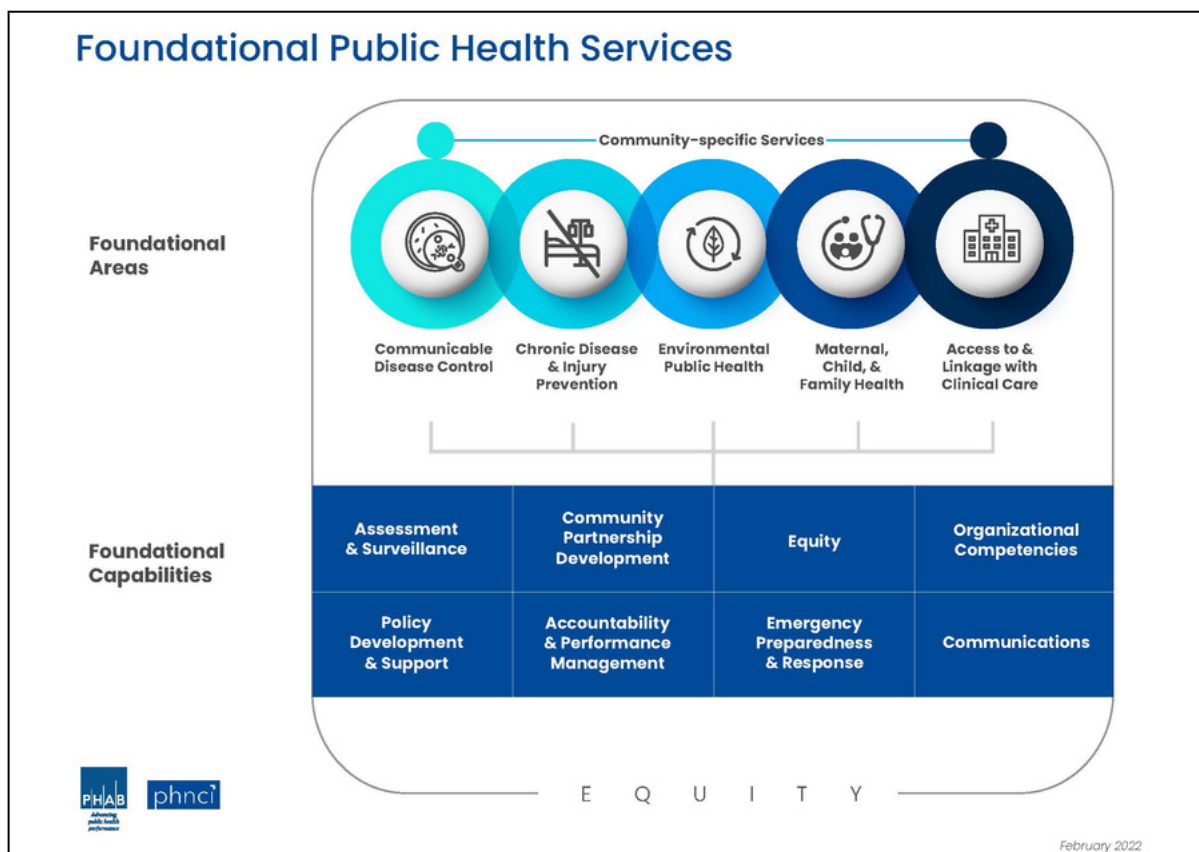


Foundational Public Health Services

Every day and during times of emergencies, public health departments make the United States a healthier and safer place to live and work. Public health works to ensure basic protections exist, all people are safe in communities, and aims to prevent health threats before they occur. Although responsible for much more, public health prevents the spread of disease and chronic conditions that impact the health status of a community and drive health care spending. Public health departments collaborate with social service and hospital/healthcare providers in response to emergencies, provide regular assistance to their communities, and continuously evolve to meet local needs.

High-performing public health departments use **data-driven, evidence-based practice** to be good stewards of public money and address community priorities. Delivering public health protections in their communities at this level requires a strong foundation of public health infrastructure.

The **Foundational Public Health Services** (FPHS) framework outlines the unique responsibilities of governmental public health and defines a minimum set of Foundational Capabilities and Foundational Areas that must be available in every community.



Implementation

What are the benefits of learning about the FPHS? Understanding the Framework provides opportunities to develop a shared language, collaborate to meet shared goals, and protect the health and well-being of your community.

Public health professionals are using the FPHS to modernize and transform the field, shifting from ways public health may have worked in the past to new strategies to promote health in a community, advance equitable practices, and work across sectors to address social challenges that intersect with public health (e.g., homelessness, food insecurity, gun violence, climate change, transportation, education). Implementing the FPHS often includes infrastructure changes and reimagined way of working. This requires innovation, collaboration, and investment - you are invited to join public health in driving change.

Foundational Public Health Services

A Breakdown of the Foundational Public Health Services

Outside of the public health field, the FPHS may be used to communicate and set clear guidelines for how to keep society healthy. The Framework explains the necessary investments, priorities of services, and provides a roadmap to meet the public health needs of all people in communities across the United States.

Community-specific services vary based on a health department's or community's unique needs and are also supported by the Foundational Capabilities and Foundational Areas. For example, a local health department may provide testing/treatment for a certain sexually transmitted infections and other jurisdictions may not. State and local health department-generated activities, and most resources, are used for the other important programs specific to their jurisdictional needs. These are outside the scope of the FCs and FAs, but still essential to a given jurisdiction.

Foundational Areas (FA) are programs and services that are supported by the public health infrastructure. In the FPHS, this is the minimum that should be available.

Foundational Capabilities (FC) are the cross-cutting skills and capacities needed to support basic public health protections and other programs and activities that are key to ensuring the community's health and achieving equitable health outcomes. When public health professionals talk about infrastructure, they are referring to the FCs.

Equity must be embedded in all public health efforts. Equity is infused in all of the FPHS and is a standalone FC, emphasizing the needed capacities, capabilities, and resources to ensure equity is integrated and intentional in all FPHS.

Looking Forward

Practically put, health departments have to be ready 24/7 to serve their communities. That requires access to a wide range of critical data sources, robust laboratory capacity, preparedness and policy planning capacity, and expert staff to leverage them in support of public health protections. Like all infrastructure, it tends to degrade over time without proactive maintenance and deliberate efforts to upgrade its capabilities as communities grow and evolve.

Evidence suggests many public health departments don't have the dedicated funding needed to build-out and sustain their public health infrastructure. Without them, public health departments simply can't deliver seamless, high-quality protections the public expects. In fact, one recent landmark study estimated a nationwide gap in funding public health infrastructure at \$4.5 billion.¹

In ways large and small, public health departments prevent the spread of disease and bring people together to help communities stay healthy. To continue these activities and respond to new threats, public health needs increased support. **Help protect the health of your community by:**

- Identifying shared goals and strategies to achieve them.
- Meeting with local and state health departments to discuss opportunities to collaborate and support their work.
- Promoting local public health achievements, including accreditation, awards, and additional recognition of excellence.
- Supporting the public health workforce.
- Engaging in conversations about investing in public health infrastructure, policy objectives, and current needs.

¹ Developing a Financing System to Support Public Health Infrastructure, The Public Health Leadership Forum, November 2018