



**Title of Design Lab:**

**Public Health Institute Strategies and Tools for Supporting Health Systems' Community Health Improvement Programs**

**Topic Champion:**

- Andy Coburn, Maine Public Health Institute

**Short Summary of session**

Maine's "Health Index" document is a guide to assess where all counties fall on key public health issues—it sets strategic directions for health and sets important public health targets, and was created as a result of a community health improvement project. It entailed a large-scale collaboration with actors from a variety of sectors. A public health institute's role is critical in acting as a neutral consultant, helping guide the logic model development, and helping with communication. One critical challenge in undergoing a large scale health improvement plan is bridging the communication gaps between different entities (e.g. health departments and hospitals). There is still a need to further explore the impact public health institute (PHIs) have on community health, eventually moving to population health/primary care engagement/ integration.

**Key Takeaway points:**

1. In developing a community health improvement plan, identify opportunities to leverage pre-existing resources
2. The process of setting targets is often more fruitful than focusing on the target itself
3. Having access to quality data is key in implementing a large scale health improvement plan
4. PHIs can best support a health improvement plan by: acting as a neutral consultant and facilitator, providing technical expertise in logic modeling and providing data, and helping with communications

**Action Steps:**

1. Consider opportunities to collaborate with PHIs (e.g. by region) to assess PHIs roles in improving communities health
2. Explore opportunities for PHIs and NNPHI specifically to help facilitate communication with hospitals re: the value of community health improvement