

PUBLIC HEALTH MODERNIZATION: A PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEM THAT PROTECTS EVERYONE IN OREGON

Public health modernization ensures basic public protections critical to the health of all in Oregon and future generations – these include protection from communicable disease and environmental risks, health promotion, prevention of disease and injury, and responding to new health threats.

In 2015 the Oregon Legislature adopted a new framework, public health modernization, for the state and local public health system. This framework will focus the public health system's work to address Oregon's health challenges.

HEALTH CHALLENGES IN OREGON

Not everyone has access to the same public health services across Oregon; this is a problem, especially when the conditions that are decreasing opportunities for better health today are chronic and preventable. In Oregon we know that:

- **In the past 10 years rates of syphilis have increased by 1500%.** This has serious implications; syphilis, if left untreated, can cause damage to the brain and heart, mental illness, serious birth defects, stillbirth, and even death. ⁱ
- **360,000 Oregonians – youth and adults struggle with asthma,** that is almost 1 in 10 people in Oregon and at least 18,000 of those are school age children. ⁱⁱ
- **In the past 20 years the prevalence of diabetes as doubled** – almost 400,000 people have diabetes and more than 25% of those don't know it yet. ⁱⁱⁱ
- **More than 50% of Oregon adults suffer from one or more chronic diseases.** ^{iv}
- **Foodborne illness costs Oregon \$229 million each year** in health care, lost productivity and premature death. ^v

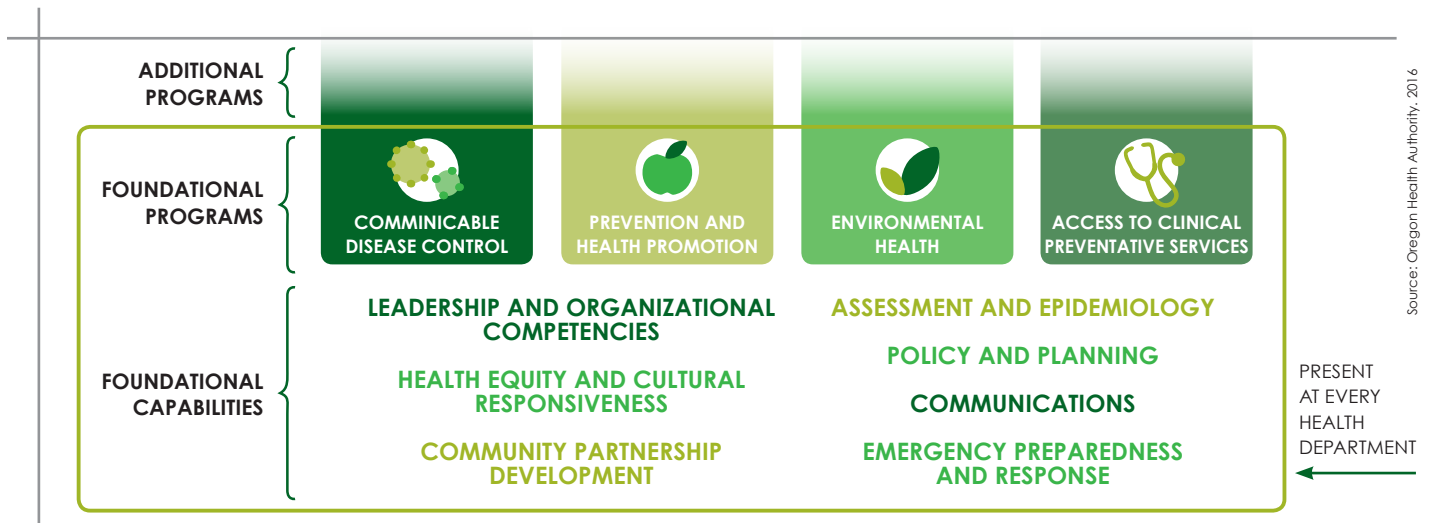
These are challenges that cannot be addressed by the health care system alone: environmental factors can trigger asthma; access to active transportation and safe water and food to eat are all factors that affect the health outside of the doctor's office. Public health can improve the conditions that create opportunities for health.

An assessment of the state and local public health system found that to implement the new framework the Oregon Legislature created, a \$210 million biennial investment is needed. Implementing this new framework will need to be done in phases over the next three biennia.

An investment of \$30 million is critical to move forward portions of the new framework and continue efforts to increase the efficiency of the state and local public health system. A First phase investment targeted in the areas of Health Equity, Communicable Disease, Environmental Health, Emergency Preparedness, Assessment and Epidemiology and future planning efforts will make a measurable difference in the health of Oregonians.

Public health modernization builds on our current public health system by redefining and expanding the work and expectations of public health.

PUBLIC HEALTH MODERNIZATION FRAMEWORK



A \$30 million investment in state and local public health will:

- Support public health to help ensure fair opportunities for health and eliminate gaps in health outcomes
- Fund prevention efforts to slow the spread of Chlamydia, Gonorrhea and Syphilis including partner notification
- Improve childhood immunization rates
- Increase emergency preparedness planning efforts with community organizations, schools to ensure readiness for disaster events
- Increase capacity to respond during disaster events
- Identify, respond, analyze and provide technical assistance to the community regarding environmental health hazards
- Support continued efforts to improve the efficiency of the state and local public health system

Please support \$30 million for these essential public health services to ensure everyone in Oregon has equal protections and opportunities for health.

ⁱ <https://public.health.oregon.gov/DiseasesConditions/CommunicableDisease/DiseaseSurveillanceData/STD/Documents/9984-STD-Syphilis-Final.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Oregon Health Authority, 2014. Oregon Asthma Leadership Plan

ⁱⁱⁱ Oregon Health Authority, 2015. Oregon Diabetes Report

^{iv} Oregon Health Authority, 2015. Chronic Diseases Among Adults

^v Oregon Health Authority, 2016. The Health and Economic Benefits of Public Health Modernization in Oregon

