

Strengthening U.S. Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce, and Data Systems

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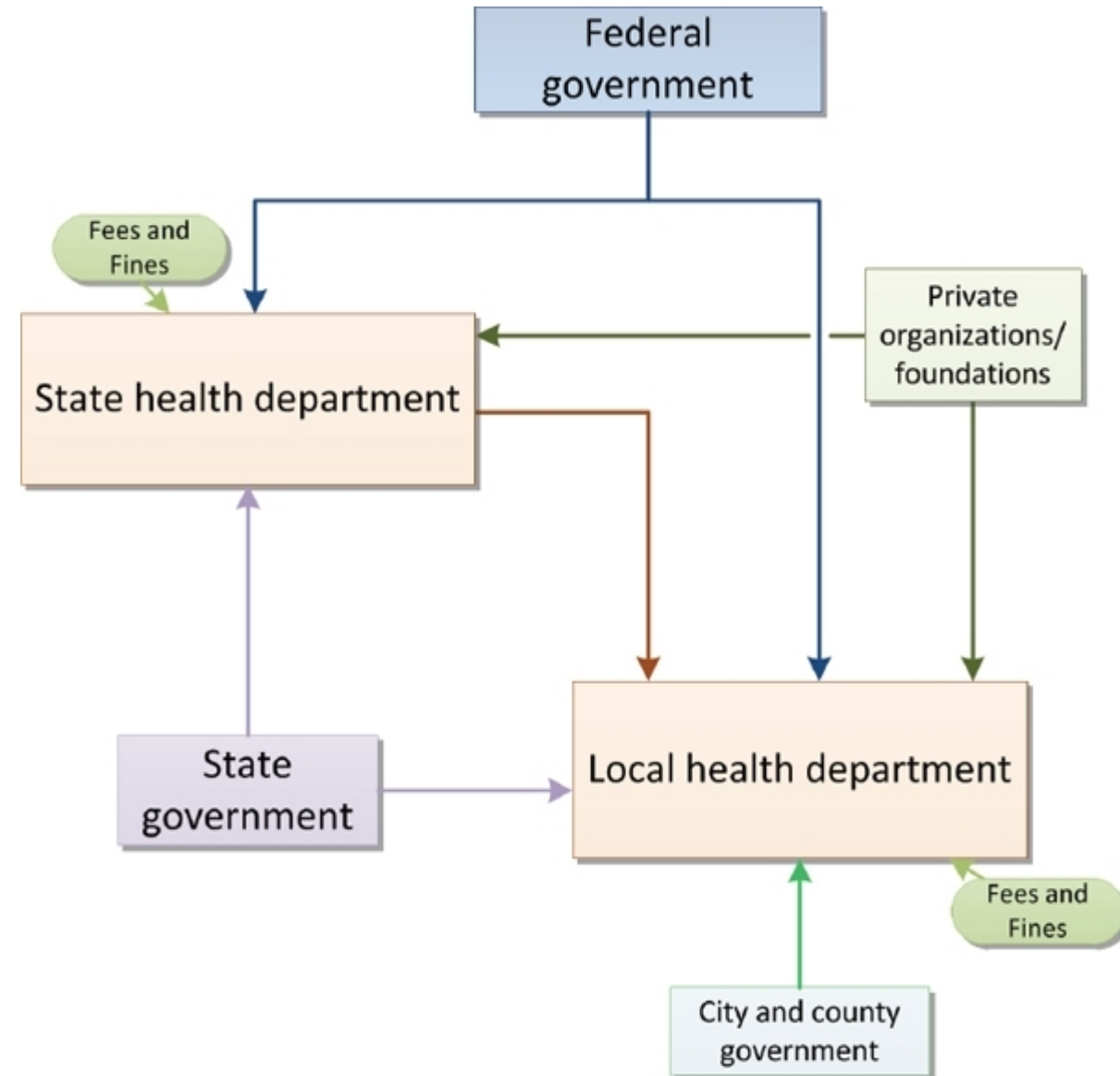
Public Health

