Healthy Public Policy Recommendations

The Infrastructure for Identifying and Diffusing Laws that Improve Health

Scott Burris
Professor of Law and Public Health, Temple University
Director, Public Health Law Research Program

Presenter Disclosures

Presenter for Abstract 336395

(1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

“No relationships to disclose”
Recommendations: Just the First Link in the “Policy Evidence Translation Supply Chain”

Evidence and Expertise

More about this later …

Recommendations: It’s About Time

PUBLIC HEALTH LAW RESEARCH
The Ideal Compendium of Recommendations

- Would be comprehensive → one stop shop for generalists who don’t live in silos
- Be consistent → providing policy recommendations in all relevant domains
- Be accessible in all the important senses of the term

The Ideal Policy Recommendation

- Clearly describes the policy action and at what level(s) it should be taken
- Details the base of evidence or expertise on which it rests
- Lists where it has already been adopted and where action is still needed
How Are We Doing?

- Scan of federal recommendations, conducted for CDC PHLP (2014)
  - Healthy People 2020
  - Prevention Status Reports
  - Community Guide
  - Winnable Battles

http://ssrn.com/abstract=2567695

Findings

- One hundred and four distinct legal interventions were identified across the four sources.
  - Addressed health concerns, including tobacco, mental health, obesity, urban planning, vaccinations, health-care acquired infections, education, HIV/AIDS, Medicaid expansion, prescription drugs/accidental overdose, alcohol use, child care/safety, crime prevention, vehicle and bicycle safety, and food safety/nutrition.
Gaps and Inconsistencies

- Community Guide and Prevention Status Reports clearly identify the evidence base
  - Winnable Battles and HP 2020 not so much
- Prevention Status Reports most consistent in linking to information on current status of the law
  - But policy surveillance generally weak
Moving towards the Ideal

- Develop better/standard practices for ensuring that policy interventions are identified and considered consistently
- Improve access to evidence summaries
- Practice policy surveillance

Five Essential Public Health Law Services

- Evidence and Expertise
- Designing Legal Solutions
- Engaging Communities and Building Political Will
- Enforcing and Defending Legal Solutions
- Policy Surveillance and Evaluation

Better Health Faster