

# Health Officer 101

How to Survive and Thrive in a  
Local Health Department

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# What does Public Health do?

- Create the conditions in which people can be healthy

# What is a Local Health Officer in California?

- Medical Doctor
- Appointed by the Board
- Administratively, may sit in a number of places
- Ensures Public Health functions are met

# Expertise Needed

- Medical
- Political
- Legal
- Ethics
- Planning
- Community Organizing

# Foundational Documents

- The HO Practice Guide
  - Legal authorities
- CCLHO Platform Statement
  - Policy agendas
- The Local Health Officer in California
  - Functional responsibilities

# Local Health Officer

- Responsibility
- Jurisdiction
- Authority

# Health Officer Responsibility

## The 10 Essential Services

- ⑩ #1: Monitor Health Status to Identify Community Health Problems
- ⑩ #2: Diagnose and Investigate Health Problems and Health Hazards in the Community
- ⑩ #3: Inform, Educate, and Empower People about Health Issues
- ⑩ #4: Mobilize Community Partnerships to Identify and Solve Health Problems
- ⑩ #5: Develop Policies and Plans that Support Individual and Community Health Efforts

# Health Officer Responsibility

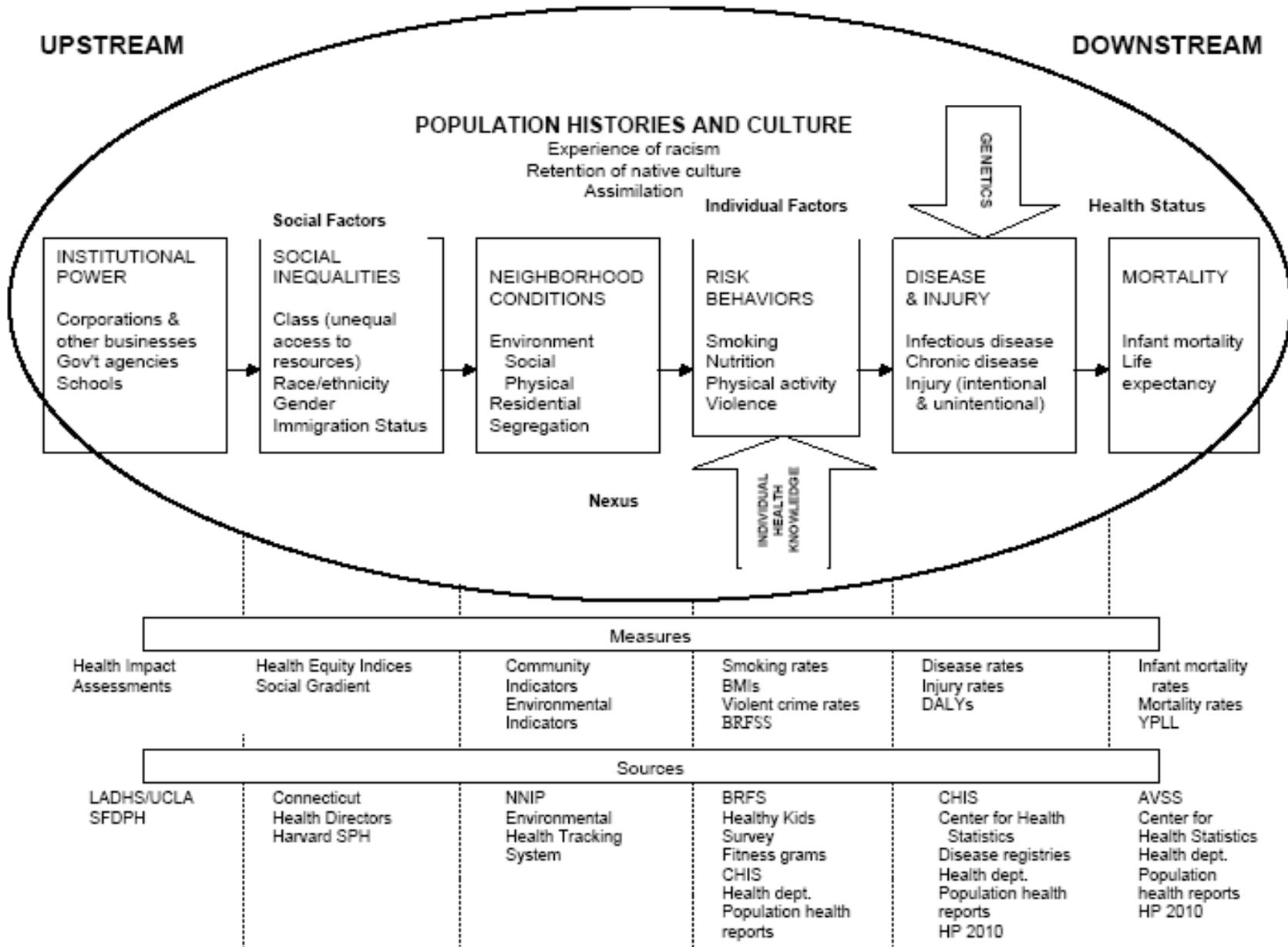
## The 10 Essential Services

- ⑩ #6: Enforce Laws and Regulations that Protect Health and Ensure Safety