Updated: Jan 26, 2023



Public Health Funding Backdrop

- Complicated and often “braided” funding
- Primarily grants and some local support
- TCPH gets local support from the Hospital District
- There is consensus among national experts that Public Health has been chronically underfunded for several decades
- Grants provide inflexible funding for predetermined deliverables
- Core issues:
 - Funding public health during crisis
 - Falling back into underfunding



Impact of Chronic Underfunding

Community

- Americans growing unhealthier despite trillions in healthcare spending
- PH spending just 3% in 2018
- Health systems not focused on prevention
- PH investment saves lives BEFORE they need saving
- Half of all Americans over 55 have 2 or more chronic conditions such as
 - Diabetes
 - Blood Pressure

Workforce

- National PH workforce shrunk by over 56,000 due to funding issues
- PHWINS survey found large proportions of workforce considering leaving PH due to inadequate pay
- Over a quarter of workforce was retirement eligible by 2020
- Low pay and COVID stresses exponentially increased staff dissatisfaction with Public Health as a profession

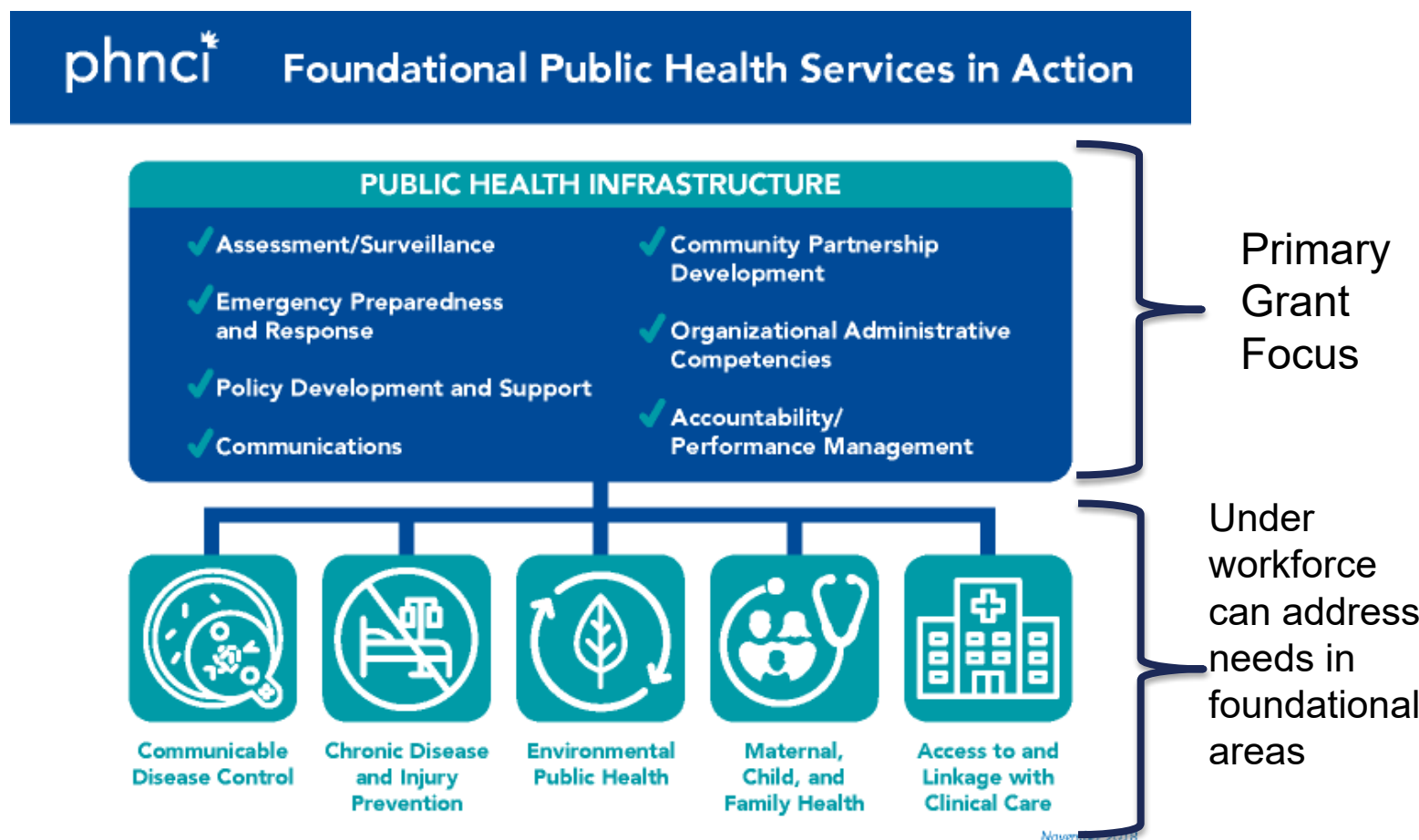
The Infrastructure Grant Model

Foundational Public Health Services Framework

- A minimum package of public health capabilities and programs that no jurisdiction can be without
- Foundational capabilities – cross cutting skills and capabilities needed to support basic public health functions
- Foundational areas – topic specific basic programs all health departments should have

Grant has 3 components

1. Workforce (FUNDED)
2. Foundational Capabilities (FUNDED)
3. Data Modernization (not eligible)



Key Points

- This grant is a good start, but it doesn't address all TCPH staffing needs
- 61.5 total FTEs
- 33.5 new funding source for existing positions
- 28 new positions
- 3 of the 28 will need new position development via county process/JEC
- Only 2 grant-required positions
 - Performance management and QI coordinator (new)
 - Workforce specialist (existing will change funding source)

Component 1: Workforce

