



**PCAST Report:
Supporting the U.S. Public Health
Workforce**

March 2023

DRAFT/PRE-DECISIONAL

PCAST Reports

- Established by Executive Order, PCAST is an independent Federal Advisory Committee comprised of individuals from industry, academia, and non-profit sectors
- A PCAST Working Group studies the topic, solicits information from diverse stakeholders, and drafts a report
- To release a report, full Council must make the decision in public, which includes discussion and voting
- Recommendations must reflect the Council's independent judgment, and thus *PCAST reports are not subject to any interagency review or approval process*
- Reports are public, except if classified



PCAST Public Health Group Members

PCAST Members

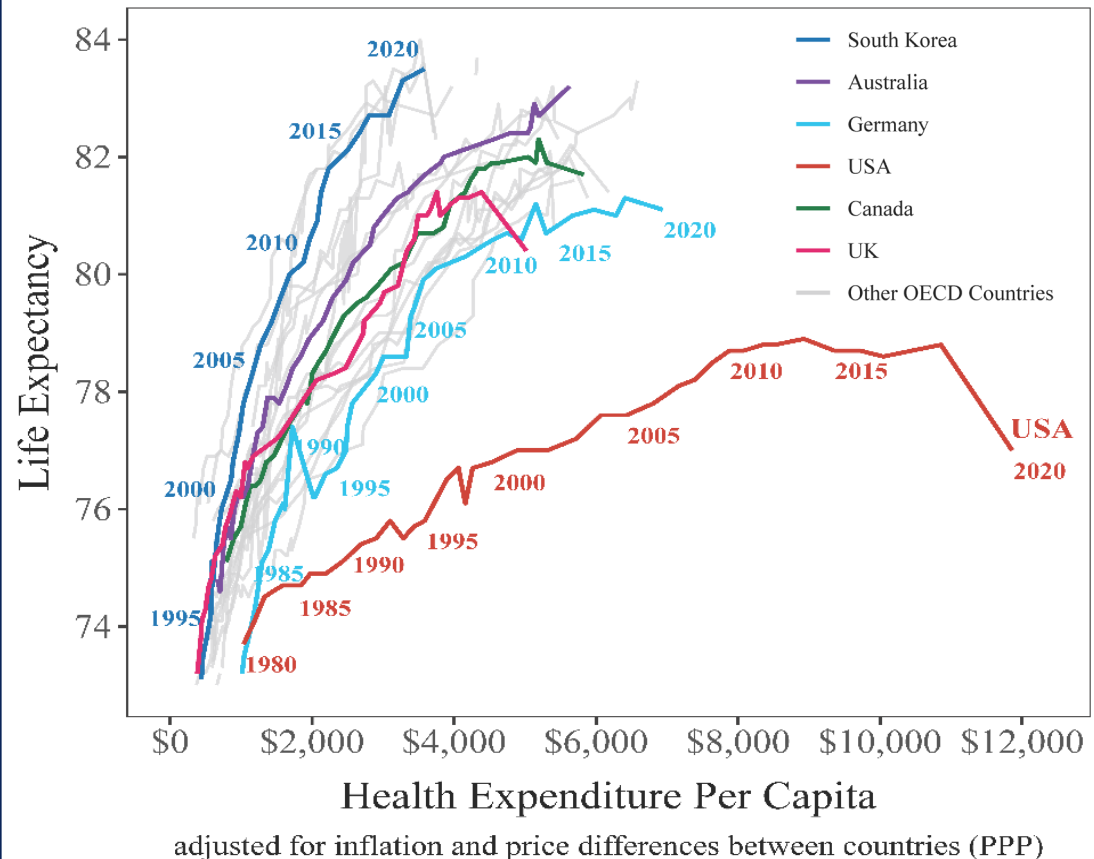
- **Lisa Cooper** (Johns Hopkins University) **co-lead**
- **Sue Desmond-Hellmann** (Former CEO, Gates Foundation) **co-lead**
- **Eric Horvitz** (Microsoft)
- **Jennifer Richeson** (Yale University)
- **Vicki Sato** (Harvard Business School, retired)

External Members

- **Georges Benjamin** (American Public Health Association)
- **Karen DeSalvo** (Google)
- **Joshua Sharfstein** (Johns Hopkins University)
- **Andy Slavitt** (Town Hall Ventures)



Challenges in U.S. Public Health



Adapted from: OWID (2020) with data from OECD (2021)

- America pays far more for health care with worse outcomes than peer nations
- Our money goes for treatment, underfunding prevention
- Our *public health system* has been underfunded for decades
- Today
 - Inequitable outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic
 - Worsening life expectancy outcomes
 - Public health workforce undercompensated and under fire



Our North Star

The public health system must allow the nation to realize its vision of health equity – when every person has a fair opportunity to ‘attain his or her full health potential’ and no one is “disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social position or other socially determined circumstances.”

