

MHOA 2019 Annual Conference

Infections, Inspections, and Local Protections New Directions for Creating an Equitable Municipal Public Health System



Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Special Commission on Local and Regional Public Health

BLUEPRINT FOR PUBLIC HEALTH EXCELLENCE

Recommendations for Improved Effectiveness and Efficiency
of Local Public Health Protections

Massachusetts Health Officers Association Annual Conference
November 6, 2019

Ron O'Connor, Director

Office of Local and Regional Public Health

Special Commission on Local and Regional Public Health



“...assess the effectiveness and efficiency of municipal and regional public health systems and ... make recommendations regarding how to strengthen the delivery of public health services and preventive measures.”

- Chapter 3 of the Resolves of 2016



Why Special Commission?

- Inconsistency across communities
- Small towns struggle
- Variability in board and staff credentials
- Limited ability to meet accreditation standards.
- Shared services proceeding slowly

From Strengthening the Local and Regional Public Health System.
Massachusetts Public Health Association (2016)



Commission Members

- Executive branch agencies
- Legislators
- Appointments by the Governor
- Named organizations



Commission Charge

- Capacity of local public health system
- Existing resources for local health
- Workforce credentials
- Capacity of the Office of Local and Regional Health
- Regional collaboration and various models of service delivery
- Progress towards achieving regionalization advisory commission recommendations
- Report of findings and recommendations

“Blueprint for Public Health Excellence” Report



The report documents the Commission’s findings and makes recommendations for strengthening local public health services and protections across the Commonwealth.

Interlocking Recommendations





Public Health Standards

Commission Finding

Many Massachusetts cities and towns are unable to meet statutory requirements and even more lack the capacity to meet rigorous national public health standards.

Commission Recommendation

- Elevate the standards for and improve the performance of local public health departments.



Cross-Jurisdictional Sharing

Commission Finding

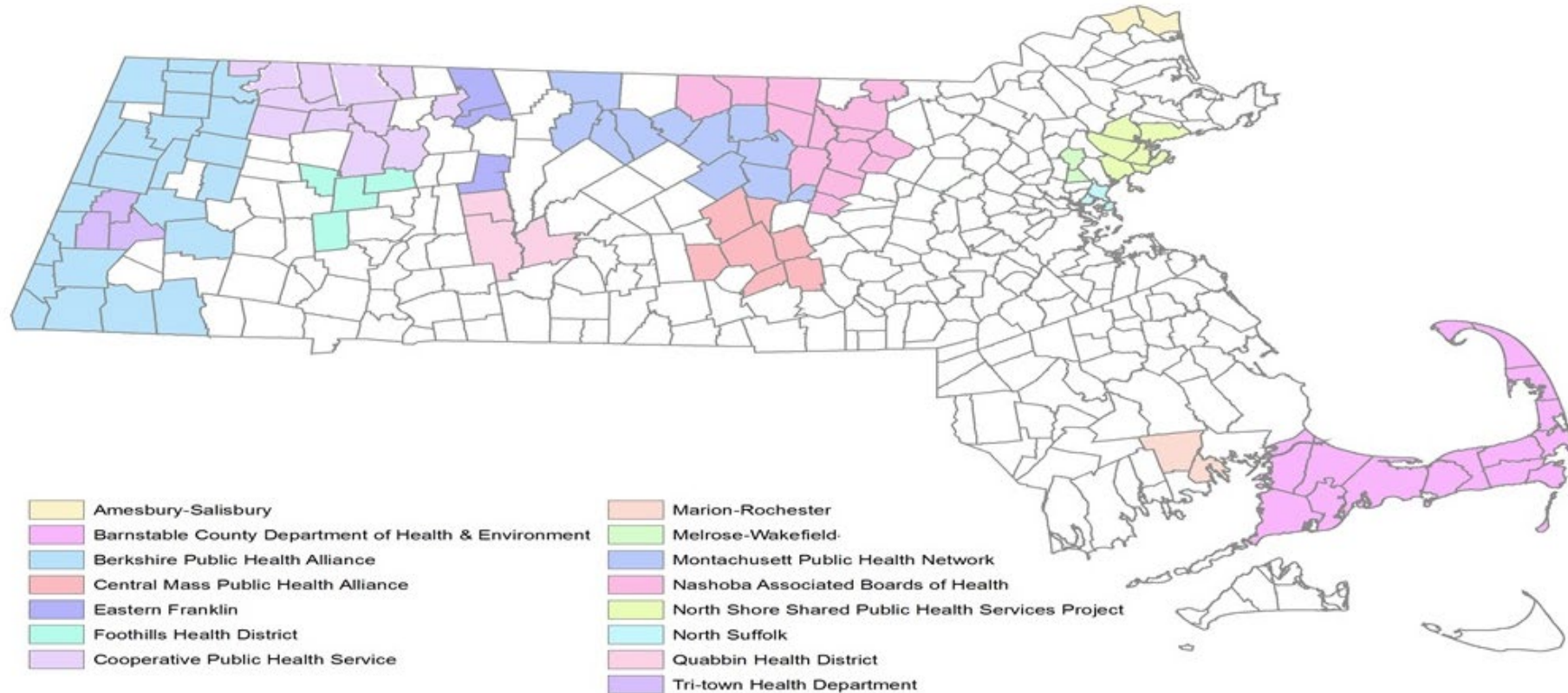
Massachusetts has more local public health jurisdictions than any other state (351)—one for each city and town—and cross-jurisdictional sharing of services is limited despite evidence that it improves effectiveness and efficiency.

