



INFORMATICS INSIGHTS

Public Health Informatics for Leaders

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The insights below are adapted from a July 2016 webinar featuring Secretary of Health, John Wiesman, DrPH, MPH and State Health Officer/ Chief Science Officer for the Washington State Department of Health, Kathy Lofy, MD.



On the value of informatics

In the “age of information,” reports with data from 2 years ago aren’t always great for decision-making. Informatics gives our agency an integrated approach to rapidly use the data we collect and analyze to make decisions. (JW)



On being a better partner

If each program asks for reporting in a different way, we’re frustrating our partners, and not getting timely data. We need to be able to evaluate data and respond in real-time, or else we’re going to be left behind. (JW)



On working with healthcare

As we look at the challenges of improving population health, we’ve got to be able to match healthcare’s abilities in data and their timelines to partner effectively. Informatics is imperative to achieving those capabilities. (JW)



On the need for integration

Our agency has 378 existing applications and service components with more planned for development. We can’t continue to support this many silos and must work in a more integrated way. (JW)

Data governance is critical when moving to shared technologies. We’ve been functioning in silos for many years, so it’s a big change. (KL)



On the role of leaders

Leaders can do 4 key things: 1) Make the case for change; 2) Identify the people who can lead that change; 3) Place informatics in the organization where it can be most successful; and 4) Resource informatics and support the people. (JW)



On getting started

We used PHII’s informatics-savvy self-assessment tool and identified 5 broad goal areas: 1) Improving information governance; 2) Exchanging data; 3) Developing the informatics workforce; 4) Managing data; and 5) Transforming data into information. (KL)

Use the available tools and resources and connect with others who have done this work. Their journey won’t be easy, but it will be smoother in the long run. Take the risk and go for it. (JW)