Whitehead M, Dahlgren G. Levelling Up (Part 1): A Discussion Paper on Concepts and Principles for Tackling Social Inequities in Health. World Health Organization. Available at <http://www.euro.who.int/document/e89383.pdf>



The Public Health Workforce

No improvements in the overall health of our nation can happen without **talent**

Build on the Administration's new programs and resources that were directed to strengthen the public health workforce during the COVID-19 emergency and sustain these for the long term

A well-defined, well-trained, and well-compensated workforce is the foundation of a truly robust U.S. public health system that can serve the needs of our people.



Workgroup Timeline

Full Draft Report Shared with WG for Review

WG Co-Leads Complete Agency Debriefings

PCAST Meeting: Council Votes

Public Release

Jan 23-30

Feb 21

Feb 21- Mar 16

March 24

Mar 30-31

April 5

End of April

Full Draft Report Shared with PCAST Co-Chairs for Review

Final Draft Report Shared with Council for Review

WG Co-Leads and PCAST Staff Meet to Complete Edits



Agencies and Organizations Met With

American Association of Schools of Public Health

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Environment

Colorado Division of Homeland Security
& Emergency Management

Community Health Worker Common Indicator Project

Cornell University

DC Mayor's Office

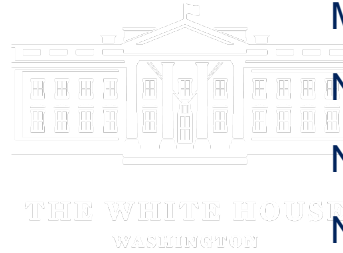
George Washington University

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

HRSA

HRSA's Bureau of Health Workforce, Division of Nursing and
Public Health

Johns Hopkins University



Microsoft Health

National Association of Community Health Workers

National Association of Community Health Workers

National Center for Health Statistics

National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

National Institutes of Health

Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information
Technology

Office of Science and Technology Policy

Public Health Accreditation Board

Public Health AmeriCorps

University of Chicago, Department of Medicine

University of Pittsburgh, Dept. of Biomedical Informatics

XPRIZE Foundation, Partnerships & Impact



Establish a common lexicon and standardized classification system for the public health workforce



1) The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB), in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS, particularly CDC and HRSA), should work together to create a new Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) for public health, and include the public health workforce in key surveys of the labor market as part of the next revision of the SOC manual.



Expand recruitment, retention, training, and personnel exchanges to strengthen public health talent



2a) Create an all-of-government campaign to recruit and retain people in public health careers. This campaign should include fast-track hiring authority, the creation of a new job series for public health, and expansion of loan repayment and forgiveness options for public health workers.



Expand recruitment, retention, training, and personnel exchanges to strengthen public health talent



2b) Establish new pathways and increase existing opportunities for personnel exchanges between federal, state, tribal, and territorial health officials, as well as support exchanges with local health systems and other private sector organizations.



Advance health equity through strengthening public health capacity for community engagement



3a) To develop and sustain a robust public health workforce that is deeply rooted in and trusted by their communities, the Departments of Education and Labor, in consultation with HHS and leveraging the updated occupational classification of “community health workers” from BLS, should develop sustainable and/or non-degree career pathways for these workers and ensure equitable workplaces that foster diversity and inclusion.



Advance health equity through strengthening public health capacity for community engagement



3b) Expand a national community of practice* focused on scientifically informed, community-engaged practices for health equity that includes public health agencies.

***Community of Practice** — Group of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise by interacting on an ongoing basis.



Agency Briefed

Key Recommendations Incorporated Into PHWG Report

White House

- Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP)
- Domestic Policy Council (DPC)

- More detailed information on the creation of a Standard Occupational Classification **(1)**
- Highlight work of previous PCAST on increasing teachers in STEM **(2A)**
- CDC toolkit for communities of practice **(3B)**

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

- HHS representatives
- Center for Disease Control (CDC)
- Office of the National Coordinator (ONC)
- Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA)

- Highlight the CDC and HRSA co-funded Public Health Workforce Research Center **(1)**
- Highlight Public Health Information Tech (PHIT) Workforce Development, as funded by ONC **(2A)**
- Change wording of **2A** to read 'direct hiring'
- Highlight work of AmeriCorps in establishing personnel exchanges **(2B)**
- Encourage utilization of community relationships and partnerships created during pandemic **(3B)**

Department of Labor

- Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)

- Properly task the OMB to direction SOC creation **(1)**
- Modify **3B** to read 'leveraging the updated occupational classification of "community health workers"'

