

# MetroWest Shared Public Health Services

## Investing in Core Public Health Shared Services

The pandemic exposed staffing and resource challenges that most Massachusetts Local Health Departments experience as a result of under investment and changing risks to community health. As our Health Departments return to the provision of traditional services critical to protecting the public's health, many of which were deprioritized during the heart of the pandemic, shared service investments can support continued pandemic response activities, such as case investigation and tracing, while bolstering essential core public health services in our communities (inspections, health promotion, immunizations).

Shared service collaborations **strengthen existing core public health services** as well as **fill gaps in essential services**. These collaborations pool resources, increase staff capacity and expertise, attract additional funding and deliver better health protections, programs and outcomes. MetroWest Health Departments are now positioned to take advantage of shared service opportunities through a new grant from the state's Public Health Excellence program.

## Proposed Shared Public Health Positions

### Shared Service Coordinator



- Facilitate creation and operations of governance structure
- Support implementation and tracking of grant-related activities
- Facilitate annual and new shared service positions and initiatives
- program planning, and new revenue development

### Public Health Nurse



- Fill-gap" public health nursing services, including childhood immunization for school enrollment, TB case management, communicable disease follow up, and other services

### Inspector



- Provide "fill-gap" environmental health and statutory mandated annual and seasonal inspections

### Epidemiologist



- Primary responsibility on public health data collection and analysis, regional community health needs assessment and improvement planning (CHA and CHIP), and population health program planning

## Funding

Grant funding from MA Department of Public Health will be cover the costs of the proposed shared positions. Annual grant funding is \$300,000, with the expectation of continued funding through the fiscal year 2024.

## Background:

Through a competitive grant process from MDPH, eight MetroWest Health Departments will engage in a shared public health services initiative. Grant funding will advance the recommendations of the Special Commission on Local and Regional Public Health in its final report of June 2019 – *Blueprint for Public Health Excellence: Recommendations for Improved Effectiveness and Efficiency of Local Public Health Protections*. As noted in the report, evidence at a National and state level support that cross-jurisdictional sharing of public health services is a means to improve effectiveness and efficiency within our local public health systems.



Blueprint for Public Health Excellence  
Recommendations for Improved  
Effectiveness and Efficiency of  
Local Public Health Protections

REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMISSION ON  
LOCAL AND REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH  
JUNE 2019