NIH SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT REVIEW BOARD
VALUE OF BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH

June 4-5, 2013
Bethesda, Maryland

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Public Health

"is what we, as a society, do collectively to assure conditions in which people can be healthy…"

Institute of Medicine, 1987

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Public Health

Focus in on health of populations.

Focus is on prevention.

Main functions are: Assessment (data)
Policy Development
Assurance

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Public Health

Priority setting:

1) Numbers of persons in a population affected (or potentially affected);
2) Severity of conditions;
3) Ability to impact (1) and/or (2).

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Research Spectrum

Basic Science (Lab, Bench)	⟷	Individual	⟷	Population (Community)
		Efficacy		Effectiveness Impact
		RCT		Surveys Modeling Epidemiology Economics

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Research Priorities vs. Public Health Priorities

1) Research progress not always linear;
2) Opportunities for success may differ;
3) Time lag from research finding to implementation on wide scale;
4) Political considerations.

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Attributing Research Success in Public Health

1) Existing data sets may be inadequate:
   a) focus on disease, biomarkers, less than prevention;
   b) time lags between research and implementation;
   c) sampling may not match populations with greatest potential impact (size, focus);
   d) specialized data needs should be specified and supported early.

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Attributing Research Success in Public Health

2) Research is often collaborative in sponsorship;
3) Success (or failure) in improving health is often multifactorial;
4) Social determinants of health often ignored by policy makers (and researchers).

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Examples from HIV/AIDS:

1) Multidisciplinary collaborations
2) Research - NIH
   Other USG Agencies
   Industry
   Foundations

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Examples from HIV/AIDS:

3) Breakthroughs – Problem definition
   Etiology
   Therapy
   Impact on populations

4) Data availability for public health:
   - best in US / developed countries;
   - best for treatment / mortality;
   - less adequate – prevention, developing countries.

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