

2023

**PUBLIC HEALTH LAW
CONFERENCE**

People. Policy. Progress.

**October 24 – 26, 2023
Renaissance Depot Hotel
Minneapolis, MN**

Session Descriptions

The full schedule with session days and times will be published soon.

Session Tracks

[Access to Reproductive Health Care](#)

[Addressing Structural Inequities to Achieve Health Equity](#)

[Pressing and Emerging Issues](#)

[The Role of Law in Facilitating System Change](#)

[The Use of Public Health Data to Improve Community Health](#)

Access to Reproductive Health Care

Leveraging Legal Epidemiology to Strengthen Maternal Mortality Research in State, Tribal, Local, and Territorial Organizations

This session will explore how legal epidemiology can be used to strengthen maternal mortality research among states, tribes, localities, and territories. Legal epidemiologists, practitioners, and policymakers will discuss how to empower those in the field to understand, use, and even generate research on the law's role in the maternal health crisis and its embedded inequities; as well as how to leverage the tools and information made available through the study of legal epidemiology.

Protecting and Expanding Abortion Access in a Post-Dobbs Landscape

Nearly thirty years ago, the Minnesota Supreme Court found that the state constitution protects the right to have an abortion. However, anti-abortion politicians in Minnesota quietly passed laws that infringe on that right. This session will focus on the behind-the-scenes work to deliver a favorable decision in *Doe v. Minnesota* as well as implications for abortion regulation on a national landscape and will include presenters with expertise in litigation, abortion provision and support, and legislative advocacy.

Patient-Centered Contraception Counseling and Access: The Role of Contraceptive Access Initiatives

This session will outline the ability of safety-net clinics with restrictive policies and limited Medicaid family planning reimbursements in the Southern U.S. to provide reproductive health services. Session presenters will discuss the capacity of these clinics to provide equitable reproductive health services to adolescents; the influence of Choose Well, a contraceptive access initiative within safety-net clinics in South Carolina; the efficacy of patient-centered contraceptive counseling (PCCC) training; and the impact of PCCC impact patient experience.

Additional sessions in this track will be forthcoming.

Addressing Structural Inequities

Creating Confluence Among Equity Initiatives to Transform the Health of Communities in Washington State

This session will focus on milestone equity initiatives in Washington State and how the Washington State Department of Health is leveraging these initiatives to address structural and social determinants of health. Presenters will provide an overview of visions, values, and lessons learned in efforts, including legal initiatives, to transform our systems of health; and will discuss how to operationalize these racial equity initiatives, tools, and frameworks.

Expanding Inclusive Voting Policies to Address Health Inequities

A key pathway to advancing health equity is ensuring inclusive democratic decision making and representative systems of accountability. Healthy Democracy Healthy People, a coalition of major public health and civic engagement organizations with national and state-level membership, works to advance voting access and civic participation as a health issue. This session will include a discussion of the role of the health sector in advancing democratic policies along with Automatic Voter Registration and Restoration of Voting Rights.

Navigating the Distribution and Dispensing of Medical Countermeasures to Sovereign Tribal Nations

This session will include a discussion of the legal and policy framework for medical countermeasures for dispensing and distribution to tribal health jurisdictions; best practices for state and local jurisdictions in developing medical countermeasures plans that are consistent with federal Indian law jurisprudence; and improving cross-jurisdictional preparedness and response for emerging infections disease threats.

Learnings on Embedding Equity into Law and Policy Work

Law and policy are essential tools for improving public health. Yet too often, laws have caused oppression and inflicted trauma, entrenching racism and other inequities instead of eradicating them. As public health law practitioners, we must challenge ourselves to hold this complex understanding of law and policy in our minds as we do our work, better maintain a core focus on equity and justice, and become better partners at co-creating healthy communities for everyone.

Using Civil Rights Law to Advance Health Justice for People Who Use Drugs

Decades of systemic, often racialized discrimination against people who use drugs has hampered efforts to address the overdose crisis through a public health lens. Federal laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) provide critical anti-discrimination protections, but their protections have long been underused. This session will explore how disability and civil rights legal frameworks apply to substance use disorders, including the underlying legal theories and their advancement through strategic advocacy and impact litigation.

Ending the Commercial Tobacco Epidemic: A Proven Approach to Reduce Health Disparities

This session will analyze the policy effects of a ban on the sale of commercial tobacco products. The session will assess the legal authority for "endgame" policies, the current policy landscape both within the United States and throughout the world, and the expected public health effects

with a focus on the significant reduction in health disparities that would be achieved by such a policy.

Pressing and Emerging Issues

Unarmed Alternative 911 Emergency Response as a Matter of Public Health

Since George Floyd's murder in 2020, there has been a renewed energy to explore unarmed 911 emergency response initiatives designed to connect residents to needed health and wellness resources and prevent unnecessary law enforcement interaction, mitigating the harms of the carceral system on over-policed communities. This session will highlight the role that public health agencies can play in championing unarmed response through these initiatives, facilitating cross-department collaboration, and providing financial support for community-based organizations.

Challenging Firearm Preemption Law as a Public Health Danger: Litigation Lessons from Philadelphia

Two cases now before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court challenge a state statute that bars cities from enforcing local gun-safety laws. These cases stem from a unique collaboration between the Philadelphia Department of Public Health and civil-rights attorneys. Attend this session to learn about the genesis of these cases, the public health data underlying them, and the novel legal arguments presented. This litigation may serve as a nationwide model for local public health authorities and advocates.

Additional sessions in this track will be forthcoming.

