

# Where is Public Health?



CAMPAIGN for  
PUBLIC HEALTH | *Foundation*

**AIRPORTS**

- Preventing Spread of Infectious Diseases
- Global Health
- Travelers' Health
- Disease Surveillance
- Quarantine Stations



**CITY HALL**

- Public Health & Prevention Policies
- Health Legislation
- Health Advocacy

**CDC**

- Coordination of Public Health Efforts
- Health Research
- Health Information Systems
- Global Health Programs
- Epidemiological Investigations
- Program Monitoring & Evaluation

**HEALTH DEPARTMENT**

- Health Services Administration
- Health Communication & Marketing

**CORPORATE HEADQUARTERS**

- Workplace Wellness Programs
- Occupational Safety

**FARM**

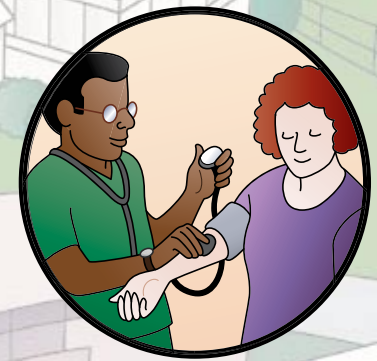
- Safe Food Supply
- Agricultural Safety
- Disease Surveillance & Response

**OUTDOORS**

- Vector-Borne Disease Prevention
- Air Quality
- Physical Activity

**LABORATORIES**

- Disease Surveillance
- Laboratory Diagnostics
- Public Health Research
- Global Disease Detection



**SUPERMARKETS**

- Food Safety Standards
- Access to Healthy Foods

**CLINICS**

- Maternal & Child Health Programs
- Vaccination
- Mental Health Counseling
- Smoking Cessation Services

**SCHOOLS**

- Nutritious Balanced Meals
- Promotion of Physical Activity
- Education on Healthy Lifestyles
- Youth Violence Prevention
- Infectious Disease Prevention & Control
- Safe Routes to School

Injury Prevention  
Safe Routes for Physical Activity

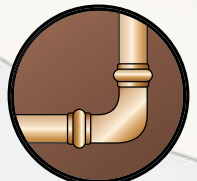
**RESTAURANTS**

- Smoke-Free Establishments
- Removal of Trans Fats from Food
- Food Preparation & Safety Standards
- Chronic Disease Prevention



**HOMES**

- Good Hygiene Practices
- Prevent Spread of Infectious Disease
- Environmental Health Hazard Prevention
- Clean & Fluoridated Water



Motor Vehicle Safety  
Traffic Safety Laws

Emergency Preparedness

Public health experts are working hard in our communities to prevent disease, prolong life and promote health.

### Who works in the field of public health?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is the lead federal agency working on public health at the national level. Independent **state and local health departments** are major players locally and are the main point of contact with the public. State and local health officials often benefit from federal standards, guidance and financial support. **Non-profits** also play a critical role in promoting public health by developing public health programs, conducting research and sponsoring public education campaigns. In addition, non-profits often partner with governmental entities and for-profit corporations on public health interventions. Many **businesses** are also involved with public health efforts, using company-wide wellness programs to help employees live healthier lives.

### What is the difference between public health and health care?

Generally speaking, public health works to **prevent illness** at the **community level** while health care offers treatment to individuals who are already sick. The U.S. health system is focused far more on treating illness than preventing it. Of the more than \$2.5 trillion dollars spent on health in 2009, only 2 or 3 percent was spent on prevention and even less was directed to public health programs. The vast majority of our health care spending is used to treat conditions that could have been prevented in the first place.

### What is the difference between public health and prevention?

While most of public health's work is focused on prevention, many preventive efforts are not directly related to public health. Clinical preventive services (such as blood tests and other screenings done in a clinical setting) are often categorized with public health. In truth, such diagnostic tests are more often focused on early detection of an individual's illness rather than preventing that disease at a community level.

### Public health seems like a local issue, why involve the federal government?

Public health experts combine local resources and staff with targeted federal funding, best practices, research and scientific support. Diseases do not stop at state lines or national borders, so a federal perspective is essential to tracking and eliminating health challenges in our communities. When food tainted with bacteria sickens hundreds of people in multiple states, public health experts need a national infrastructure to find the source of contamination. Responding to outbreaks, tracking viruses and the development of disease and sharing successful programs in one community with others are all coordinating functions that rely on federal support.

### How do public health experts know where to focus their efforts?

Health leaders at the national and local level, advocates, community leaders and others **identify health problems** within a population or community. Public health experts then **research** ways to limit or prevent the problem using **science-based solutions**. These solutions are put into action in the form of a public health **intervention**. Programs are then **monitored** and **evaluated** to make sure they are effective.

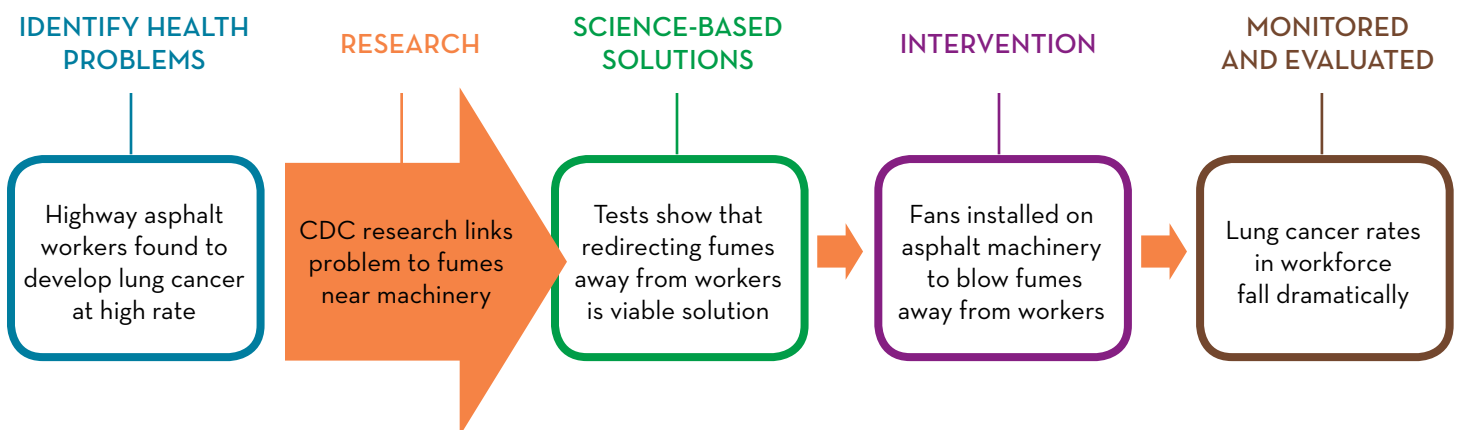
There are many different fields of study within public health, including: maternal and child health, chronic disease, infectious disease, environmental health, global health, emergency preparedness and response, and injury prevention – and this process is often used in each of these areas.

### How can I support public health?

There is much that can be done to ensure a strong public health system is kept in place to protect our health and prevent illness. Businesses, non-profits, health departments and the media can work with the CDC and others to more effectively promote health. You can also voice your support for local, state and federal public health programs or donate to non-profits working on innovative public health efforts!

### More information can be found at:

[www.cphfoundation.org/factsheet.html](http://www.cphfoundation.org/factsheet.html)



Example from a project run by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health at the CDC.