Hindsight is 2020:
Reminders for Reconstructing Public Health

Marcus Johnson
Director, State Health Policy and Advocacy
6/16/2021
Police said he killed an Arizona officer while texting. But records say he wasn't on his phone

Richard Ruelas  Arizona Republic
Published 7:00 a.m. MT Jun. 9, 2021  |  Updated 7:33 p.m. MT Jun. 12, 2021
Arizona’s New Telehealth Law Supports Audio-Only Platforms, License Portability

Governor Doug Ducey’s signature this week on HB 2454 pushes Arizona to the front of the line in post-COVID-19 telehealth policy, providing guidance on a number of connected health issues.

Governor Ducey Signs Legislation To Dramatically Expand Telehealth

News Release
May 5, 2021

New Arizona Law Will Be Broadest In The Nation
'Incredibly significant': Arizona has decriminalized clean needle exchanges

Stephanie Innes Arizona Republic
Policy and Systems Change

- Ideas/Solutions
- Leadership
- Resources
- Political and Public Will
Ideas
$15B to State and Local Authorities

600 Years’ worth of funding for Coconino County’s Department of Health and Human Services

Source: JLBC 3/16/21 American Rescue Plan Act Program Summary
ARPA

- $2.6B to AZ Dept of Education
- AHCCCS, DES and ADHS
  - Vaccine Grants from CDC ($150MM)
  - COVID testing, contact tracing, mitigation ($960MM)
  - Public health workforce (153MM)
  - FQHCs ($152MM)
  - Teaching Health Centers GME ($7MM)
  - Community Mental Health Services Block Grant ($38MM)
  - Substance Abuse Prevention Treatment Block Grant ($33MM)
  - Mental health training for healthcare workers ($2MM)
ARPA

• DCS, DES, Veterans
  – SNAP administration support ($23MM)
  – Extension of **15% boost in SNAP benefits** through Sept. ‘21
  – Expands age of eligibility for ADE’s food care program at emergency homeless shelters
  – To DES for Older Americans:
    • Nutrition program support ($17MM)
    • Home and community-based support services ($10MM)
    • Evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention ($1MM)
    • Family caregiver support ($3MM)
ARPA

• DCS, DES, Veterans
  – Child Care workers deemed essential ($374MM)
  – Child Care provider stabilization ($598MM)
  – Suspends state match on child care entitlements through FY22
  – Family Violence prevention ($4MM), Child abuse prevention ($6MM)
ARPA

- Housing
  - Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program ($46MM)
  - Water expense assistance ($10MM)
  - **Emergency Rental Assistance** via DES ($374MM)
  - Homeowner Assistance Fund – mortgage and utility assistance ($199MM)
  - Tenant rental assistance, affordable housing development, supports, etc ($100MM)
ARPA

• Housing
  – Emergency Housing Vouchers ($100MM)
  – Emergency assistance for rural housing, via DES ($2MM)
  – Housing counseling ($2MM)

• Transportation
  – Federal Transit Administration mass transit grants ($261MM)
  – Paycheck Protection Program expands to large nonprofits ($145MM)
ARPA

• Tax, Employment Benefits
  – Direct stimulus payments to tax filers
  – Enhanced child tax credits, and are now fully refundable
  – Paid sick and family leave credits extended
  – Additional $300/week to unemployment insurance payments
What Have We Learned?

Lesson Reminder #1
Public Health decisions are made by leaders outside of traditional Public Health.
Political and Public Will
“The Covid year has exposed an even more important limitation of our scientific and technological power. Science cannot replace politics.”

- Yuval Noah Harari
Changing the Conversation

- 19 People
- Identify as Republican
- Voted for Trump
- Identify as Conservative
- Responded “Maybe” or “Probably Not” when asked if they’d get the COVID vaccine. They’re not “anti-vaxxers.”

Source: Changing the Conversation
Changing the Conversation – 5 Facts

1. If you get infected with the virus, it will go all over your body and stay there for at least a week and be much more likely to cause you long-term problems than the vaccine.

2. If you get the vaccine, it will prime your immune system, but then the vaccine is gone. It will not be with you anymore.

3. More than 90% of the doctors who have been offered this vaccine have chosen to get it.

4. The more we vaccinate, the faster we can get back to growing our economy and doing the things we want to do.

5. If people get vaccinated, we’re going to save at least 100,000 lives of Americans who would otherwise be killed by COVID.

Source: Changing the Conversation
Changing the Conversation

Focus Group Highlights

- Thoughts on the politicization of COVID-19 (11:35-13:55)
- Dr. Frieden’s 5 Facts (13:55-16:13)
- Reactions to Ads (23:45-28:20)
- Governor Chris Christie’s Story (28:20-31:20)
- Have your opinions changed? (31:20)

Source: Changing the Conversation
“Trump Republicans remain the last significant holdout in embracing the COVID-19 vaccine -- but we now have hope.

A combination of key medical facts, enumerated clearly without any political undertones, and a human story of just how random and deadly the virus has been, is a convincing, motivating message.

If the elected officials and the public health experts adopt this strategy, they will save thousands of lives.”

- Frank Luntz
What Have We Learned?

**Lesson Reminder #1**
Public Health decisions are made by leaders outside of traditional Public Health

**Lesson Reminder #2**
Policy Begins with Narrative
Opportunities for Reconstruction

- Awareness of Public Health at an all-time high
- Strong leadership
- Unprecedented funds available
- Proven solutions are out there
- Decision-makers are searching for solutions
“Public Health is very political and operates in a government system that is constrained, and when you analyze why it gets very little attention, it ultimately comes down to the fact that there isn't a meaningful political constituency for prevention.”

- Dr. Anthony Iton, SVP, The California Endowment
The window is open.
Let's make the most of this opportunity.
Helpful Tools & Resources

PHRASES and Frameworks Institute

- [Motivating the Public to Support Public Health](#)
- “When you say…They think”

deBeaumont Foundation

- [Changing the COVID Conversation](#)