



STATE LEADERSHIP TO SUPPORT PUBLIC HEALTH

GRETCHEN HAMMER, PUBLIC LEADERSHIP GROUP



OVERVIEW

- 📍 Together, explore how state policymakers can improve the health of the residents of their state and align programs and investments across the state enterprise to promote health and respond to things that undermine and limit health.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

In my experience, state policy makers can best support public health when they are clear about:

- 📍 Their **role and the tools** they have available to use.
- 📍 The **type of problem** they are trying to solve or avoid.
- 📍 When they are using both core and adaptive **leadership skills and capacities**.
- 📍 The **structures of work** to support success.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND POPULATION HEALTH

- 🏠 **Public health** is the science of protecting and improving the health of people and their communities. This work is achieved by promoting health and well being, monitoring and reducing diseases and injuries, and detecting, preventing and responding to infectious diseases.
- 🏠 **Population health** is the focus of the health outcomes of a group of individuals, including the distribution of such outcomes within the group.

ROLE AND TOOLS TO SUPPORT PUBLIC AND POPULATION HEALTH

Role of state policy makers - direct and make policies and investments to improve health and well-being of people you serve.

- 📍 **Direct Federal investments and programs** – implementation of federal public health policies and programs, directing state administrative policies and finances in jointly managed programs.
- 📍 **Develop State investments and programs** – implementing state programs and protections, administrative policies and financing, directing state agency implementation, aligning state government structure administration and financing.
- 📍 **Invest in and support Local programs** – invest in locally administered program independently or in alignment with local governments, private industry investments, and philanthropy.

THREE TYPES OF PROBLEMS*

👤 **Simple – Making Pancakes** – success is easily defined and replicable; ingredients for success are known; anyone can do it; practicing to improve is cheap and easy.

👤 **Complicated – Landing a Rover on Mars** – success is easily defined; ingredients for success are understood, but not mastered; ingredients are so complex they must be broken apart and then coordinated to come back together at go time; special knowledge is needed; practicing is not cheap and easy, but can improve your success over time.

👤 **Complex – Raising a Child** – success is not easily defined because there are multiple definers and it varies for each attempt; ingredients for success are understood, but are influenced by actors; practicing is costly, and there are serious consequences as you work to improve and success with one does not guarantee success with another

*Concepts adapted from the work of the late Dr. Brenda Zimmerman.

THREE TYPES OF PROBLEMS APPLIED TO PUBLIC HEALTH

- 📍 **Simple** – John Snow and the water pump.
 - 📍 **Complicated** – Early COVID-19 testing capacity and logistics.
 - 📍 **Complex** – Maternal morbidity and mortality and the disparities of the perinatal experience and health for women of color.
-
- 📍 Promotion, Prevention, Primary-Secondary-Tertiary Intervention
 - 📍 Population specific

LEADING THROUGH COMPLEX PROBLEMS – COMPLEXITY THEORY

- 📍 All complex problems and systems are interconnected, and the relationships and strength of the connections are as important, if not more important, than the performance of any individual component.
- 📍 To impact a complex problem and system you must innovate and invest in solutions on the different levels and across the different components; solving for one level or one component will not create meaningful systemic impact.

LEADING THROUGH COMPLEX PROBLEMS – CHALLENGES

- 🚧 Common challenges of working on complex problems and systems are:
 - 🚧 Pervasive siloes within and across organizational structures
 - 🚧 Actors with competing goals and dispersed ownership of resources
 - 🚧 Conflicting processes and entrenched conventions that stifle innovation
 - 🚧 Underrepresentation and even exclusion of people affected by the problem in the system design, management and improvement

LEADING THROUGH COMPLEX PROBLEMS – LEADERSHIP SKILLS



Core leadership skills include:

Learning and interpreting data and information,
Setting and managing strategic priorities,
Effective decision making and resource management skills



Adaptive and Systems leadership skills include:

Personal leadership and self-management
Relationship management and linkages
Taking initiative and leading action
Monitoring and celebrating progress

SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

Successful systems change and solving of complex challenges requires:

- 📍 Places for shared learning and priority setting
- 📍 Governance and decision making structures,
- 📍 Communications,
- 📍 Resources, (people, time and money)
- 📍 a data and accountability framework that assesses the change for individuals and the system overall.

COVID-19 RESPONSE AND PUBLIC HEALTH INTERSECTION

Investments

- 📍 Many federal investments are coming through established channels
- 📍 Investments are coming to multiple levels of government infrastructure: State-County-Big Cities
- 📍 State and local investments are coming from rainy day funds, philanthropy, private industry

Priorities

- 📍 Simple, complicated, complex
- 📍 COVID specific response
- 📍 Pre-COVID public health and population health priorities
- 📍 Newly emerging public health and population health priorities that are secondary from the pandemic



THANK YOU

GRETCHEN.HAMMER@PUBLICLEADER.ORG, 303.875.5399

