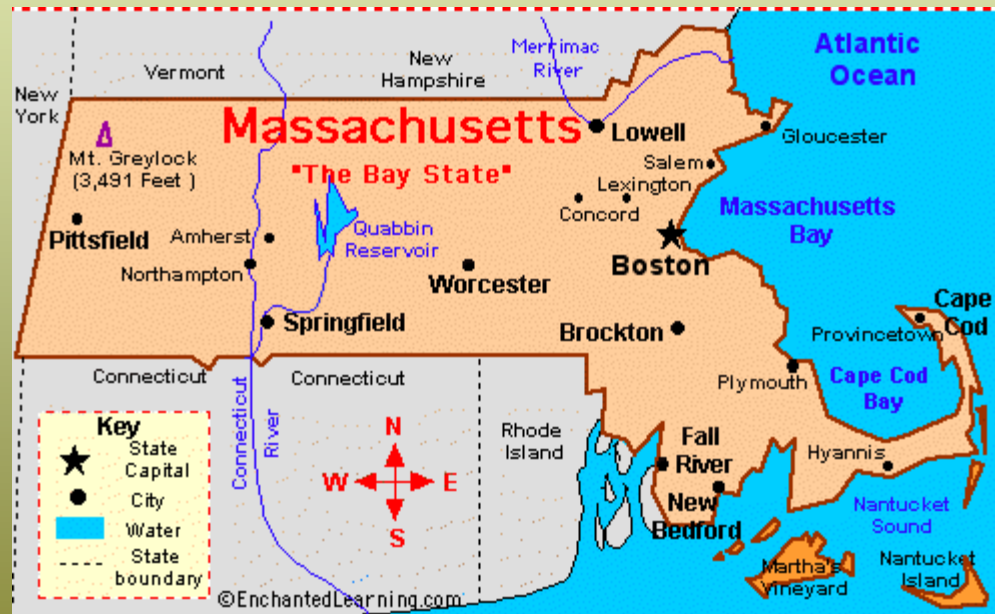


Massachusetts Public Health Practice-Based Research Network



Public Health Regionalization Working Group

Goal of Working Group:

To strengthen the Massachusetts public health system by creating a sustainable regional structure for equitable delivery of local public health services across the Commonwealth

Focus of PBRN:

Steering committee from the Working Group that is responsible for research associated with regionalization of public health services

Our Hypothesis

- Adoption of a regional model for local public health service delivery in Massachusetts will improve the quality and breadth of public health services
 - Regional models include:
 - Regional cooperation (e.g., shared staff or purchased services from another health department)
 - Consolidation (i.e., one public health entity provides services to multiple communities)

Research Needs

- Baseline assessment of the strengths and gaps in public health service delivery
 - Services provided
 - Infrastructure (e.g., staffing, budgets)
 - Core competencies of public health workforce, including board of health

Research Needs

- How are decisions made about public health service delivery?
 - Local public health directors/agents, local boards of health, and municipal governing officials
- Some factors influencing decisions:
 - Understanding of local public health
 - Use of data/research
 - Financial health
 - Politics

Possible Research Plan

- Statewide survey of local public health departments
- Follow-up semi-structured interviews with local public health, board of health, and governing officials in select sample of municipalities

Potential Overlap with Other PBRNs

- PH service delivery measures
- Focus on decision-making
 - Interest in identifying appropriate framework to structure study
 - Lomas' Linkage and Exchange Model
 - Community Readiness