



## Increasing the Capacity of Public Health Nursing to Impact Population Health

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## Objectives

- Discuss current status of the triple aim in health care reform
- Discuss declining status of public health infrastructure and public health workforce
- Discuss the capacity of public health nursing to impact the public's health
- Identify progress as well as barriers in increasing the capacity of the PHN workforce
- Identify strategies for increasing the future capacity of public health nursing

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## Current State of Affairs-Triple Aim

- **Access to Medical Services:** Expansion of Medicaid under the ACA; by 2016, lowest percentage of Americans lacking insurance
- **Decreasing Costs:** 2015 the US spent \$3.2 trillion on health; 95% focused on individual care and 2.5% federal, state, and local governmental public health spending (Leider et al, 2018)
- **Improving Quality of Care:** Inferior health systems on measure of quality, efficiency, equity, and healthy lives compared to other higher income countries (IOM, 2012)

• Hayes, S.L., Riley, P., Radley, D.C. & McCarthy D. (2017). Reducing racial and ethnic disparities in access to care: Has the Affordable Care Act made a difference? *Issue Brief (Commonw Fund)* August, 1-14.

• Leider et al. (2018). Assessing the value of 40 years of local public health expenditures on health. *Health Affairs*, 37(4), 560-569.

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### Reframing Prevention in Era of Health Reform

- Increasing emphasis on prevention and population health-ACA
- Home visiting
- Primary care workforce
- Community Based Care

Chait, N. & Glied, S. (2018). Promoting Prevention under the Affordable Care Act. *Annu Rev Public Health*.39,507-524. doi: 10.1146/annurev-publhealth-040617-013534

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### Public Health Infrastructure

- Since 2008, 50,600 state and local jobs have been lost (Drehobl, Stover, & Koo, 2014)
- **ASTHO 2016 Profile Survey**  
 Number of full time employees at state health agencies declined by 3 percent from 2012 to 2016  
 Number of retirement employees expected to go from 17 percent to 25 percent  
 Marked decline in health service activities– 17 of 18 clinical services surveyed decreased  
 Driven by decreases in funding, increases in "pass through" funding going to third parties such as nonprofits and local health agencies and a decline in direct services  
 Tapping chronic disease prevention as top priority (14.5% in 2012 to nearly 24% in 2016)
- [www.astho.org/profile](http://www.astho.org/profile)

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### Public Health Workforce

#### Challenges

- Retirement of workers
- Job losses associated with budget cuts
- Difficulty recruiting new workers
- Gap between workforce skills and capacity caused by change to public health practice
- Lack of formal training or limited training

#### Increasing Capacity of Existing Workforce

- Define target skills and competencies across disciplines
- Develop robust leader and leadership development offerings
- Expand training for the identified skills and competencies
- Drehobl, Stover, and Koo, 2014

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## Policy Brief

- “Increasing the capacity of public health nursing to strengthen the public health infrastructure and to promote and protect the health of communities and populations” (Kub et al, 2017)
- Origins – strengthen alliances between nursing organizations and public health systems to assure the promises of a reformed health system (Bekemeier et al, 2016)

Bekemeier, B. Zahner, S., Kulbok, P., Merrill, J., & Kub, J. (2016). Assuring a strong foundation for our nation’s public health systems. *Nursing Outlook*, 64, 557-565.  
 Kub, J. E., Kulbok, P. A., Merrill, J. A., & Miner, S. (2017). Increasing the Capacity of Public Health Nursing to Strengthen the Public Health Infrastructure and to Promote and Protect the Health of Communities and Populations. *Nursing Outlook*, 65(5), 661-664.

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## National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice.

- 2014- 12<sup>th</sup> report –”Public health nurses: Key to our nation's health”
- Call to specifically enlist public health nurses as leaders in population-focused health improvement as the key to a healthier future and better health outcomes.
- <https://www.hrsa.gov/advisorycommittees/bhpradvisory/nacnep/Meetings/12thannualreportpublichealthnursing.pdf>

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## Recommendations

- The Department of Health and Human Services and Congress should provide an increase in the resources and opportunities solely aimed at the education, training, and workforce development of public health nurses.
- The Department of Health and Human Services should convene a summit of key public health organizations, foundations, and schools of nursing to delineate the required leadership, training, and professional development required to advance the field of public health nursing.

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**Recommendations**

- The Department of Health and Human Services and the Congress should provide opportunities to advance public health practice and research.
- The Department of Health and Human Services and the Congress should identify and remedy the gaps in the cost effectiveness of public health nursing.

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**National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice.**

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- 2016-14<sup>th</sup> report -"Preparing Nurses for New Roles in Population Health Management"—2016
- **Recommendation 2:** NACNEP recommends that Congress provide funding to develop a more comprehensive public health infrastructure in rural, frontier, inner city, and other underserved areas, including improving access to clear and accurate health information, remote health monitoring, and telehealth and other virtual access services
- **Recommendation 3:** NACNEP recommends that HRSA's Title VIII funding opportunity announcements for registered nurse education and training include language that encourages grantees to develop curricular innovations that integrate population health competencies across the nursing educational pipeline from undergraduate to post-doctoral studies.
- <https://www.hrsa.gov/advisorycommittees/bhpradvisory/nacnep/Reports/fourteenthereport.pdf>

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**National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice.**

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- **Recommendation 5:** NACNEP recommends that Congress and the HHS Secretary work with the National Institute of Nursing Research, the National Center for Advancing Translational Science, and other relevant federal research agencies to expand investment in population health science, including infrastructure and training, and increase funding support for research studies on population health management initiatives and data collection on population health measures and metrics.
- **Recommendation 6:** NACNEP recommends that HHS establish and convene a federal working group to address population health.

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## Recommendations

- **Recommendations: Policy Brief**  
Encourage key stakeholders to respond to the NACNEP reports  
Urge Congress to enact legislation and appropriate funding

Kub, J. E., Kulbok, P. A., Merrill, J. A., & Miner, S. (2017). Increasing the Capacity of Public Health Nursing to Strengthen the Public Health Infrastructure and to Promote and Protect the Health of Communities and Populations. *Nursing Outlook*, 65(5), 661-664

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## Challenges/Opportunities

- Renewing public health workforce -funding needed, graduate education is needed- **ADVOCACY**
- Strengthen skills in population health – all levels but advanced role also important
- Strengthen research base to connect outcomes to actions
- Reclaim our role– are able to address care management at all levels - including population and systems
- Invisibility and underutilized

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## Historical Role Models



- *“To each age comes its own peculiar problems and challenges, but to it also comes the **necessary vision and strength**” (1950, p. 608).*

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