

# PUBLIC HEALTH IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP

## 5930 PERFORMANCE MEASURES BACKGROUND

In 2005, the Washington State Legislature passed Engrossed House Concurrent Resolution (EHCR) 4410 establishing the Joint Select Committee on Public Health Financing. The committee reviewed information and held hearings. They asked local health officials to answer the following questions:

- What important public health needs are you unable to meet?
- How much would it cost to meet them?
- How would those investments protect or improve the public's health? And, how will we know if the investments are effective?

In response, public health officials from across Washington participated in outlining, prioritizing and estimating costs of addressing public health problems statewide. The result of their work is presented in the report *Creating a Stronger Public Health System: A Statewide Priorities for Action*. The Public Health Priority Model set forth in the report includes three tiers of possible additional funding: \$50 million, \$100 million, and \$200 million. The report ordered a list of priorities 'for the next investment in public health' as follows:

- Stopping communicable diseases before they spread,
- Reducing the impact of chronic disease,
- Investing in healthy families,
- Protecting the safety of drinking water and air,
- Using health information to guide decisions, and
- Helping people get the health care services they need.

The committee unanimously concluded that 'the lack of a stable source of funding provided specifically for public health services has eroded the ability of local health jurisdictions to maintain a reliable statewide system that protects the public's health.' It recommended that the state 'provide additional funding in the amount of approximately \$50 million annually during the 2007-2009 biennium, as an initial investment' and that a 'dedicated account for public health revenues' be established. Finally, it recommended that these actions be considered 'the first step in what must be continuing state and local efforts to fund the public health system at a level that provides the capacity to effectively deliver the five core functions.'

Associated materials can be found at

[www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/PHF/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.leg.wa.gov/JointCommittees/PHF/Pages/default.aspx)

The new law required public health officials to develop and report on performance measures for the \$20 million (per biennium) of new general fund state dollars and to identify, prioritize, and develop performance measures for the core public health functions of statewide significance and make recommendations to the Secretary of Health by November 1, 2007.