Funding

- 5-year award, upfront allocation totaling \$19,219,787
 - Annualized to about \$3.8 Million

Purpose

- Hire, retain and develop a highly skilled, trained public health workforce
- Assure the department has planning, systems, processes, policies and infrastructure to provide the foundational public health services

Specific Aims

- Enhance TCPH's workforce and organizational development
- Enhance TCPH's ability to conduct program evaluation, quality improvement and performance management
- Ensure adequate data modernization workforce and supporting staff to meet departments informatics and data science needs
- Strengthen the departments environmental health workforce
- Strengthen the departments communicable disease / sexually transmitted infection workforce
- Strengthen the departments fiscal/ administrative operations workforce

Component 1: Personnel

Title	New	Existing	Total
Administrative Assistant II - EPI		1	1
Administrative Assistant - Fiscal	5		5
Advanced Epidemiologist - Environmental Health	1		1
Supervisor Disease Intervention Specialist	1		1
Epidemiology Specialists - STI	4		4
Epi Support Specialists - STI	3		3
Epidemiologist		2	2
Epidemiologist Supervisor		1	1
Inventory Records/Warehouse	1	0.5	1.5
Microbiologist	1		1
Office Manager	1		1
Population Health Analyst		2	2
Performance Management and QI Coordinator*	1		1
Community Health Planning & Engagement Manager		1	1
Sanitarian I	5		5
Sanitarian II	3		3
Sanitarian III	1		1
Supervisor, Environmental Health	1		1
Workforce Specialist*		1	1
	28	8.5	36.5

Component 2: Foundational Capabilities

Funding

- 1 year funding of \$942,961
 - Expecting at least that much funding in years 2-5

Purpose

- To enhance the foundational capabilities in the cross-cutting areas of accreditation, performance management, quality improvement, external and internal communications, as well as data governance to support a strong core public health infrastructure

Specific Aims

- To improve department systems and processes
- To improve, develop, and implement strong communications capability and products
- To enhance data governance.

