

2019-2020 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

GOAL: PROTECT AND PROMOTE POPULATION HEALTH BY RATIONALIZING AND INCREASING INVESTMENTS IN PUBLIC HEALTH



Why: One elegant definition describes public health as “the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life, and promoting health through the organized efforts and informed choices of society.”¹ A strong public health system is integral to government’s responsibility for keeping residents and communities safe and healthy because it focuses on protecting entire populations from illness, disease, and injury. Public health will need to have a central role as the State engages in activities to achieve the Triple Aim: better care for individuals, better health for populations, and lower costs.

At a time when New York State’s health transformation efforts have been touting the impact of the social determinants on the overall cost and quality of health care, it would be logical to invest in initiatives that prevent or mitigate disease. Instead, New York State has not matched the rhetoric with real investment in population health, but has reduced funding for public health programs. Without changes, the public health system will continue to wither instead of becoming the critical link needed to transform New York’s health outcomes.

Supporting Policies & Initiatives:

- **New York should undertake a thorough and systematic review of the current method for funding the broad variety of public health programs.** At a minimum, this review should consider:
 - Removing funding and regulatory silos that inhibit public health programs from fully connecting with other parts of the health care system.
 - Adequate investment to ensure a robust and vibrant public health sector
 - Development of New York’s future public health workforce
- **The State Fiscal Year 2019-20 Budget should:**
 - Expand funding for public health, including local departments of health and community programs that prevent disease and promote health.
 - Restore funding for public health programs eliminated in the SFY 2016-17 budget.

¹ CDC Public Health Series 101. <https://www.cdc.gov/publichealth101/public-health.html>