

Career Pathways for Veterinarians in the public health Workforce at Local, State, and Federal Levels

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Public health, as defined by the Institute of Medicine, "is what we, as a society, do collectively to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy." Not well known by many in the public health arena, or by the public, is the leadership that veterinarians provide and the important contributions that veterinarians make to public health at local, state and federal levels, across public and private sectors. At the Federal level, approximately 2,400 veterinarians work in Departments across the Executive Branch, providing leadership, oversight, and manpower for zoonotic disease control and injury prevention programs, food safety and security, emergency preparedness and response, bio-, agro- and chemical terrorism preparedness, environmental health programs, biomedical research, toxicology, and more. At the State level, veterinarians serve as State epidemiologists, State Public Health Veterinarians, State Veterinarians, State Wildlife Veterinarians, and participate in biomedical research. At the local level, veterinarians provide leadership and play key roles in emergency management, prevention of zoonotic diseases early detection and warning systems for emerging diseases and agents of bio- and agro-terrorism concern. With an increasing mobile human population moving into wildlife habitat or livestock grazing areas, global climate change, globalization of the food supply, natural and manmade disasters, risky human behaviors including contact with exotic animals, and evolving microbes, veterinary leadership, knowledge, expertise, and perspective are critical to the public health workforce. This presentation will provide an overview of the contributions made by and exciting career pathways available for veterinarians in the public health workforce.

Biography:

Dr. Marguerite Pappaioanou is an epidemiologist with over 25 years experience in domestic and international public health. She currently is Professor, Infectious Disease Epidemiology, with the Division of Epidemiology and Community Health, in the School of Public Health, at the University of Minnesota. She holds a joint appointment with the College of Veterinary Medicine. Her research interests include emerging zoonotic diseases, particularly influenza, and in linking the human, domestic animal, and wildlife health sectors to solve important human and animal health problems. She moved to Minnesota from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), where over a 21-year career she conducted applied research in malaria prevention and control in Africa, designed and led the implementation of the family of HIV seroprevalance surveillance surveys, directed a capacity building project to strengthen skills of health officials in developing countries to use data for program and policy decision making more effectively, led a research synthesis program supporting the development of the US Guide to Community Preventive Services: Systematic Reviews and Evidence-based Recommendations, and served as Associate Director for Science and Policy in the Office of Global Health, also coordinating CDC's programs in Asia. She received her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from Michigan State University in 1972, Masters of Preventive Veterinary Medicine and Doctor of Philosophy degree from the University of California, Davis, in 1976 and 1982, respectively. She was an Epidemic Intelligence Service Officer at CDC from 1983-1985. She is a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Preventive Medicine.
