

# Core Functions and Essential Services For Public Health in Wisconsin

## Core Public Health Functions and Essential Public Health Services

The essential public health services connect directly with Wisconsin's statutorily mandated core public health functions: assessment, policy development, and assurance. Conducting research, one of the 12 essential services, supports and influences all the others. Shared responsibility for these services exists between government and the public, private, nonprofit, and voluntary sectors throughout Wisconsin as a key strategy to attain our shared vision, described as "healthy people in healthy Wisconsin communities."



### Assessment

Determine community strengths and identify current and emerging threats to the community's health through regular and systematic review of the community's health indicators with the public health system partners.

- 1. Monitor health status to identify community health problems.**  
Monitor and assess a community's health status. Identify community assets and threats to health and determine current and emerging health needs.
- 2. Identify, investigate, control, and prevent health problems and environmental health hazards in the community.**  
Use health laboratories and other resources to investigate disease outbreaks and patterns of environmental health hazards, chronic disease and injury. Identify relationships between environmental conditions and the public's health. Develop and implement prevention and intervention strategies.

### Policy Development

Establish a community health improvement plan and action steps with the public health system partners to promote and protect the health of the community through formal and informal policies, programs, guidelines, environmental changes, and programs and services.

- 3. Inform, educate, and empower the public about current and emerging health issues.**  
Promote and engage in healthy behavior and lifestyles by making health information available in a variety of formats, styles, languages, and reading levels so it can be effectively communicated to the diverse people of Wisconsin. Regularly share and discuss current and emerging health issues with policy-makers and decision-makers throughout the state (such as health care providers, elected officials, agency and department leaders).
- 4. Promote community partnerships to identify and solve health problems.**  
Collaborate with community groups and individuals (including those not traditionally considered connected to "health care") to identify and address local and statewide health and environmental issues. Provide needed infrastructure support to build and maintain inclusive, viable partnerships. Develop strategies for assessing and engaging the full range of individual and community assets to improve health.
- 5. Develop policies and plans that support individual and community health efforts.**  
Provide the leadership to drive the development of community health improvement processes, plans, and policies that are consistent throughout the state but address local needs and conditions.

### Assurance

Address current and emerging community health needs and threats through governmental leadership and action with the public health system partners. Take necessary and reasonable action through direct services, regulations, and enforcement. Evaluate the improvement plan and actions and provide feedback to the community.

- 6. Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.**  
Efficiently and effectively enforce state and local laws and regulations that protect and promote the public's health.
- 7. Link people to needed health services.**  
Provide education, outreach, case-finding of people outside the system, referral, care coordination, and other services that help people better use the public health and health care services to which they have access.
- 8. Assure a diverse, adequate, and competent workforce to support the public health system.**  
Lead and support efforts to improve the quality, quantity, and diversity of health professionals in the state. Promote the development of professional education strategies and programs that address state and local health needs.
- 9. Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.**  
Regularly evaluate the public health system's performance, processes and outcomes to provide information necessary to define accountability, allocate resources, reshape policies and redesign services.
- 10. Assure access to primary health care for all.**  
Seek out and develop creative approaches to improve access to primary health care for all people, especially those who confront economic, linguistic, cultural, geographic or other barriers.
- 11. Foster the understanding and promotion of social and economic conditions that support good health.**  
Raise awareness of social and economic conditions that affect the public's health. Promote conditions that improve the health of a community. Engage broad community partnerships between the private, nonprofit, public, and voluntary sectors to confront these issues in order to have a healthy community. Foster conditions that allow families and neighborhoods to nurture and protect children.
- 12. Conduct research to seek new insights and innovative solutions to health problems.**  
Develop partnerships with institutions, colleges, vocational and technical colleges, and universities to broaden the range of public health research (to include, for example, issues and communities that were historically ignored, and emerging issues that need attention). Conduct timely scientific analysis of public health issues. Test innovative solutions at the local and state levels.

