Public Health Modernization

Public health modernization ensures Oregon's public health system can respond equitably to the community's health priorities.

- Oregon's **governmental public health system** includes state, local and tribal public health authorities. Governmental public health **protects the health and wellbeing of every person** in Oregon.

- The **governmental public health system works daily with partners, including community-based organizations,** so that public health serves those who experience greater health risks. Community-based organizations often **provide hyper-local, culturally specific and linguistically responsive services** which are necessary to eliminate health inequities.

Current Investments (2021-2023)

Oregon's public health system is using a $60.6 million General Fund investment in public health modernization for the following priorities:

- Strengthening **communicable disease prevention, environmental health and emergency preparedness**

- Protecting communities from acute and communicable diseases through **prevention initiatives to eliminate health inequities.**

- Protecting communities from environmental health threats through public health interventions for **equitable climate adaptation**.

- Expanding **community-centered approaches** established during the COVID-19 pandemic to other public health emergencies and programs. This includes changes to how public health data are collected and shared, how communities are engaged in the work of public health and how culturally and linguistically responsive public communications are developed.

Current funding is allocated as follows:

	2021-23
Local public health authorities (LPHAs)	$33.4 million
Federally recognized Tribes and NARA	$4.4 million
Community-based organizations	$10 million
Oregon Health Authority	$12.8 million
Total	$60.6 million

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Strategies Implemented (2021-2023)

Public health system partners implement a range of strategies to meet the needs of their communities. Examples of strategies being implemented with current funding include:

LPHAs
- Partnering with community-based organizations to hold emergency preparedness events
- Partnering with long-term care facilities to prevent communicable diseases
- Using communicable disease data to identify disease trends and priorities for prevention
- Developing data reports for environmental health risks
- Developing and implementing all-hazards emergency response and climate adaptation plans

Tribes and Urban Indian Health Program
- Implementing public health modernization action plans: eight federally recognized Tribes and NARA have completed and are implementing public health modernization action plans.

Community-based organizations
- Partnering with LPHAs to bring health information to communities
- Working with families to increase childhood immunizations
- Developing culturally-specific health communications
- Educating communities about affordable solutions to home cooling during extreme heat
- Engaging communities at disproportionate risk in communicable disease prevention

Oregon Health Authority
- Investing in statewide technology, including for the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory
- Leading improvements in public health data collection, including community-led data initiatives
- Administering grants and contracts, and monitoring and evaluating funds
- Investing in equity, workforce and partnerships across OHA, LPHAs and CBOs.

Equity impacts

Across public health issues, communities of color, tribal communities, disability communities, rural communities and underserved communities experience greater health inequities.

Short-term COVID-19 funding facilitated OHA and LPHAs to invest in culturally and linguistically responsive health communications, local and community-based public health strategies, and inclusion of communities most impacted in public health emergency response planning. As a result, **Oregon's public health system was able to produce some of the best outcomes in the nation during the COVID-19 pandemic response**. This includes having the **highest vaccination rates for Black/African American residents.** Public health modernization provides the opportunity to continue best practices for eliminating health inequities.

Next steps

Moving forward as public health resources increase, Oregon's public health system will continue to build on lessons learned to respond to public health threats, invest in community public health initiatives, develop the public health workforce and broadly expand public health modernization across public health programs.

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