Toward a System of Prevention

Enabling and Sustaining Healthy & Equitable Communities
Simply put, in the absence of a radical shift towards prevention and public health, we will not be successful in containing medical costs or improving the health of the American people.

- President Obama
But...how do we make the shift toward prevention and public health so that they are the default?
Systematize!

**System**: A set of things working together as parts of a mechanism or an interconnecting network; a complex whole.
Systems thinking is a discipline for seeing wholes. It is a framework for seeing interrelationships...for seeing ‘patterns of change’ rather than static ‘snapshots.’

Peter Senge, senior lecturer in Leadership and Sustainability at MIT Sloan School of Management
The time for a System of Prevention is now.
A System of Prevention

By design, a System of Prevention will encompass an array of prevention strategies, carried forward by diverse stakeholders, in diverse sectors, all aimed at shifting social conditions, policies, practices, and resources to advance health and wellbeing in all communities.
The Stage is Set: National leaders in health outline a systems approach ...
...The Surgeon General’s *National Prevention Strategy*
The California Endowment’s Health Happens Here campaign

Your zip code should not determine the length of your life. This year, California legislators and Governor Jerry Brown recognized that health happens in neighborhoods. The California Endowment would like to thank California’s leaders for taking steps to make our communities and our state stronger.

AB 581 (Perez): Brings grocery stores to neighborhoods where they are needed.

AB 6 (Fuentes): Eliminates bureaucratic red tape for families who need access to healthy food.

SB 20 (Padilla): Gives Californians the facts about restaurant food.

SB 244 (Wolk): Requires local land use planning to include improvement of disadvantaged communities.
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s *Culture of Health* framework
...The *Triple Aim* of health system transformation
What have we learned from past examples of systematized prevention?
Systematized prevention successes have taught us we can save lives and money

Examples include:

- Child Restraint and Safety Belt Use
- Minimum Drinking Age Laws
- Childhood Immunizations
- Motorcycle and Bicycle Helmet Laws
- Reduced Lead Levels in Children
- Tobacco Prevention
We can also change cultural norms, leading to population-scaled impact.
Norms

Attitudes, beliefs, ways of being

Behavior shapers

Based in culture & tradition

More than a habit

Sanction behavior

Communicate regularity in behavior

Taken for granted
“That’s the third smoker we’ve lost this week.”
A System of Prevention...

...Takes learnings from our successes (and failures) and uses them to build an ever stronger discipline of prevention
A System of Prevention Will Entail a Shift in Our Approach to Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From</th>
<th>To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fragmented prevention programs and services</td>
<td>Coordinated Prevention Policies, Practices and Programs / Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prevention primarily centered within formal institutions</td>
<td>Prevention centered within formal institutions and communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in the population as patients</td>
<td>An engaged population focused on community determinants and equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“After the fact”</td>
<td>“In the first place”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
...And Leadership From Public Health and Healthcare

From  | To
--- | ---
Public health and healthcare just as a service provider  | Public health and healthcare as facilitators and catalysts for change
Patient-centered healthcare  | Patient and Community-centered health and healthcare
Sick care  | Prevention, health, wellness, and then treatment
Evidence-based treatment  | Evidence-based and informed treatment and prevention
What are the elements that make a System of Prevention possible?
Elements of a System of Prevention

1. A Shared Vision
2. Multi-level action
3. Community voice and leadership
4. Community partnerships and multi-sector collaboration
5. Skilled prevention and equity workforce
6. Making the case for prevention
7. Evidence-informed practice
8. Sustainable funding
Element #1: Shared vision

Establishing a clear vision can provide leaders advancing a System of Prevention with a unified sense of direction.
Element #2: Multi-level action

Past prevention successes have taught us that a systematic set of thoughtful, community-focused actions are essential.
Community engagement, participation, and leadership are central to a System of Prevention, amplifying the voices of those who have been traditionally under-represented as stewards of the system.
Element #4: Community partnerships and multi-sector collaboration

Advancing health equity in a System of Prevention requires leadership and buy-in from a broad range of sectors whose policies, funding decisions, and practices greatly influence whether more equitable health and safety outcomes are realized.
Element #5: Skilled prevention and equity workforce

A diverse cadre of community and health leaders, steeped in a shared vision for building such a system, equipped with the skills to systematize prevention practice.
Element #6: Making the case for prevention

Data to support systems change is critical, but momentum for change most often comes from the stories we tell each other, and the solutions those stories lead us to.
Element #7: Evidence-informed practice

Achieving full opportunity and optimal health requires developing methodologies for measuring success that align with community values, and that can and will make a difference in the health and wellbeing of the overall populace.
Element #8: Sustainable funding

Investing in prevention and health equity goals means leveraging resources within different sectors. At the same time, the core functions of a System of Prevention can be supported through a prevention fund.
Who does it take?

A System of Prevention needs:

• Robust State and Local Public Health Departments
• Vibrant Community Collaboratives
• Multi-Sector Coalitions and Alliances
• Healthcare
• Committed Funders
• Engaged communities and community organizations
A System of Prevention
Achieving Health and Wellbeing for All

Coming Soon...