APHA Action Board Chair’s Report for 2019
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I. Overview

APHA’s Action Board helps coordinate the association’s grassroots and grasststop advocacy activities and encourages participation in advocacy initiatives among the association’s Sections, SPIGs, Caucuses, state and regional Affiliates and other member units. Members of the Action Board serve for a three-year term and help engage the units they represent to take action on APHA’s advocacy priorities. In addition, the Chair and Chair-designate of the Action Board and two additional members selected by the chair serve as members of the Joint Policy Committee.

II. Activities

In 2019, the Action Board organized its work primarily through three internal workgroups: Media, Direct Advocacy/Annual Meeting, and Policy Statement. These groups served to expand and enhance the work of the Action Board. The workgroups identified activities and met via conference calls throughout the year to keep efforts on schedule. Additionally, the Action Board created a Speak for Health Challenge subcommittee to manage the Speak for Health Challenge, an inaugural effort to engage APHA members in the Speak for Health campaign.

Key activities from Action Board members this year included:
- Dissemination of APHA resources to members, including social media resources
- Dissemination of APHA advocacy priority messages, including action alerts, internally (to APHA members and components) and externally (to elected officials, through social media, etc.)
- Submission of letters to the editor and op/eds on public health issues in local newspapers
- Visiting their members of Congress on Capitol Hill during the Action Board mid-year meeting in Washington, DC
- Planning an Annual Meeting session titled “Mobilizing a Public Health Campaign” featuring key speakers who will discuss how they were able to mobilize a campaign for public health action
- Planning an Annual Meeting session titled “Policy Statements 101: Lessons Learned” featuring key speakers from the Action Board, Science Board, and JPC on the policy statement development process
- Planning and launching the inaugural Speak for Health Challenge, an effort to drive APHA member engagement in Speak for Health activities by documenting member advocacy activities between July 1 and September 30, 2019
- Participation in the Speak for Health campaign and documenting advocacy activities through the Speak for Health Challenge

III. Speak for Health Challenge
Speak for Health is how APHA members stand up for public health interests. To learn more about how APHA members are taking action for public health, the Action Board asked APHA members to document their advocacy activities between July 1 and Sept. 30, 2019. Members reported their actions taken between July 1 and Sept. 30, 2019 on a short reporting form distributed to components by Action Board members and through APHA’s various communications channels. The challenge time period included APHA’s Speak for Health Advocacy Bootcamp and the summer Congressional recess. The APHA member group with the most individual members reporting at least one action will be recognized at this year’s Annual Meeting during the Advocacy for Leaders session. The inaugural winner of the Speak for Health Challenge was the Public Health Nursing Section. Overall, the challenge recorded 113 responses from 79 unique members representing 28 components:

- Aging and Public Health
- Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs
- Breastfeeding Forum
- Caucus on Public Health and the Faith Community
- Chiropractic Health Care
- Community Health Planning and Policy Development
- Community Health Workers
- Community-Based Public Health Caucus
- Disability
- Environment
- Epidemiology
- Ethics
- Food and Nutrition
- Health Administration
- Human Rights
- Injury Control and Emergency Health Services
- International Health
- Maternal and Child Health
- Mental Health
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Oral Health
- Physical Activity
- Public Health Education and Health Promotion
- Public Health Nursing
- Student Assembly
- Veterinary Public Health SPIG
- Vision Care
- Women’s Caucus

IV. Communications
Bimonthly conference call meetings were held during the year for planning purposes and to update members on legislative priorities and committee action items. Internal communications were strengthened through electronic meeting invitations, agendas, and meeting minutes in order to keep all members informed of activities, roles, and responsibilities. Members also met during subcommittee and workgroup calls through the year and communicated via email in between meetings.

V. Additional Activities
Joint Policy Committee
Four Action Board members served on the Joint Policy Committee (JPC): the Chair, the Chair-Designate, and two members invited by the Chair. Members participated in all JPC activities and reported relevant information to the Action Board on bimonthly calls. The Action Board Chair co-chairs the JPC.

Executive Board
The Action Board Chair serves as an ex officio member of the APHA Executive Board. The Action Board Chair participated in all Executive Board meetings and committee meetings required. In partnership with the other co-chairs of the JPC, the Action Board Chair shared relevant JPC reports to the Executive Board. Further, the Action Board Chair shared relevant information about the Speak for Health challenge and other advocacy activities. Twelve Members of the Executive Board further participated in Congressional visits during the May in-person meeting in Washington, DC.

VII. Action Board Next Steps
The Action Board continued an internal review process this year to determine effectiveness of the board. Chronic vacancies and unengaged membership has contributed to a shrinking Action Board cohort, limiting the board’s impact. The Action Board Chair and Chair-Designate are working with APHA staff and association leadership to make recommendations to improve the structure of the board to increase its effectiveness. The proposal is being refined and discussed with stakeholders in the coming year prior to going before the Governing Council for consideration.