



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LAW, POLICY AND PUBLIC HEALTH

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INTRODUCTION

Understanding what law and policy does for public health is very important. Public health intervention is very important. It is very important for the public health professional to make an assessment of the population, so that a well-defined intervention can be tailored to fit that specific target population. Public health assessment helps to identify the severity of a problem and find ways to solve the problem by understanding how the problem affects the population and what governmental resources can be used to help the affected population. Understanding the needs is very important, but the ability to set objectives to address the need is paramount. Further, well defined public policy, law, and regulations help implement a lasting intervention that will help achieve the needs of the population. The focus of this paper is to analyze how policy, law, and public health intervention can be collaborated to execute initiatives that are geared towards improving the lives of the affected population. The fact is, a well-defined policy can be implemented to improve health outcomes.

LAW

Law helps to set regulations that facilitate rules and regulations in Public health improvements. Law is an integral part of public health. There are three types of Public health law; infrastructural which helps public health statutes it specifies the mission, function, structure, and authorities of the state or local public health agencies. ("Institute of Medicine". 2011). Interventional is the use of the law at different levels, federal, state, or local for achieving health objectives or policies designed to modify a health risk factor. Lastly, the intersectoral are laws enacted in another sector of government. These are policies implemented, either federal or state, for the primary purpose other than health which has intended or unintended health effects.

The law focuses on improving and protecting the public's health as well as "discharging the statutory duty to protect the public from harm and promote health and safety. (Institute of Medicine. 2011). A typical example is imposing laws that make it impossible for manufacturing and pharmaceutical companies to pollute the environment, but rather enforcing laws and standards that hold these companies responsible for their actions. Pollution in the environment has various adverse health effects like perinatal disorders, respiratory disorders, cardiovascular and other harmful diseases. (Kelishadi, 2012). Due to the magnitude of this pollution

and waste, Congress passed the Pollution Act in 1990. This is to ensure that hazardous waste and pollution are reduced and managed so that they are not harmful to the environment and population health. Law in public health is a needed tool that improves the health of the nation. It was important for the local government to pass the clean indoor air legislation to address tobacco as a health hazard as well as ensuring that vaccinations are adhered to in schools. The law also helps to establish vehicle performance standards to promote safety. ("Law and Public Health at CDC", 2020)

PUBLIC POLICY

Public Policy refers to the broad arena of position principle and priority that inform and constitute decision making. ("Institute of Medicine".2011). Public Policy is the relatively stable set of purposive governmental actions that address the matter of concern to some part of society. Public policy is a guide to legislative action that is more or less fixed for long periods of time. The policy does not happen by accident. It happens as a result of a promise to either change the situation or make a situation better. The Affordable Care Act was a priority of the Democratic Party for several decades which was made possible due to analysis of existing policy that did not work for most people and showed that there was a disparity in health care coverage, hence there was a need to make that change. ("What Is Public Policy? American Government", 2020).

Public policy most of the time deals with issues of concern to the population or a particular segment as opposed to matters of interest only to the individual or small group but rather covers issues that directly or indirectly affect society as a whole. Nevertheless, Public policy put in place by elected officials wants to take credit for their involvement to help their constituents and opposition might fight when in power like the battle with the Affordable Act care. ("What Is Public Policy? American Government", 2020).

The president can also implement or change policy through executive order or can also happen as a result of court actions or opinions such as Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka that ended segregation in the U.S. or when congress passed the Clean Water Act (1972) which gave steps to improve water quality through the country. ("What Is Public Policy? American Government", 2020).

Public Policy, on the other hand, promotes certain types of behavior change while holding other accountable

PUBLIC HEALTH

Public Health involves governmental actions to produce an outcome and can be achieved only through collective action, not an individual endeavor ("What Is Public Policy? American Government", 2020). Public health issues, such as smoking vaccination, driving under the influence and the manufacturing and sales of products sometimes require political decisions about how to impose restraints on individual liberties or commercial interest.

Public health officials, before having the need to establish policies, examine the health problem before the problem makes its way to the policy agenda. Then investigation and analysis are conducted to determine if the problem merits a policy to be established. Further, it's important "that health professionals understand the political dimensions of problems and proposed solutions , whether they hold positions in government, advocacy groups or healthcare industries. (Oliver, 2006).

However, there are many reasons why population health is a political issue, not merely a private matter, instances like drinking while driving or underage drinking, vaccinations, smoking and manufacturing and sale of products requires political decision, if not then there will be underage drinking smoking in all public facilities and no accountability for vaccination. Hence policy has to be put in place to help protect and improve public health and safety.

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