

PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

2022



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Message from the Chair

The coronavirus pandemic demonstrated we must both strengthen our public health infrastructure and trust in public health messaging and measures. The Public Health Advisory Council (PHAC) is positioned to support the state of Michigan as we navigate the issues of strengthening public health infrastructure, messaging and relationships with communities and partners in a post-pandemic world.

I wanted to ensure all members of the PHAC had the opportunity to express their vision and ideas on how to achieve these shared goals. Collectively, we were able to develop a new strategic framework that assisted in aligning our messaging and help motivate and guide our actions.

The PHAC strives to identify and remedy systemic barriers to equity so that each individual we serve has the opportunity to attain their optimal health regardless of race, ethnicity, disability, gender identity, socioeconomic status, immigration status or any other factor that may affect access to care and health outcomes. The PHAC has outlined a bold vision for the public health of our state, and we know that it can be achieved.

We believe that through collaboration, we can build a robust public health infrastructure that challenges us to address health disparities while creating opportunities to meaningfully engage with community. I am excited to embark on this journey towards better public health with my fellow PHAC members and the communities we represent.

Sincerely,



Natasha Bagdasarian MD, MPH, FIDSA
Chair
Chief Medical Executive
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

About the Public Health Advisory Council

Mission

To strengthen the delivery of public health in Michigan with a priority on equity; to serve an advisory role for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and the Governor.

Vision

We will have a strong, accountable, trusted public health system with the capacity to meet current and future public health needs. We will eliminate health inequities for all Michigan residents and create healthy, resilient communities.

Charge

The PHAC shall act in an advisory capacity to the Governor and the Director of the Department, and shall do all the following:

1. Provide guidance and advice about emerging issues in public health, or other public health matters, as deemed appropriate, or as requested by the Governor or the Director of the Department.
2. Develop and propose an action plan for implementing the recommendations set forth in the Report.
3. Monitor the effectiveness of Michigan's public health response system, particularly in circumstances in which multiple government agencies are required to work in collaboration in response to a public health threat.
4. Review multiagency efforts that support a One-Health approach (human health/animal health interface) to reduce duplication of effort by involved agencies and to form a unified communications strategy when addressing public health concerns.

Goals

- Strengthening of public health in order to prepare for the future.
- Rebuild trust with the public.
- Work with other trusted messengers and community groups.
- Strengthen relationship between the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) and local health departments (LHDs).
- Keep messaging targeted.
- Ensure accountability.
- Strengthen public health infrastructure.
- Financial support for LHDs and other partners.
- Better data management systems that communicate with each other.

Membership

Eric Adelman, represents the general public
James Averill, represents veterinarians
Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, Chief Medical Executive, Chair
James Baker, represents local director of public works
Shenlin Chen, represents the general public
Denise Chrysler, represents a school of public health from an institution of higher education
Jayne DeBoer-Rowse, represents a registered nurse
Cheryl Dickson, represents a nationally accredited medical school
Denise Fair Razo, represents local public health officials
Justin Klamerus, represents a member with hospital administration experience
Rory Lafferty, represents a non-profit health or environmental organization
Dr. Farah Jalloul, represents licensed pharmacists
Dr. Annette Mercatante, represents physicians
Ashley Rapp, represents epidemiologists
Tanya Rule, represents an expert in environmental health
Kristen Schweighofer, represents a food safety expert
Dr. Herbert Smitherman, represents the general public
Marianne Udow Phillips, represents the general public
Linda Vail, represents local public health officials
Jamie Zaniewski, represents the general public

Ex-Officio Members

Jennifer Bonsky – Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development
Jacqueline Hampton – Michigan State Police
Larry Horvath – Licensing and Regulatory Affairs
Eric Oswald – Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy
Dr. Alexis Travis – Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

