



Local Public Health Association of Minnesota

2012 Legislative Priorities

Protecting the health and safety of Minnesotans

- Minnesota's local public health system protects the public's health and safety while providing the flexibility local governments need to identify and address local health priorities. (Minnesota Statute 145A.09)
- The local public health grant is the primary source of funding for these important priorities. Maintaining this funding for the local, regional and statewide public health system is essential to protecting the health and safety of Minnesotans.
- Local public health departments have a mandate to investigate and respond to communicable disease outbreaks. (Minnesota Statute 145A.04, subd. 6)
- An outbreak that impacts all Minnesotans – such as H1N1 influenza, tuberculosis, or a new emerging pathogen – can happen at any time and anywhere in the state.

Reducing health care costs through public health

- Public health saves lives. (*"Evidence Links Increases In Public Health Spending To Declines In Preventable Deaths"* Glen P. Mays and Sharla A. Smith, *Health Affairs*, August 2011)
- Minnesota has been a leader in work to reduce health care costs and public health has been a contributor to that. Public health can strategically contribute even more in the future based on evidence based research findings
- The Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) was launched in 2008 to reduce health care costs and chronic disease rates with public health led local partnerships leading change using their choice of 33 research proven strategies. Unfortunately, this funding was significantly reduced in 2011.
- Preventing disease is the most common sense and cost effective way to reduce health care costs. Addressing behavior change and influencing community norms related to smoking, activity levels and nutrition can impact rates of cancer, heart disease, diabetes and other chronic and expensive to treat diseases.

The Local Public Health Association supports the use of peer-reviewed scientific research in the development of health policy and legislation. Science informs good health policy decisions.