The Role of Law in Facilitating System Change

Viewing Wisconsin's Alcohol Environment through a Public Health Lens

Wisconsin has a long history of alcohol beverage production and consumption. In 2020, over one-fourth of Wisconsin adults drank excessively, and in 2021, over 3,200 people in Wisconsin died from excessive alcohol use. The state's alcohol regulation occurs through a combination of state law and local ordinances. Attend this session for a discussion of efforts in Wisconsin to better understand the role of alcohol in morbidity and mortality and how the development of a data base of local municipal alcoholic polices might improve the state's public health.

Public Health Attorneys: Key Leaders in Building and Maintaining Successful Health Departments

Public health attorneys are at the forefront of many state, tribal, local, and territorial (STLT) health department decisions, policies, and emergency responses. In this session, presenters will use the example of starting a new health department to discuss the role of public health attorneys; how public health attorneys provide a return on investment when they are properly utilized; and opportunities to engage with the STLT public health attorney community.

Building Successful Partnerships Between State Health Departments and Attorney General Offices: The Minnesota Example

The Minnesota Attorney General's Office (AGO) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) have built a strong partnership in three key areas: human trafficking, post-conviction remedies, and the opioid epidemic. This session will focus on examples of how these two government

agencies have coordinated to strengthen the state's response to overlapping health equity and social justice issues. Session presenters will also include insights and lessons learned to guide similar partnerships in other jurisdictions.

Good Governance to Advance Health Equity: Preemption and Equitable Enforcement

Laws and policies are powerful tools for making our communities healthier and more equitable. A good governance process is inclusive, transparent, and effective; and fosters a clear understanding of policy landscapes, local resources, and potential partnerships. This session will explore two tools (preemption and enforcement) that play a role in determining whether and how law is used to advance health equity; and will explain how they fit into a broader good governance framework.

Developing an Equity-Minded Public Health Workforce

This session will explore opportunities for preparing the next generation of public health workers and will also provide insight and guidance on how we can strengthen the capacity of the existing workforce to leverage the tools of law and policy to respond to some of today's most pressing public health challenges, including addressing deeply entrenched drivers of structural inequity and the widespread harms of health misinformation.

The Why and How of Legal Epidemiology: A Practical Guide to Applying Legal Epidemiology In Research and Practice

Using legal epidemiology to understand the health effects of laws and policies is crucial for advancing evidence-based policy to improve health outcomes in the United States. In this session, presenters will discuss the current state of innovation in the field and how to implement legal epidemiology tools and methods in research and practice using real-world examples, including projects that explore debt collection litigation policies and laws prohibiting intimate partner violence perpetrators from possessing firearms.

The Use of Public Health Data to Improve Community Health

Barriers and Opportunities for Tribal Access to Public Health Data to Advance Health Equity

In this session, attendees will learn about the core legal concepts connecting Tribal sovereignty; public health authority; and the collection, sharing, and use of public health data from a Tribal perspective. Presenters will outline and describe the unique barriers and legal complexities around Tribal access to essential public health data and opportunities to advance health equity through better data policy.

Creating Strong Legal Frameworks for Cross-Sector Data Integration

Government agencies produce an incredible amount of data, yet technical, legal, administrative, and cultural challenges often limit data sharing, integration, and use. While some agencies across the U.S. have successfully figured out a way forward, routine data sharing and integration for operations and research remains elusive. This session includes three practitioners who have led the creation of strong legal frameworks to support data integration who will provide details on their successful approaches.

Strategies and Lessons for Protecting HIV Patient Data, Ensuring Data Privacy, and Assessing HIV Criminalization Laws and Policies at the State and Local Level

This session will focus on local and state efforts to protect an individual's HIV data and prevent the use of data to criminalize people with HIV. Presenters will discuss data privacy laws, HIV criminalization laws, efforts to protect HIV and other communicable disease data, and considerations in releasing data to law enforcement. Speakers will share content from a practical HIV criminalization legal and policy assessment tool and discuss actionable steps for public health professionals.

Using Data Hashing to De-identify Cross-Sector Data for Chicago's Crisis Assistance Response and Engagement (CARE) Program

The Crisis Assistance Response and Engagement (CARE) pilot is a partnership between multiple city agencies in the city of Chicago. This session will discuss some of the challenges presented by state law in Illinois regarding the implantation and management of CARE; including those related to program operations, evaluation, and technical and quality assurance. The techniques described in this session can protect individual privacy while supporting the evaluation of alternative crisis response programs as they expand nationwide.

Risks and Rewards of Demographic Data Collection: How Effective Data Privacy Can Promote Health Equity

In this session, legal and policy experts describe the necessary balance between using demographic data to advance health equity and ensuring individual data remains confidential and applied to its stated purpose.

Trends in General Privacy Legislation, Data Federalism, and AI Regulation Affecting Public Health Data Access and Use

Legal developments in data protection and processing have massive implications for public health informatics at state, federal and international levels. This session includes discussions of general data privacy legislation, intergovernmental data-sharing agreements affecting public health, and governance approaches to mediate Artificial Intelligence as a structural determinant of health. This session will also include original work published in *Science*, *BMC Public Health*, *Health Affairs Forefront*, and *Yale Journal of Health Policy, Law, and Ethics* by one of the session presenters.

Leveraging Cross-Sector Data in the Opioid Crisis Response

The opioid crisis has resulted in an unfortunately staggering number of preventable deaths and other community harms, but the data to identify public health interventions is often limited. The Hennepin County Public Health Department in Minneapolis, Minnesota is leveraging multiple data sources in its opioid crisis response to overcome data sharing and availability limitations. In this session, attendees will learn how the county is matching death records to housing services and criminal justice interactions to identify intervention points and is engaging with a statewide partnership of healthcare systems to monitor substance related hospital encounters in an effort to address this ongoing crisis.