In August 2010, the University of Kansas submitted to the Kansas Board of Regents a plan to reorganize the Preventive Medicine and Public Health, Biostatistics, and Health Policy and Management Programs at the University of Kansas Medical Center into a **School of Public Health**. The decision to develop and pursue accreditation for a School of Public Health was made based upon significant background research and stakeholder input and will entail the installation of new programs and a new organizational structure.

### How will Kansas benefit from having a School of Public Health?

The overall goals of public health are to: (1) prevent epidemics and the spread of disease; (2) protect against environmental hazards; (3) prevent injuries; (4) promote and encourage healthy behaviors; (5) respond to disasters and assist communities in recovery; and (6) assure the quality and accessibility of health services. Reorganizing KU’s public health-related programs into a School of Public Health:

- **Enhances our ability to develop a stable public health and health care workforce.** Hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, insurance companies, pharmaceutical companies, and informatics companies are all desperately seeking individuals with skills in the public health/population health sciences. Individuals trained in our school of public health will be leaders in the design and implementation of innovative programs to promote health, prevent disease, manage chronic illness, and control health care costs.

- **Increases the potential for federal grant funding.** On a per capita basis in 2009, Kansas ranked 40th in overall state funding for public health, 47th in Health Services and Resources Administration (HRSA) funding, and 37th in Centers for Disease Control (CDC) prevention funding. Having a School of Public Health in Kansas will allow us to more successfully compete for federal grant funding in support of health care and public health education, service and research programs.

- **Leverages a new emphasis on population health and control of health care costs.** New resources directed toward disease prevention and health promotion, as well as increasing the quality and effectiveness of health care delivery through greater use of health information technology are available at the federal level. Our public health doctoral students will be trained to lead the much needed transformation of health care delivery to improve health outcomes and control health care costs.

- **Supports the state’s efforts to apply for National Cancer Institute (NCI) designation.** Having a School of Public Health nicely dovetails with KU’s goal of obtaining NCI designation and will continue to build on the momentum of the Cancer Control and Population Health program, which currently has over $4 million in NCI-funded grants.

---

**Proposed School of Public Health Programs**

**Departments of Preventive Medicine and Public Health (Wichita and Kansas City)**

- Master of Public Health (MPH)  
  (concentrations in epidemiology; social and behavioral health; environmental and occupational health)
- Master of Clinical Research (MCR)
- Doctor (PhD or DrPH) of Public Health

**Department of Biostatistics**

- Master of Science (MS) of Biostatistics
- Master of Public Health with a concentration in Biostatistics
- Doctor (PhD) of Biostatistics

**Department of Health Policy and Management**

- Master of Health Services Administration (MHSA)
- Master of Public Health with a concentration in Health Policy and Management.
- Doctor (PhD) of Health Policy and Management
Benefit to other Regents institutions

Other Regents institutions are also interested in improving the health system in Kansas, including expanding health care and public health research, training, and education. Having a School of Public Health creates opportunities to collaborate on public health-related grants as well as provides the chance for current students in public health-related disciplines to be enrolled and participate in public health coursework. In addition, KU’s various PhD programs that will be offered through a School of Public Health can also provide faculty for other health degree programs throughout the state.

Benefit to local health departments

The School will have a strong "practice" focus whereby its education, research and service activities will develop collaborations with the public health practice community across the state and with other Kansas Regents' institutions. The School is expected to become a resource for the practice communities in both the public and private sector, which serve to enhance public health by ensuring clean water, air, food safety, providing immunizations, controlling disease outbreaks, etc. It will function as a provider of technical assistance and support in the delivery of services; conduct locally initiated, community-based research programs; and assist in the maintenance of accreditation of local health departments; and the development of public policy.

Cost and structure of a School of Public Health

Four departments will be reorganized into the School of Public Health: Preventive Medicine and Public Health in Kansas City; Preventive Medicine and Public Health in Wichita; Biostatistics in Kansas City; and Health Policy and Management in Kansas City. The four departments house over 45 faculty actively engaged in public health education, service and research. Currently, the four departments hold over $30 million in grant support. New funding and the use of internal budget reallocations will make the reorganization of existing programs as a School of Public Health cost-effective, and it will be accomplished with negligible disruption to students, faculty, and staff. New funding from private sources and endowments will be sought to recruit a Dean, a few key faculty, and other required administrative personnel. Reorganization, including any necessary realignment of faculty positions to form the school, will be supported through internal budget reallocations under the direction of the Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor. Any relocation of faculty and staff within the Medical Center or between the campuses will occur with no reductions in staff positions. Degree programs will be moved within the school to protect the integrity of those programs. All current students will be able to complete their programs of study on schedule, and we expect these changes to be of benefit to all future students. With the endorsement of the Board of Regents, this reorganization will be effect at the start of FY 2012 (July 1, 2011).

Vision for reorganization

The proposed reorganization will support and strengthen the public health workforce in both the private and public sectors. It will assure that Kansas is well-prepared to benefit from the economies that can be recognized with a public health focus, and it will strengthen collaboration across major academic units and create opportunities for joint educational and research programs throughout the Regents' system.

The proposed School will:

- Meet the missions of public health education, service and research to the state and region
- Span the KU campuses in Kansas City, Lawrence, Wichita and Overland Park
- Create collaborations in research, education, and service with Kansas Regents’ institutions, the public health practice community, and other public health agencies and associations
- Build upon existing public health expertise and programs in the region
- Create and maintain interdisciplinary education, service, and research programs
- Be accredited by CEPH (Council on Education for Public Health)

For more information about the University of Kansas Medical Center, please contact Marci Nielsen at mnielsen@kumc.edu

---