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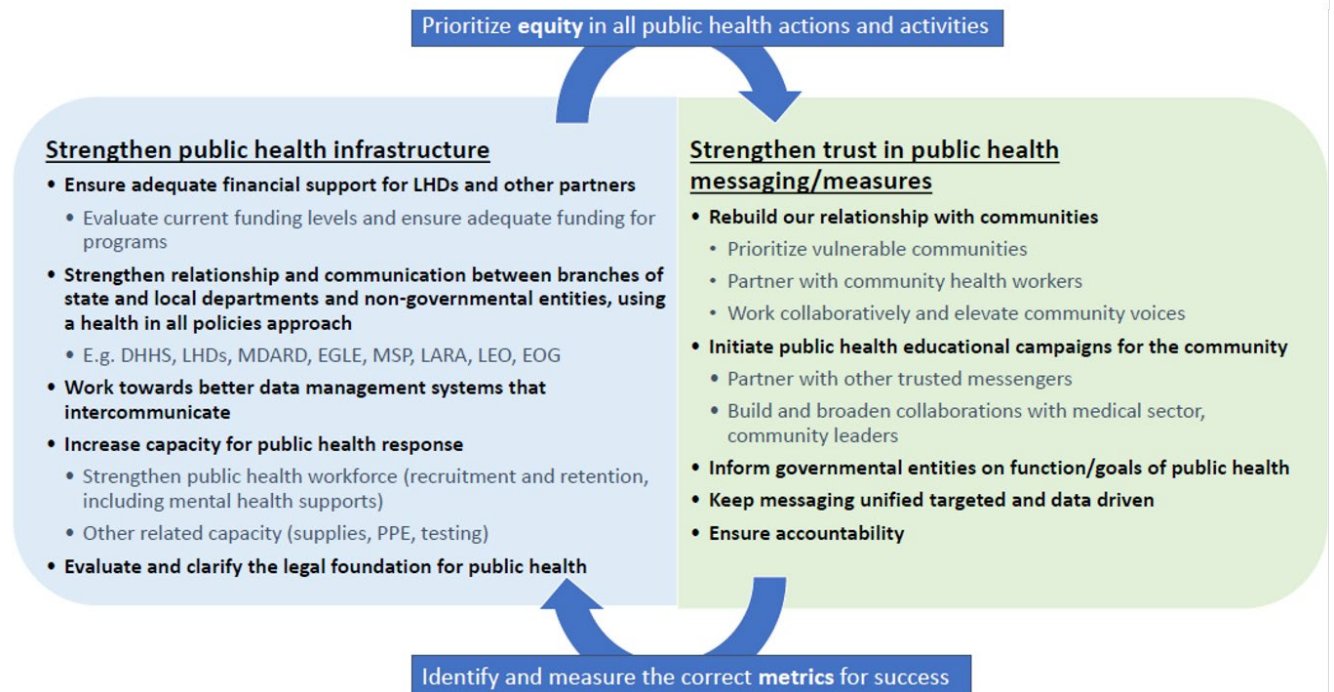
2022 PHAC Activities

The PHAC engaged in a variety of strategic initiatives this year to move the needle on health inequities, improve public health infrastructure, and create new methods for rebuilding trust with community. This section highlights both the internal and external efforts the PHAC participated in to fulfill its mission.

PHAC Strategic Planning

As we emerge from the early weight of the pandemic, public health has identified new priorities, approaches, and agendas to meet the demand for innovation. To be at the forefront of these discussions, the PHAC convened strategic planning sessions to update the mission and vision of the group. With a new PHAC Steering Committee, the PHAC was able to define goals, objectives, and principles for collaboration for 2022 and beyond.

To complement this direction, the group created and approved a new strategic framework:



National Academy for State Health Policy Learning Collaborative

The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) sought state applications to participate in its Public Health Modernization State Learning Collaborative. This learning opportunity will engage up to five teams of state leaders for one year to develop and strengthen policies and strategies to improve cross-sector alignment, coordination, and collaboration between public health and health system stakeholders on key public health goals. States participating in NASHP's Public Health Modernization Learning Collaborative will receive one year of strategic planning and related technical assistance support to develop initiatives to strengthen collaboration between public health agencies and health system partners to prevent and address foundational public health conditions that are also high-impact health conditions in the broader health system.

MDHHS and the PHAC submitted a joint response, highlighting the past success and learnings from cross-sector initiatives. Since being accepted, the group began to:

- Examine opportunities and best practices for developing cross-agency/cross-sector governance structures aligned around common goals;
- Align resources and health system incentives around public health goals;
- Improve information exchange with key partners;
- Effectively engaging communities in policy development and implementation.

As the PHAC continues to engage in this learning collaborative, lessons learned and best practices will be shared with relevant parties to ensure implementation within the state.

