

A Brief History of the Maine State Coordinating Council for Public Health (SCC)

2005

The Public Health Work Group (PHWG) was established as a representative body of 40 members appointed by the Governor's Office with a charge to develop a statewide community based public health infrastructure. The PHWG held numerous meetings with national and local experts, and reported back to the Legislature annually on progress made.

2007-2008

The PHWG issued a final report to the Maine Legislature detailing plans and recommendations to strengthen public health infrastructure and improve system performance over the next 5 years.

Key infrastructure elements proposed were later codified in Public Health Statute:

<http://www.mainelegislature.org/legis/statutes/22/title22ch152sec0.html>

Key Infrastructure Elements:

1. **Establish a State Coordinating Council (SCC)** as a representative body of stakeholders to implement a statewide public health infrastructure that streamlines administration, strengthens local capacity, and assures a coordinated system for delivery of essential public health services.
2. **Establish Public Health District Coordinating Councils** in 9 districts (8 geographical and one Tribal) as the representative body for collaborative planning and decision-making for functions that are more efficiently accomplished at the district level.
3. **Establish Local Public Health Units** in each district, staffed by Maine CDC, including a Public Health Nurse, Health Inspector, Epidemiologist and a District Liaison, who would take regional responsibility for communication, coordination and system performance.
4. **Formalize the role of Healthy Maine Partnerships** as a system of 28 Comprehensive Community Health Coalitions that in aggregate, served all communities in Maine.
5. **Modernize Maine's Local Health Officer System** building capacity with training and technical assistance, to strengthen a network of municipally-based Local Health Officers linked with the state health department.

2008-2011

Maine employed this model of integrated public health infrastructure, with enhanced coordination among the elements to improve overall system performance. Local Public Health System assessments and performance improvement plans were implemented. The enhanced public health system was stress tested in response to the H1N1 Pandemic of 2009/2010, and was found to be extremely successful:

<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/epi/influenza/maineflu/piop.shtml>

2011-2018 The LePage administration did not share this vision for a public health system in Maine.

2019

Do we have an identifiable statewide public health infrastructure that has capacity to address current and future threats to the public's health?

Do we have a system that assures essential services are provided in all areas of the state and with clear lines of responsibility, accountability and coordination?