Commission Recommendation

- Increase the number and scope of comprehensive public health districts, formal shared services agreements, and other arrangements for sharing public health services.

Public Health Districts for Shared Services

Public Health Districts and Shared Services



Map produced by BEH-GID, MDPH. Data as of July 6, 2017
Updated June 2019



Data Reporting and Analysis

Commission Finding

Limited capacity to measure local public health system performance and to use local data to plan public health improvements

Commission Recommendation

- Create a standardized, integrated, and unified public health reporting system
- Strengthen DPH and local public health capacity to collect, analyze, and share data.



Workforce Credentials

Commission Finding

The Massachusetts local public health system does not adequately support its workforce with standards and credentials that align with the capacity to meet current mandates and future standards.

Commission Recommendation

Set education and training standards for local public health workforce and expand access to professional development by implementing local public health workforce credentialing standards.



Resources to Meet System Needs

Commission Finding

Funding for local public health is inconsistent and inequitable in its ability to meet the current mandates and the needs of a 21st century system

Commission Recommendation

Commit appropriate resources to the local public health system changes proposed by the commission.



Continuity and Sustainability

Commission Finding

The Massachusetts local public health system depends on the continuing engagement of the stakeholders who have laid out an actionable path to effectiveness and efficiency.

Commission Recommendation

- Continue to engage a wide range of stakeholders to provide ongoing support for the recommendations for systems improvement.
- Give DPH the infrastructure and authority to support the recommendations.



Next Step: Advisory Committee

Local and Regional Public Health Advisory Committee

- Request for Information process to gather input on membership and structure
- Notice of Opportunity to solicit applications to serve on advisory committee
- Working groups on shared services and workforce credentials
- CLPH priorities for DPH administrative recommendations



Next Step: Cross-Jurisdictional Sharing

Municipal Shared Public Health Services Grant Program

- Funds in FY2020 DPH budget for shared public health services
- Proposals due yesterday
- Shared services grants to municipalities are expected to begin in January 2020.



Next Steps: Workforce Credentials

Local Public Health Workforce Standards

- Credentials requirements
 - Education
 - Certifications (e.g., Certified Health Officer, Registered Sanitarian)
- Training requirements (e.g., Foundations of Local Public Health Practice)

Next Steps: Data Reporting and Analysis

Environmental Scan of Approaches to Inspectional Reports

- Coalition for Local Public Health review of approaches to electronic inspection reports in Massachusetts and other states



150 YEARS
OF ADVANCING
PUBLIC
HEALTH

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

THANK YOU!

Panel Members

- Kathleen MacVarish, Associate Professor of the Practice and Director of Practice Programs at the Activist Lab, Boston University School of Public Health
- Eileen McAnneny, President, Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation
- Kevin Mizikar, Town Manager, Shrewsbury
- Maddie Ribble, Director of Public Policy and Campaign Strategy Massachusetts Public Health Association
- Cheryl Sbarra, Senior Staff Attorney and Director of Policy and Law, Massachusetts Association of Health Boards

