lacroix@state.or.us

Bob Dannenhoffer

rldannen@co.douglas.or.us