



Why Are Infectious Diseases Important?

Viral hepatitis, influenza, and tuberculosis (TB) remain among the leading causes of illness and death in the United States and account for substantial spending on the related consequences of infection.

The infectious disease public health infrastructure, which carries out disease surveillance at the Federal, State, and local levels, is an essential tool in the fight against newly emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases. Other important defenses against infectious diseases include:

- Proper use of vaccines
- Antibiotics
- Screening and testing guidelines
- Scientific improvements in the diagnosis of infectious disease-related health concerns

Surveillance

The Victoria County Public Department's goals focus on reducing illness, hospitalization, and death from infectious diseases. The Victoria County Public Health Departments surveillance and investigation efforts will save lives by allowing the maximum time possible for public health responses. Surveillance enables rapid information sharing and facilitates the timely identification of people in need of immediate treatment. Increasing laboratory capacity is essential for these efforts.

Overview

Public health infrastructure provides communities, states, and the Nation the capacity to prevent disease, promote health, and prepare for and respond to both acute (emergency) threats and chronic (ongoing) challenges to health. Infrastructure is the foundation for planning, delivering, evaluating, and improving public health.

Understanding Victoria County's Public Health Infrastructure

The Victoria County Public Department's infrastructure can best be described by what it is and what it does. It includes three key components:

- A capable and qualified workforce
- Up-to-date local and regional data and information systems
- Networking or lead participating agency capable of assessing and responding to public health needs.