

# APPENDIX B

KEY ELEMENTS OF  
WISCONSIN'S PUBLIC  
HEALTH SYSTEM

Everyone Living  
Better, Longer

Healthiest  
Wisconsin  
2020





# APPENDIX B

## KEY ELEMENTS OF WISCONSIN'S PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM

### Core Functions and 10 Essential Services of Public Health

State and local health departments in Wisconsin are required by law to make certain that three core public health functions and 10 essential public health services are available to all people in Wisconsin. These functions and services represent the spectrum of activities and responsibilities that are shared among public health system partners. No one sector can do this alone, but together, the partners in a public health system can.

Wisconsin's public health system refers to coordinated working relationships between government, private, public, and voluntary agencies, organizations, sectors, and communities to achieve public health goals through shared responsibility to carry out the three core functions and 10 essential services in order to align policies and systems to assure conditions in which people can be healthy and part of healthy, safe, and resilient families and communities.

By statute, Wisconsin's public health system is organized around three core functions and 10 essential services.

### Core Function: Assessment

Assessment means all activities involved in community diagnosis such as disease surveillance, identifying current and emerging needs, analyzing the underlying causes of problems, collecting and interpreting data, case finding, monitoring and forecasting trends, research and evaluation of outcomes.

### Essential public health services that relate to this core function

1. *Monitor the health status of populations to identify and solve community health problems.* This means monitoring and assessing the community's health status and identifying the community's strengths (assets) and challenges (threats) and determining current and emerging health needs of all.

2. *Investigate and diagnose community health problems and health hazards.* This means using health laboratories and other resources to investigate disease outbreaks and patterns of environmental health hazards, chronic disease, and injury. It also includes identifying relationships between environmental conditions and the public's health and developing and implementing prevention and intervention strategies.

## Core Function: Policy Development

Policy development means the process by which communities make decisions about problems, choose goals and proper means to reach them, handle conflicting views about what should be done, and allocate resources.

### Essential public health services that relate to this core function

1. *Inform and educate individuals about health issues.* This means promoting and engaging 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. It also means regularly sharing and discussing current and emerging health information, statistics, and issues with communities, policy-makers, and decision-makers.
2. *Mobilize public and private sector collaboration and action to identify and solve health problems.* This means collaborating with community groups and individuals to identify and address local and statewide health and environmental issues using the underlying determinants of health. It also includes providing needed infrastructure support to build, support, and maintain inclusive partnerships to improve and protect the public's health. Finally, it includes developing strategies for inviting and engaging the full range of human capital, social networks, and community assets to improve health for all.
3. *Develop policies, plans, and programs that support individual and community health efforts.* This means providing 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.

## Core Function: Assurance

Assurance means to make certain that necessary services for a community are provided to reach agreed-upon goals, either by encouraging public, private, non-profit, civic, and voluntary sector action, by requiring it, or by providing services directly.

## Essential public health services that relate to this core function

1. *Enforce statutes and rules that protect health and ensure safety.* This means the efficient and effective enforcement of state and local laws and regulations that protect and promote the public's health.
2. *Link individuals to needed personal health services.* This means providing education, outreach, case-finding, referral, care coordination, navigation, and other services that help individuals and families access high-quality health and public health services.
3. *Assure a competent public health workforce.* This means leading and supporting efforts to improve the quality, quantity, and diversity of the public health workforce. This includes promoting the development of professional education strategies and programs that address state and local health needs.
4. *Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.* This means regularly evaluating the public health system's performance to include programs, processes, results, and outcomes. It includes providing information necessary to define accountability, allocate resources, reshape policies, and redesign services. It includes aligning policies and systems to improve productivity, prosperity, participation, and well-being of the people of Wisconsin.
5. *Provide research to develop insights into and innovative solutions for health problems.* This means developing partnerships with institutions, colleges, vocational and technical colleges, and universities to broaden the range of public health research to eliminate health disparities, and testing innovative approaches to what works to improve and protect the health of the public. This includes conducting timely scientific analysis of current and emerging public health issues.

