

Governor Phil Murphy

ICYMI: Several Northeastern States and America's Largest City Announce the Northeast Public Health Collaborative

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Voluntary Coalition includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York State, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island and New York City

Regional Partnership Brings Together Public Health Agencies and Leaders to Share Expertise, Improve Coordination, and Promote and Protect Evidence-Based Public Health

Work Groups Created to Identify Opportunities for Collaboration Including Public Health Emergency Preparedness, Vaccine Recommendations, Data Collection, Infectious Disease Management and Laboratory Services

TRENTON, NJ – Several Northeastern states and America’s largest city have been collaborating since early 2025 and today formally announced the Northeast Public Health Collaborative, a voluntary regional coalition of public health agencies and leaders, brought together to share expertise, improve coordination, enhance capacity, strengthen regional readiness, and promote and protect evidence-based public health.

The Collaborative’s shared purpose is to work together in new ways – optimizing the use of shared resources, innovating and reimagining core services – to ensure trust in public health, respond to public health threats, advance community health and strengthen confidence in vaccines and science-based medicine. The group’s shared goal is to protect the health, safety and well-being of all residents by providing information based on science, data, and evidence, while working to ensure equitable access to vaccines, medications and services.

The regional partnership, which was informally established several months ago, held its first in-person meeting in Rhode Island in August. The Collaborative has already formed interjurisdictional working groups to identify opportunities for collaboration and shared planning across multiple public health disciplines including public health emergency preparedness and response, vaccine recommendations and purchasing, data collection and analysis, infectious disease, epidemiology and laboratory capacity and services.

Members of the Collaborative worked together on science-based guidance for health care personnel (HCP) advising on precautions health care workers should take to protect themselves and patients during respiratory virus season. Other examples of collaborative efforts include sharing information on public health emergency preparedness related to three FIFA (International Federation of Association Football) World Cup host cities within the collaborative, exploring workforce pipeline activities given the understaffing in public health and coordinating state lab related activities and services.

Connecticut Department of Public Health Commissioner Manisha Juthani, M.D., said, “In public health, we are always

stronger together. Pathogens know no borders. Particularly in the northeast, people cross borders daily for work and school. In a time of significant change in public health, we have benefited from the enhanced collaborations between our jurisdictions. We are confident that we will preserve and protect core public health principles and services as we navigate current changes together."

Maine CDC Director, Dr. Puthiery Va said, "The people of Maine are known for their resilience, neighborly support, and a collaborative approach to solving community challenges. This spirit is evident in the Northeast Public Health Collaborative, which serves as an incubator for solutions in public health. By working together, we can build more adaptable, sustainable, and resilient public health framework for the region."

Massachusetts Commissioner of Public Health Robbie Goldstein, M.D., Ph.D., said, "When our states speak in concert, our voice carries farther, and our impact deepens. Those who work in public health are entrusted with a profound responsibility – a promise – to protect the health and safety of those in our states, to advance equity, and to ground every decision in data and evidence. Strong public health must stand high above ideology. Our region understands this, and we are moving forward, resolute, united, and guided by science."

New Jersey Acting Health Commissioner Jeff Brown said, "The interconnectedness of our populations and shared health challenges across the Northeast make this Collaborative a natural synergy and extension of our longstanding partnerships with peer health agencies to support the health of the people of New Jersey. Public health requires regular sharing of information, ideas, and best practices across jurisdictions and state lines. Whether it's responding to a pandemic or an outbreak or preparing for a large-scale event such as the upcoming FIFA World Cup, with three host cities in the Northeast, working together helps keep our residents safe and healthy. We look forward to continuing to do so with our colleagues in the Collaborative."

New York State Health Commissioner Dr. James McDonald, M.D., M.P.H., said, "Everyone benefits when we work together. I am excited about this collaborative; we all share the same goal of achieving health and well-being for our people. New York is proud to be part of the Northeast Public Health Collaborative. By working together, we are creating a more adaptable, sustainable and resilient public health system for our state and the region."

Pennsylvania Department of Health Secretary Dr. Debra Bogen said, "Protecting public health has always been a collaborative effort and that joint work has never been more important. Continuing to work with public health experts in other states allows us to exchange best practices, pursue improvements and efficiencies, and explore opportunities to better meet the needs of Pennsylvanians. We respect the role public health professionals play in keeping our Commonwealth safe, and will continue to back science in our efforts to ensure Pennsylvanians can make the best health care decisions for themselves and their families."

Rhode Island Department of Health Director Jerry Larkin, M.D., said, "Collaboration is the core of public health. We look forward to continuing to work with the Northeast Public Health Collaborative to improve information sharing, coordinate on public health initiatives, and develop policy that is grounded in science and data. This partnership will advance our work to prevent disease and promote the health and safety of the people in every community in Rhode Island."

New York City Acting Health Commissioner Dr. Michelle Morse said, "As the oldest and largest local health department in the nation, the New York City Health Department is proud to be a member of the Northeast Public Health Collaborative. We must always protect our public health infrastructure, reject misinformation, and maintain trust in science. The collaborative is working together to rebuild public trust, and provide factual information, so people can make informed decisions about their health, and continue our critical work to address health inequities."

While the Northeast Public Health Collaborative members share common public health goals and objectives, they recognize that each state and city is independent with their own diverse populations and unique sets of laws,

regulations and histories. Members may choose to participate in or adapt those specific initiatives consistent with their particular needs, values, objectives, and statutory or regulatory requirements.

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