- ⑩ #7: Link People to Needed Personal Health Services and Assure the Provision of Health Care When Otherwise Unavailable
- ⑩ #8: Assure a Competent Public and Personal Health Care Workforce
- ⑩ #9: Evaluate Effectiveness, Accessibility, and Quality of Personal and Population-based Health Services
- ⑩ #10: Research for New Insights and Innovate Solutions to Health Problems

# SOCIAL ETIOLOGY OF DISEASE: A DATA FRAMEWORK

**UPSTREAM**

**DOWNSTREAM**



**INSTITUTIONAL POWER**  
Corporations & other businesses  
Gov't agencies  
Schools

**Social Factors**  
**SOCIAL INEQUALITIES**  
Class (unequal access to resources)  
Race/ethnicity  
Gender  
Immigration Status

**NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS**  
Environment  
Social  
Physical  
Residential  
Segregation

**RISK BEHAVIORS**  
Smoking  
Nutrition  
Physical activity  
Violence

**DISEASE & INJURY**  
Infectious disease  
Chronic disease  
Injury (intentional & unintentional)

**MORTALITY**  
Infant mortality  
Life expectancy

# The Hippocratic Oath

"I swear to Apollo the physician, by Aesclepius, Hygeia, and Panacea, and I take to witness all the gods, all the goddesses, to keep according to my ability and my judgment the following oath:

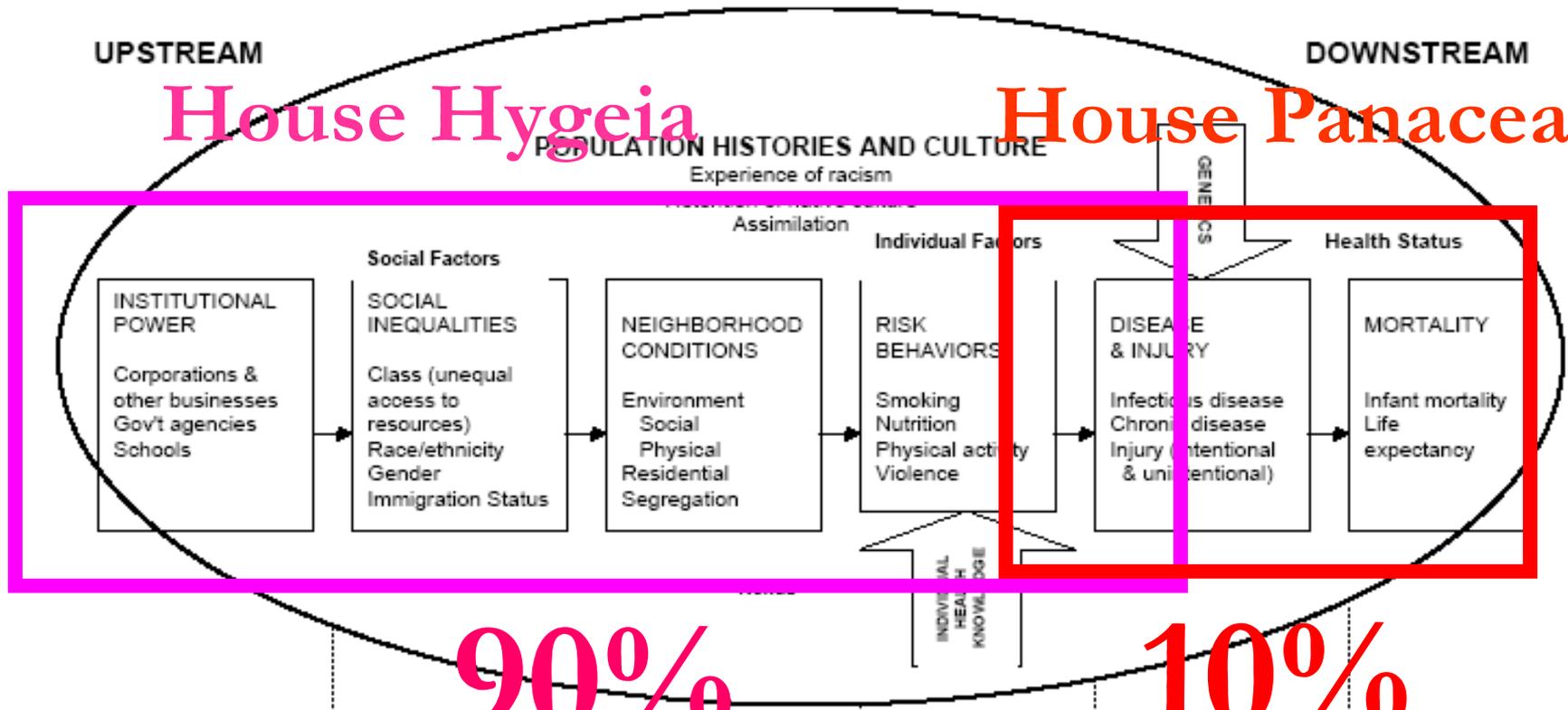
SOCIAL ETIOLOGY OF DISEASE: A DATA FRAMEWORK

