

# **Public Health Is Stronger Together (PHIST)**

## **A collaborative strategic initiative including IPHA, IDPH, IAPHA, NIPHC, SIPHC, & UIC SPH MCPHP**

**Short-term Goal: Increase effectiveness and strengthen the Governmental Public Health System through strategic improvements.**

**Overall Goal: Strengthen the entire public health system in Illinois.**

### **Accomplishments**

The PHIST Initiative is growing and evolving. There is a dual focus on developing an overall plan to strengthen the public health system and on implementing and aligning work as opportunities arise. To this end there have already been some accomplishments related to the identified focus areas even though the overall plan is a work in progress.

### **Progress Report as of 2/18**

#### **Focus Area 1. Clarify roles and relationship of LHD/SHD**

- A list of state and local roles has been developed and assessment tools drafted.
- More discussion needs to occur on how to operationalize list.

#### **Focus Area 2. Improve coordination and joint planning**

- The IDPH Director's Local Liaison meetings are now both more frequent and more focused on strategic discussion and a more collaborative approach to issues.
- IPHA is taking the lead to ensure more coordination on legislative issues which has already resulted in joint Zika testimony, joint support led to adoption of immunization rules. A joint legislative reception was held on April 5<sup>th</sup> and weekly calls were held during session. A second joint legislative reception is planned for April 25, 2018.

#### **Focus Area 3. Improve communication across the governmental public health system**

- Each organization involved has collected issues related to communication between IDPH and local health departments. These issues have been discussed and the following areas are going to be addressed first:
  - Communication will likely be improved through better understanding of roles at local and state HD. IDPH Assistant Director spent a day in Boone County attending meetings and getting first hand experience at LHD. More job shadowing opportunities need to be explored.
- IDPH has identified a need to be more out front on issues impacting LHDs and there is more attention being given to this.
- The Steering Committee will continue to work on identifying next steps.

**Focus Area 4. Develop joint public relations and media messaging**

- Strategic Communication Workgroup has developed key messages, provided training on communicating the value of public health through storytelling which is archived by UIC MidAmerica Center for Public Health Practice. Over 100 people have attended at least one of the sessions.
- Using materials and the approach from the Sharing Stories and Speaking with One Voice trainings IDPH worked with the Regional PIOs to develop a joint (LHD/SHD) messaging campaign during 2017 National Public Health Week.
- More training was offered at IPHA annual meeting focusing on how LHDs have used training and toolkit.
- This workgroup continues to work on increasing the capacity to convey the value of PH.
- PHIST Leadership has identified the need to focus more attention on answering the question Why Public Health Matters. Plans are being developed to produce communication products.

**Focus Area 5. Align and fund health priorities**

- Some advocacy has occurred on the need for funding on lead, opioid prevention, and chronic disease prevention. FY18 included an increase in the Local Health Protection Grant.

**Focus Area 6. Improve public health practice with an initial focus on workforce development**

- A IPHA Workforce Development Committee has been formed to align workforce development opportunities across the system, it is chaired by Christina Welter and Guddi Kapadia. There are 3 areas of work:
  - training on strategic communication
  - training for new health department leadership
  - a statewide workforce development plan is expected to be completed by summer of 2018

**Focus Area 7. Adapt the public health role within the transforming public health system.**

- Plans are underway for a PH 3.0 — a Workforce Development Forum in May 2-3 2018 with follow-up planned for September IPHA conference.

**How to be involved?**

- Take part in joint legislative initiatives and attend April 25th reception
- When you have issues with communication with IDPH convey this to program staff or if need be to Assistant Director.
- Ensure your agency is conveying the value of public health with your own community stakeholders using key messages and storytelling. Make sure you and your staff are

trained. Use 2018 National Public Health Week as opportunity to get the word out on, “Why Public Health Matters”

- Participate in workforce development committee or workgroup
- Attend PH 3.0—A Workforce Development Forum May 2-3 in Springfield