

### ***Background Information on Organizational and Systems Capacity***

Imagine trying to play baseball without a set of game rules, without a team captain directing, and with players who don't communicate or listen to one another. The team wouldn't get very far against a competing team that played with a clear set of rules, had a team captain, and had great communication between players.

Just like baseball, public health has its own set of rules, its own captains and referees, and ways of communicating. Public health has its own "league" or system that tracks wins and team standards, orients coaches, arranges games, and alerts everyone if the games are rained out. These components of the public health "league" can be thought of as the "skeletons" of public health infrastructure. How well each part moves and works together tells us how capable we are at carrying out the 10 Essential Public Health Services.

Public health organizational and systems capacity can be thought of as the partnerships; laws, policies, and regulations; plans and protocols; management; and finances that make the "league" or system successful.

### **Strengthening Systems and Organizational Capacity Depends Upon Our Ability to....**

- Develop strong public health leadership organizations and leaders
- Collaborate with organizations from the private health sector, as well as those representing education, commerce, labor, and transportation
- Commit adequate resources to public health activities
- Continually assess public health efforts through performance management practices

To learn more about what is currently being done to strengthen the organizational and systems capacity of public health, visit the "Systems Capacity" section on the Public Health Infrastructure Resource Center website.

Visit <http://www.phf.org/infrastructure>



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