

Northwest PUBLIC HEALTH

From the Dean

Public Health and Public Policy Linked in Many Ways



Public health is intimately linked with public health policy. This issue of *Northwest Public Health*, makes that fact abundantly clear as it covers a number of public health issues from tobacco to domestic violence. Once again, the range of topics covered by this publication demonstrates the scope and complexity of the field; it also highlights the array of programs and people-in this School and throughout the region-dedicated to the health of the public.

Research has policy implications, or at the very least the potential for influencing policy, and a number of the School's interdisciplinary centers are directly involved with policy issues. For instance, the Health Policy Analysis Program in our Department of Health Services, directed by *Northwest Public Health*, Editor-in-Chief Aaron Katz, studies issues and public policy measures that affect the health of communities throughout our region. Its work helps our leaders-elected officials, local and state governments, national health research institutes, and advocacy and professional groups-make informed decisions based on thorough analyses.

Our Institute for Public Health Genetics in the Context of Law, Ethics, and Policy is a unique multidisciplinary program that addresses society's legal, ethical, financial, regulatory, and organizational responsibilities in offering genetic services. Designed to educate academicians and health professionals about the scientific advances in biotechnology and human genetics, the Institute also provides new information about the effects these advances may have on public health services and policies.

Another interdisciplinary research effort, the Child Health Institute (CHI), involves our School in partnership with the School of Medicine. CHI is one of very few research centers in this country devoted exclusively to studying access, cost-effectiveness, quality, and outcomes of health care for kids-all of which form the basis for a range of health care policy decisions affecting our children.

The School's newest center, the Center for Public Health Nutrition, has a strong policy component. Not only is part of its mandate to review policy issues for Washington State government agencies, many of the research and educational activities undertaken by Center faculty and staff will have direct policy implications in such areas as obesity prevention and health disparities.

On the national level, I have been involved in two Institute of Medicine (IOM) committees, whose recommendations will have important policy ramifications in the decades ahead. The IOM Committee on Assuring the Health of the Public in the 21st Century will soon issue a report describing a new and inclusive framework for assuring population-level health that can be effectively communicated to and acted upon by

diverse community partners. The more narrowly focused IOM Committee on Educating Public Health Professionals for the 21st Century has been assessing the state of education and training in schools of public health.

The work featured in this issue of *Northwest Public Health*, as well as the local, regional, and national efforts briefly described above, together cover only a few of the many contributions made by this School and our partners in the policy arena. I hope you enjoy reading about these activities, and I invite you to learn more through the School's Web site (<http://sphcm.washington.edu>).

© 2023 University of Washington School of Public Health 
Produced by the Northwest Center for Public Health Practice
[Privacy](#) / [Terms](#)