

Precise Definition of Public Health
and the
Proper Role of a Public Health Department

- A. Public Health services are concerned with:
1. The promotion of individual and public health through information.
 2. The prevention and control of disease and injury.
 3. Provision of a healthful environment.
 4. Education of individuals and groups in healthful living.
 5. The planning, organization and administration of medical care programs for special groups of the population.
 6. The coordination of planning and administration of health services.
- B. Public health services do not include:
1. The person to person relationship of a physician and patient.
 2. The private practice of medicine.
- C. The objective of public health services is to provide an environment in which families can flourish in optimal health.
- D. A public health department is a legal entity required by Michigan statute. Its powers, duties, and functions should be those vested in it by state statute and by the community for the maintenance and protection of the health of the people of the community it serves. It should coordinate and cooperate with medical societies, voluntary health associations, and other health-oriented groups in promoting efforts to improve the health of the people. It is the responsibility of the organized medical profession to assume an important leadership role in such efforts. State and county medical societies, and departments of public health, should cooperate in the interest of public health and should always keep in mind the need for a proper balance between public health programs and the private practice of medicine.

(Prior to 1990)