UPSTREAM

DOWNSTREAM

House Hygeia

House Panacea



90%

10%

Measures					
Health Impact Assessments	Health Equity Indices Social Gradient	Community Indicators Environmental Indicators	Smoking rates BMIs Violent crime rates BRFSS	Disease rates Injury rates DALYs	Infant mortality rates Mortality rates YPLL
Sources					
LADHS/UCLA SFDPH	Connecticut Health Directors Harvard SPH	NNIP Environmental Health Tracking System	BRFS Healthy Kids Survey Fitness grams CHIS Health dept. Population health reports	CHIS Center for Health Statistics Disease registries Health dept. Population health reports HP 2010	AVSS Center for Health Statistics Health dept. Population health reports HP 2010

# Local Health Officer

- Responsibility
- Jurisdiction
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# Power

# Power

- From where does your power flow?

# The Cardinal Rule(s)

- Your reputation is the most important thing you have to fulfill your job
- Don't do anything to damage it
- Don't violate #1 or #2

# The US Constitution

- 3 main functions
  - Divide power between the federal government and states
  - Divide power among 3 branches of government (executive, legislative, judicial)
  - Limit government power

# PH Law

- Federal power vs. State power
  - Feds- Common defense (military), Foreign Relations, Commerce, Taxing, (CDC)
  - State-make laws, **including the protection of public health**

# PH Law

- Unique to California, the state has further devolved this constitutionally derived power down to the local level

# PH Law

- The Practice Guide
  - PH laws in CA are in general “Broad and Vague”
  - H&S Code 120175
  - H&S Code 101040

# PH Law

- The Practice Guide
  - H&S Code 120175: Each health officer knowing or having reason to believe that any case of the diseases made reportable by regulation of the department, or any other contagious, infectious or communicable disease exists, or has recently existed, within the territory under his or her jurisdiction, shall take measures as may be necessary to prevent the spread of the disease or occurrence of additional cases.

# PH Law

- The Practice Guide
  - H&S Code 101040: (a) The local health officer may take any preventive measure that may be necessary to protect and preserve the public health from any public health hazard during any "state of war emergency," "state of emergency," or "local emergency," as defined by Section 8558 of the Government Code, within his or her jurisdiction. (b) "Preventive measure" means abatement, correction, removal or any other protective step that may be taken against any public health hazard that is caused by a disaster and affects the public health.

# Practice Guide

- Actions that can be taken (under General Authority)
  - Limiting the Movement of Individuals and Groups
    - Isolation
    - Quarantine
    - Large scale Isolation/Quarantine
  - Evacuation
  - Closure of Public Gatherings
    - Business

# Practice Guide

- Actions that can be taken (under General Authority)
  - Involuntary Investigation, Examination, Decontamination, and Testing
  - Inspection and Seizure of Real and Personal Property
  - Rationing

# Practice Guide

- Actions that can be taken (probably only after an emergency declaration)
  - Commandeering
  - Curfew
  - Conscription

# Practice Guide

- Orders
- Voluntary orders
- Enforcement=guns

# Authority

- 4 types
  - Legal
  - Medical
  - Administrative
  - Moral

# Politics

- Playing a different game
- Palace intrigue
- Long broad view
- Decision maker=not you
- Higher office
- Electoral politics
- Sheriff
- State reps

**CCLHO**



