

## Questions and Answers

**Event:** Learning Community Quarterly Webinar, May 14, 2013

**Event Title:** A Unified Voice: Policymakers and public health officials working together for the community's health

### **Are the presentation materials available for use/distribution?**

The PowerPoint slides can be used with an attribution to the Kansas Association of Counties (honeycomb and triangle slides). The [10 essential public health services](#) with examples presentation can be used with attribution to the Kansas Association of Local Health Departments. The County Commissioners: Public Health Governance Roles can be used with the attribution at the bottom of the page: Public Health and Local Governance: A Board of Health Workshop, 2013/Kansas Association of Counties & Kansas Association of Local Health Departments. The What is Public Health video link can be found on YouTube.

### **Does Kansas have a statewide plan for regionalization?**

Kansas does not have a statewide regionalization plan. In fact, a statewide regionalization plan would probably be resisted. There are counties working together regionally. This evolved out of emergency preparedness when Kansas counties were given the option to develop response relationships at the regional level using available preparedness funds. The rules for these relationships allowed counties to select their own partner counties as long as they were contiguous and allowed for building regions from the ground up rather than from the top down. As a guideline what was found was the need for a region to be comprised of a combined population of around 50,000 to be able to provide the 10 essential services. Some of the resulting Kansas preparedness regions have seven or eight small counties, some have two or three, and except for two counties the remaining 103 counties in Kansas continue to work together in numerous public health areas utilizing the regions that were developed out of the emergency preparedness work.

### **Can you share a web address for the public health videos that Marena Works mentioned sharing with her board of health members?**

Many schools of public health are very good advocates for public health as a whole and have developed numerous short videos that are easily understandable for any audience in explaining what public health does every day. The following is a link to a public health message-focused video.

Video: What is Public Health? (on youtube)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQ3PHL3qT-s>

### **Does Kansas or Nevada have an organization that works with cities, i.e., League of Cities. If so, have you worked with them around public health issues?**

In Nevada that organization would be the National Association of Counties (NACo). In Kansas there is the League of Municipalities that works with cities, but as an organization the League of Municipalities does not have jurisdiction over public health. It is possible in some states the League of Municipalities would be able to help cities with public health issues but determining if

there is an organization that is the critical public health partner for cities probably would need to be determined on a state by state basis.

**How do you share the value of public health to local officials who currently do not have a local public health department, and thus may not be as closely funding these?**

Local officials seem to identify with the notion of public good in the center of the triad of public safety, public works, and public health services, which constitute about 85% of a county's budget. When presented in this way, i.e., alongside public safety and public works, public health is elevated to a core value and placed on equal footing.

**How did you go about framing or describing public health and the 10 essential services so they are better understood, i.e., illustration and real life examples?**

We asked for real life examples from health administrators around the state to come up with good examples and got some really good ones from both large and small jurisdictions. The Kansas Association of Local Health Departments has put together a presentation that illustrates each of the 10 essential services with depictions. That presentation is available above and provides real life examples of each service. A document entitled "Governance Roles and County Commissioners," is included at the link above and provides areas where public health administrators and county commissioners can work together to ensure quality improvement in public health services and programs.

**When an agency is a health and human services agency, what is the best way to recognize the role human services and functions play in the "triangle of public good." At times it can be a challenge since human services is very individual-based whereas public health is shifting to more population based on the local level.**

It is very difficult to separate public safety from public health. Those areas, while some might think very distinct, there are a lot of interdisciplinary ties among public works, public safety, and public health. You cannot talk about public health without thinking about the built environment, and who else thinks about the built environment--the public works folks do. Many of the community health assessments in the state have identified mental health issues as a primary need and we know the close relationship between public safety and mental health services. We know the close relationship between public health, public safety, and public works. You cannot place them in separate boxes. There are very strong ties among the three.