Strengthening Public Health in Michigan

With funding from the Total Health Care Foundation, the PHAC and Center for Health & Research Transformation (CHRT) gathered input from stakeholders across Michigan to understand potential strategies to strengthen the infrastructure of public health in Michigan as well as to build trust in public health. The group gathered information from key informants about how to better align local, state, and federal public health entities, how to build trust through collaborations with other health care entities such as primary care, and how to improve dissemination of public health measures and messages. Key informants were asked to identify potential solutions to the problems that were highlighted in the interviews. The semi-structured protocol questions can be found in Appendix 2 and organizations represented in the semi-structured interviews can be found in Appendix 3. A timeline of this project is below.

Project Timeline

Task	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4
Design semi-structured interview protocol, with input from PHAC	X			
Identify interview subjects, recruit and schedule interviews	X	X		
Conduct 20 key information interviews, potential additional interviews		X	X	

Synthesize interview data with input from PHAC			X	X
Present findings to PHAC; Develop model for pilot				X
Write final report to THC Foundation				X

The final summaries of interviews were reviewed, and key themes emerged. The key themes are:

Improve knowledge of public health among legislators.
Improve knowledge of what public health does among the public.
Improve connection of public health to the health care system.
Improve public health data systems.
Enhance technical assistance training to local health departments.
Develop leadership training for local public health.
Improve communications between MDHHS and local health departments.
Improve advocacy for more flexible federal funding.

The PHAC will draft recommendations and present findings to stakeholders to inform future public health policy and practice in 2023.

Conclusion

This year represented a pivot for the PHAC. With so many different needs to be addressed and older recommendations for addressing them – the group found it best to spend time getting ahead. The public health challenges our state faces highlight the need for better, stronger health systems and capacities. It is time to consider shifting the paradigm toward public health and preventive medicine. And public health cannot do this alone. There is an ongoing importance for coordination and collaboration across stakeholders and partners.

The PHAC believes the time to act is now. There has never been a clearer case for empowering public health and improving the lives of all Michigan residents. The urgency of these collective public health threats and the availability of both proven and innovative solutions have combined in this moment, and we must seize the opportunity to rebuild our public health infrastructure in a more sustainable and equitable manner.

In 2023, the PHAC will develop actionable recommendations based on the interviews led by CHRT. These recommendations will be finalized in early 2023 and will be the foundation of our work for next year. These recommendations will work to ensure that Michigan’s public health system is able to respond to future public health challenges.

Appendices

Appendix 1: 2022 Public Health Advisory Council Meeting Dates

February 15, 2022

March 21, 2022

April 14, 2022

May 17, 2022

June 21, 2022

September 20, 2022

November 9, 2022

December 20, 2022

Workgroup Meetings

November 14, 2022

December 8, 2022

Appendix 2: Semi-Structured Protocol Questions

Q 1: Say a little bit about what public health means to you?

- What would a high functioning public health system look like to you? (Can you give a few characteristics of that system?)

Q 2: Our current system of delivering public health services has distinct roles for the federal, state and local governments. Can you say a little bit about what you think the most important roles and responsibilities for each entity of government should be?

- Are there any functions that are performed at the local level today that you think should be centralized at the state? Conversely, are there functions currently performed at the state that you think would be better performed at the local level?

Q 3: What resources are needed to enable effective public health services and response?

- What would adequate financial support look like?
- Other resources?

Q 4: Do you have some thoughts on what data or data systems are needed to manage public health?

Q 5: How can state or local public health build stronger relationships with local communities and/or the group you represent?

Q 6: Do you have thoughts on how to strengthen relationships and communication between branches of state and local public health and non-governmental entities?

Q 7: How about communication with the public? How can we improve public health educational campaigns for Michiganders?

Q 8: What could be gained by better connecting public health with medical care communities? How could we achieve that?

Q 9: Do you have thoughts on how Michigan's public health leaders can establish a more unified message and goals for public health?

Q 10: Do you have other thoughts on how to better improve the infrastructure and/or trust in public health?

Appendix 3: Stakeholder Organizations Included in Semi-Structured Protocol

- ACCESS
- Action of Greater Lansing
- Citizens Research Council
- Family Physicians
- Kellogg Foundation
- Local Health Departments
- Michigan Association of Counties
- Michigan Association for Local Public Health
- Michigan Association of Health Plans
- Michigan Health and Hospital Association
- Michigan Health Endowment Fund
- Michigan League for Public Policy
- Michigan Legislators
- Michigan Long Term Care Ombudsman Program
- Michigan Primary Care Association
- Michigan Public Health Institute
- Michigan Sheriffs' Association
- Michigan State Medical Society