



January 8, 2020  
Oregon Coalition of Local Health Officials  
Sierra Prior, Program Manager

RE: Status of AOPHNS and Proposal for New Caucus

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**Background:** During the 2019 Annual CLHO Retreat hosted in September, CLHO Board Members raised two issues: 1) the status of the AOPHNS Caucus, and 2) leadership development for manager level staff in local public health departments.

The Association of Oregon Public Health Nursing Supervisors (AOPHNS) is a caucus that can appoint a representative to serve on the Conference of Local Health Officials and the CLHO Board of Directors. AOPHNS historically hosted in-person training opportunities for nursing supervisors, and monthly meeting calls. Several current public health administrators used to be AOPHNS members and received valuable knowledge, skills, and networking that contributed to the trajectory of their public health careers. Each local public health authority (LPHA) appoints someone as a Nursing Supervisor, however several LPHAs have a dual role as the Director or Public Health Administrator. LPHAs have a decreasing number of Nursing Supervisors with capacity to participate in AOPHNS, and an increasing number of manager level staff with non-nursing backgrounds. The AOPHNS Caucus has been inactive for approximately four years, despite attempts to recruit new caucus leadership.

In addition to concerns for AOPHNS, CLHO Board Members expressed that they are interested in having opportunities for manager level staff to develop leadership skills, such as:

- Understanding and leading Public Health Accreditation
- Developing Modernization foundational capabilities and programs
- Understanding finance principles and managing budgets
- Improving communications skills for public relations purposes (community outreach, media, serving on local boards)
- Management skills (supervising staff, group facilitation, writing agendas)
- Navigating leadership and management in the public sector
- Etc.

**Actions Taken:** Following the retreat, Sierra Prior, CLHO Program Manager, conducted outreach to CLHO Board Members to further discuss AOPHNS and manager leadership development. Sierra held a group discussion with the Leadership Program participants about expanding leadership opportunities for other LPHA staff, and had several 1:1 conversations.

**Proposal:** Whereas the Oregon public health workforce is shifting and it is imperative to prepare for public health leadership succession, the CLHO Board of Directors will consider the following:

- 1) Establish consensus among CLHO Board members, that each member has a responsibility, willingness, and commitment to encourage public health managers and nursing supervisors to develop their leadership skills for the betterment Oregon's governmental public health system.
- 2) Replace the AOPHNS Caucus with a new *Public Health Supervisors Caucus* that is open to local public health staff in manager roles (i.e. individuals who supervise other public health staff) and nursing supervisors.
- 3) Structure the *Public Health Supervisors Caucus* to focus on broad leadership/management skills, while also encouraging connections between peers with similar roles (e.g. nursing supervisors).
- 4) Establish: caucus name, and requirements for a charter, meetings, and participation in the Conference and Coalition of Local Health Officials.
- 5) Select two volunteers from the CLHO Board to work with the Program Manager to develop a plan for drafting a charter, recruiting caucus members, and planning a kickoff event (either virtually or in-person) in spring or summer of 2020.