Component 2: Personnel

Title	# existing FTEs
Administrative Assistant III - Call Center	2
Administrative Assistant III- Informatics/Compliance	2
Administrative Assistant II -Call Center	10
Compliance Specialist	2
Data Governance Specialist	2
Digital and Social Media Marketing Specialist	1
Graphic Designer	1
Medical Translators	4
Public Information Officer-II	1
	25

Environmental Health

- TCPH has MOUs with all but 6 municipalities and DFW airport for food/pool inspections
- 10 FTE inspectors in the program
 - 4,300 establishments
 - 8,600 inspections conducted (860/FTE) annually
 - FDA Model Standards recommend 280-320/FTE (~300)
 - Current workload about 2.87x of recommendation and growing
 - Fee increases are being considered to further support the program

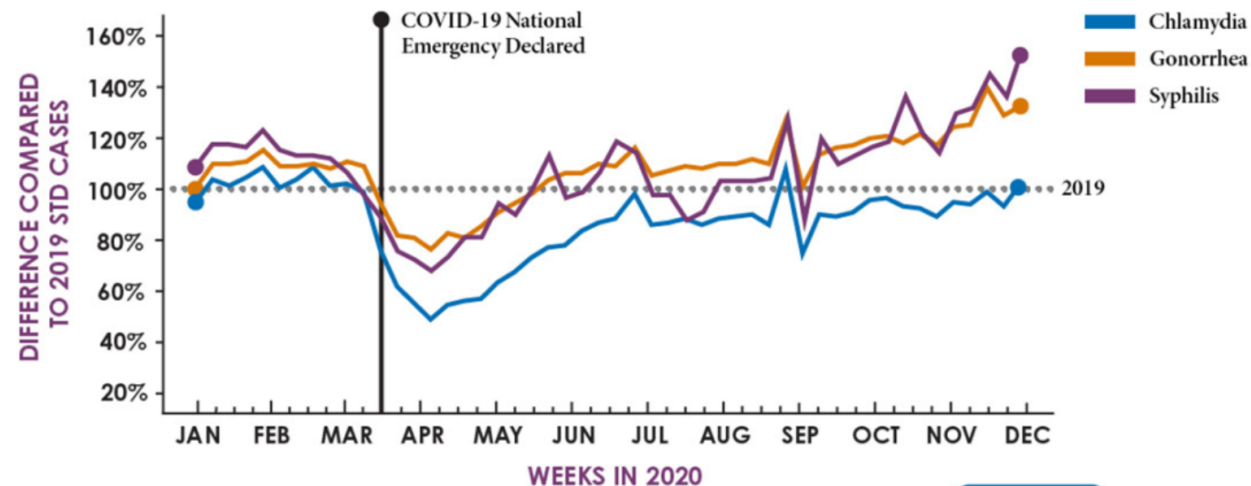
Disease Intervention Specialists

- Program sustained primarily with grant funds, which have been mostly level funded
- Disease burden has grown exponentially, and the county has grown in size over the last few years adding need

WEEKLY REPORTED U.S. STD CASES: 2020 VS. 2019

AFTER COVID-19 STAY-AT-HOME ORDERS, WEEKLY STD CASES DROPPED ▼
to 50% (chlamydia), 71% (gonorrhea), and 64% (syphilis) compared to their 2019 levels.

AT THE END OF 2020, REPORTED STD CASES RESURGED ▲



For more information, visit
cdc.gov/nchhstp/newsroom



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

Flex Administrative Pool

- Most programs have grant funded FTEs
- Public Health suffers from INFLEXIBLE funding
 - Tight balance between professional staff and administrative staff
 - With retirements, FML, other absences; operations suffer as other grant funded staff can't be moved to support operations

References/Sources

- [The Impact of Chronic Underfunding on America's Public Health System: Trends, Risks, and Recommendations, 2020 – TFAH](#)
- [Funding Sources and Structures to Build Public Health - For the Public's Health - NCBI Bookshelf \(nih.gov\)](#)
- [Public Health Infrastructure Grant Program | CDC](#)
- [2022 Program Standards 8 Program Support and Resources \(fda.gov\)](#)



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Public Health

