Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

RUTGERS
Edward J. Bloustein School
of Planning and Public Policy

NJ Health
New Jersey
Department of Health

PHACE
Public Health Associations' Collaborative Effort

Assessing Local Public Health Capacity in New Jersey: Challenges and Opportunities

Wednesday, December 1, 2021 • 9:00-12:30
Zoom registration
rutgers.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_uRjS03NzTla1KVFruAHD-A

Over the past several decades, New Jersey's public health infrastructure and its capacity have been examined at least seven times through a combination of commissioned reports and internal agency studies. Now in the face of a pandemic that has disproportionately affected residents that experience the greatest health inequities, New Jersey finds itself, again, with public health infrastructure capacity that is stressed and severely constrained in its ability to address current and emerging threats such as infectious diseases, climate change, and an increasingly inequitable distribution of risk among the state's populations as a result of structural racism, underinvestment of certain communities, and underrepresentation of marginalized populations in civic decision-making.

Recently, the NJ Public Health Agencies Collaborating Effort (NJPHACE), a network of six leading statewide public health associations, pointed to lack of adequate resources as the major challenge facing the state's local public health infrastructure. In written comments to Governor-Elect Murphy's Transition Team in 2017, NJPHACE recommended that the Governor "study the local public health infrastructure in New Jersey and the adequacy of the funding to support that structure."

With support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Rutgers University Bloustein School worked in collaboration with state and local public health officials to collect, analyze, assimilate, frame, and communicate key issues associated with capacity of the state's public health infrastructure.

During the course of this project, the research team examined studies and reports from the past 3 decades, compared New Jersey's public health capacity to a set of other states, conducted a statewide public opinion poll and developed case stories of local public health officials in action. This half-day virtual convening will provide an overview of project outcomes and an opportunity to discuss implications and next steps with public health leaders.

9:00-9:10   **Welcome**

Sallie George, Program Officer;
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

9:10-10:20   **Project Outcomes**

Jeanne Herb, Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy
Dr. Karen Lowrie, Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy
Ashley Koning, Director; Eagleton Institute of Politics Center for Public Interest Polling
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

- Q&A

10:20-10:30   *Break*

10:30-11:00   **Public Health Forward: Modernizing the U.S. Public Health System**

Anand Parekh, MD
Chief Medical Advisor
Bipartisan Policy Center

11:00 – 11:20   **Experiences in Other States**

Georgia Heise, District Director
Three Rivers District Health Department, Kentucky

Jaime Bodden, Managing Director
Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials

11:20-12:15   **Discussion**

- Insights from Project Working Group
  - ○ *Facilitator: John Gattuso, Gattuso Media Design*
  - ○ *Panelists:*
    - Margy Jahn, New Jersey County and City Health Officers Association
    - Juliet Leonard, New Jersey Association of Public Health Nurse Administrators
    - Lynette Medeiros, New Jersey Environmental Health Officers Association
    - Kevin McNally, New Jersey Public Health Association
    - Tara Rice, New Jersey Society for Public Health Education
    - Paul Roman, New Jersey Local Boards of Health Association
    - Shereen Semple, New Jersey Department of Health
    - Kevin Sumner, New Jersey Public Health Agencies Collaborating Effort
- Discussion with audience participants

12:15-12:30   **Next steps**

- Project website
- Online survey