Building your Public Health Department Utopia

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Learning Objectives

1. Describe how different public health systems are structured.
2. Practice creating public health organizational structures and network webs.
3. Identify 3 organizational and network changes that you can suggest to your public health leadership.
Setting the Stage

“If you can imagine it, you can build it”

“It isn’t broken, it was built that way.”

Systems are diverse, unique, and can be changed!
Gathering Information

• At each station, discuss what your “utopian” health system would look like, including the pros and cons of each piece. Think outside the box!

• You can work alone or together, but no two systems will necessarily look the same.
Prompts:
• Who is on your governing body?
• How are they chosen?
• How will they interact with the health department?
Administration

Prompts:

• What key positions will be part of your health department?
• What do you want their background (experience, education, etc.) be?
Public Engagement

Prompts:
• How will you engage with your community?
• How will the community participate in programs/policies at the HD?
• What level of engagement will you have with the community?
• What policies need to be in place?
Partnerships

Prompts:
• Who are key partners?
• How will you select partners?
• What will your relationship be (formal, informal, etc.)?
Staff

Prompts:

• What positions are needed?
• What are the factors to consider in choosing staff (education level, representative of the population, from the community, etc.)?
• What training/onboarding will you offer staff?
• How will you build a long-term workforce plan?
Key Services

Prompts:

• What are the key services you will offer? (you can use PHAB, 10 Essential Services, and the Foundational Capacities for PH, or build your own)

• Who will offer which services?

• Will you offer non-public health services or combine with another department (integrated system)?
Stations

1. Governing Body  
2. Administration  
3. Public Engagement  
4. Partnership  
5. Staff  
6. Key Services
Design your Dream Department

• Create an org chart, relationship chart and/or outline how your HD will look

• Example statements:
  • My governing body will be __________ (elected/appointed/etc.) every __ years because _______.
  • My public health director/department leaders will be...
  • We will engage the community by...
  • Our partners will be______. We will conduct these partnerships using a ______ (informal meetings, formal agreement, etc.)
  • The people we have on staff will be...
  • Our key services will be_________. These services will be provided by ______(the HD, a cooperative agreement, a cross-jurisdictional partner, etc.)
Top 3 Changes

• Using elements of your perfect health department, pick 3 realistic changes that you can suggest to your leadership.

• How can you make this changes? What are realistic steps you can take towards improvement?