



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Dayton & Montgomery County

Policy & Advocacy Agenda

2020 - 2022



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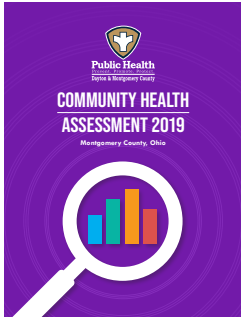
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Public Health - Dayton & Montgomery County and our Board of Health's (Public Health) mission is to improve the quality of life in our community by achieving the goals of public health: *prevention, promotion and protection*. We achieve our mission through the core functions of assessment, policy development, and assurance of essential public health services.



Our 2019 Community Health Assessment describes the overall health of Montgomery County and identifies key factors that contribute to our public health challenges. The assessment reinforces the historical disparities in health outcomes among population groups. Our White population enjoys a longer lifespan, has more economic stability, experiences less burden of preventable disease and violence, and benefits from better access to healthcare. Our Black, LGBTQ+, Asian, Native American and other populations and individuals of Hispanic ethnicity fare much worse and have less opportunity to be healthy.

This Policy and Advocacy Agenda is predicated on using the assessment data to guide evidence-based policy changes at the state and local level. The guiding principle for this agenda requires applying an equity lens and adopting a Health Equity in All Policies approach. Health and equity considerations must be incorporated into decision-making on policies and services that impact public health. The public health challenges facing Ohio and Montgomery County underscore the urgent need for all sectors to address social determinants of health to reduce health inequities and disparities in health outcomes.



These policy and advocacy priorities support our agency 2018-2020 Strategic Plan, the 2020-2022 Community Health Improvement Plan, and the Montgomery County Strategic Plan. The agenda layout aligns with the five national public health foundational areas:

- **Communicable Disease Control**
- **Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention**
- **Environmental Public Health**
- **Maternal, Child, and Family Health**
- **Access to and Linkage with Clinical Care**

Also included are policy and advocacy priorities for Behavioral Health (mental health and substance misuse/abuse) to support the Montgomery County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board's Community Plan.

Public Health's policy change and advocacy efforts require sustainable federal and state funding to support our public health infrastructure and capacity. Therefore, our highest priority is to advocate for fiscal year 2020 appropriation levels or greater for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Food and Drug Administration, (FDA), Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Office of the Assistant Secretary for Preparedness and Response (ASPR), and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).



Communicable Disease Control

Public Health is charged with controlling the spread of communicable diseases such as influenza-associated hospitalizations, hepatitis A and C and pertussis, as well as sexually transmitted diseases (STD) such as gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis, and HIV.

Public Health advocates for reducing vaccine-preventable diseases and increasing community immunity through higher vaccination rates.

- Improve childhood immunization rates
- Support vaccine exclusion policies for medical reasons only
- Increase Community Health Worker outreach to vulnerable, underserved communities with low vaccination rates
- Mandate all providers use Ohio Department of Health's Vaccination State Registry (Impact SIRS)
- Post statewide school vaccination coverage assessment reports online
- Mandate parent education on school vaccination requirements

Public Health advocates for reducing Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STD) to improve sexual, reproductive, infant and maternal health.

- Reinvest in public health prevention funding and infrastructure
- Increase access to routine screening for chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis
- Support research for more effective treatment options aimed at multidrug resistant forms and for the development of vaccines
- Promote safe sex practices (ex. condom use)
- Expand sex education in schools to include sexuality and relationship education
- Support CDC's HIV Elimination Plan



Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention

For the top ten causes of premature death in Montgomery County, the top two: heart disease and cancer, cause more deaths than the other eight causes combined. Tobacco use, physical inactivity, poor diets and alcohol use are significant risk factors for heart disease and cancer. Sixty-nine percent and 50%, respectively, of our adult and child population are overweight or obese, and 23% of our adults are smokers, 30% higher than the national average.

Public Health advocates for continuation at authorized levels for the federal Prevention and Public Health Fund for childhood lead poisoning prevention, diabetes and heart disease prevention, and the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant.

- Implement policies to decrease use of tobacco and alternative nicotine products
- Increase funding for evidence-based tobacco prevention and cessation services
- Adopt tobacco licensing, zoning and retailer density policies
- Increase taxation on all tobacco and alternative nicotine products
- Increase taxation on sugary beverages
- Enforce Food and Drug Administration menu labeling requirements
- Support Governor DeWine's proposal aimed at reducing firearm-related violence



Environmental Public Health

Public Health is charged with protecting against health threats in air, food, water, and other environmental media in accordance with federal, state and local laws and regulations. An integral component is the promotion of land use planning and sustainable development (housing and urban development, recreational facilities, and transportation systems) to build resilient communities.

Public Health advocates for Clean Air Act protection, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and sustainable funding for mandated environmental health programs including food safety and vector-borne disease.

- Enhance state policy regarding childhood lead screening, testing, and reporting
- Increase funding for education and community lead abatement programs
- Link and share data between Medicaid and the State Lead Surveillance System
- Merge ODA and ODH site survey processes to standardize and avoid duplication
- Support a standardized, state-wide cost methodology for all environmental health programs
- Increase funding for repair and replacement of failing sewage treatment systems
- Support state and local regulations that lessen human impact on climate change



Maternal, Child and Family Health

Infant mortality is an important indicator of the overall health of a community. In Montgomery County, nearly eight infants die for every 1,000 live births. A racial disparity exists with Black infants dying at a rate four times higher than White infants. Most Montgomery County infants die because they are born prematurely and at a low birth weight. A woman's health prior to becoming pregnant is a major determinant of having a baby born full-term and at a healthy birth weight.

Public Health advocates for improved coordination and integration of maternal, child and family health programs and services.

- Support Governor DeWine's Investing in Ohio's Children and Families initiatives
- Support continued Ohio Department of Medicaid funding earmarked for reducing the racial disparity in infant mortality
- Support preconception care including physical activity and nutrition
- Support enhanced prenatal care including smoking cessation and avoidance of alcohol
- Support enhanced postpartum care including breastfeeding promotion
- Increase funding for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)



Access to and Linkage with Clinical Care

Access to prevention and treatment for medical, dental and behavioral health care is vital to overall health. Linkages among Public Health, healthcare and behavioral health providers are necessary to ensure continuity of care for patients.

Public Health advocates for supporting primary care funding streams authorized in the Affordable Care Act (ex. Children's Health Insurance Program, Community Health Centers, Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting program)

- Advocate for the Affordable Care Act and any modifications that expand rather than limit access to health care services
- Support Medicaid expansion in Ohio to ensure access to primary care, substance abuse treatment and mental health services
- Promote collaboration and data sharing among public health, health care providers and first responders

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Behavioral Health

Mental health and substance misuse and abuse are strongly influenced by unfavorable social, economic and environmental circumstances. Poverty, debt, low educational attainment, unemployment, weak social support, trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are major risk factors which contribute to poor behavioral health outcomes.

Public Health advocates for improved access to prevention, intervention and treatment services, integration of primary and behavioral health services, and enhanced care coordination and information sharing among system partners.

- Support Governor DeWine's Investing in Recovery initiatives
- Implement Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) screening in primary care and in schools
- Promote universal screening of adults and children for adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and trauma
- Adopt a trauma-informed approach to care

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