



Science Board 2024 Report to the Governing Council

October 26, 2024

Members of the 2023-2024 Science Board

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A. Description of Issues

The Science Board (SB) is pleased to submit its 2023-2024 Annual Report to the Governing Council

B. Discussion

As stated in Article VII, Section 5, of the APHA Bylaws, the Science Board is tasked with stimulating and coordinating the development of the scientific basis for the Association's professional and public policy programs. The Science Board carries out these functions through the board and its subcommittees. As an integral part of the policy development process, the Science Board ensures that proposed APHA policy statements have scientific merit. The board

also sponsors a scientific session at the Annual Meeting and provides scientific advice to the association.

Over the course of the year, the full Science Board met five times as follows:

- November 12, 2023 - Annual Meeting
- January 22, 2024 - Introduction to Proposed Policy Statement Review
- February 27, 2024 - Business meeting
- April 18, 2024 - Proposed Policy Statement Review/Business Meeting Day 1
- April 19, 2024 - Proposed Policy Statement Review/Business Meeting Day 2

Policy Review

During its April 18 and 19, 2024 meeting, the Science Board conducted a scientific review of proposed policy statements and made recommendations to the JPC based on the strength of the evidence and scientific reasoning presented. The criteria the Science Board used to assess the quality and strength of the scientific evidence and reasoning were as follows:

Strength of the Evidence - Ratings in this section reflect the strength of evidence included (i.e., all seminal works were included, strength of evidence based on the study design/findings), regardless of whether the evidence is presented in a logical manner.

1. Strong Evidence
2. Sufficient Evidence
3. Insufficient Evidence
 - a. Requires minimal additional evidence
 - b. Requires a lot of additional evidence

Strength of Scientific Reasoning - Ratings in this section reflect the quality of the scientific reasoning, or logical progression of ideas to support the claims made, regardless of the strength of the evidence presented.

1. Strong Scientific Reasoning
2. Sufficient Scientific Reasoning
3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning
 - a. Requires minimal revision
 - b. Requires major revision

Of the 14 proposed policy statements reviewed, 0 received an assessment of strong evidence, 0 received an assessment of sufficient evidence, 2 received an assessment of insufficient evidence- requires minimal additional evidence, and 12 received an assessment of insufficient evidence- requires major additional evidence; 0 received an assessment of strong scientific reasoning, 2 received an assessment of sufficient scientific reasoning, 4 received an assessment of insufficient scientific reasoning- requires minor revision and 8 received an assessment of insufficient scientific reasoning- requires major revision.

Science Board Spring Assessments

Group A: Access to Care and Equity	
Proposed Policy Statement	Science Board Assessment
A1: Supporting Physical Activity for Transgender Individuals	3. Insufficient Evidence b. Requires a lot of additional evidence 3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning a. Requires minor revision
A2: Increasing Access to Telehealth Medication Abortion in the United States	3. Insufficient Evidence b. Requires a lot of additional evidence 3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning b. Requires major revision
A3: A Call to Protect Access to Gender Affirming Care Nationwide in the Wake of Stricter Health System Religious Practices	3. Insufficient Evidence b. Requires a lot of additional evidence 3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning b. Requires major revision
A4: Actions to Incorporate Traditional, Complementary and Integrative Health Care Practices into Primary Disease Prevention and Health Promotion Policies	3. Insufficient Evidence b. Requires a lot of additional evidence 2. Sufficient Scientific Reasoning
A5: Advancing Community-Based Participatory Practice in Public Health	3. Insufficient Evidence a. Requires minimal additional evidence 3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning a. Requires minor revision
A6: The Case for Equity and Justice-Centered Racial and Ethnic Public Health Data Collection Practices	3. Insufficient Evidence b. Requires a lot of additional evidence 3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning a. Requires major revision
Group B: Workforce Protection, Safety and Training	
B1: Equitably Applying Artificial Intelligence in the United States Workforce Using Training and Collaboration	3. Insufficient Evidence b. Requires a lot of additional evidence 3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning b. Requires major revision
B2: Protecting the Health and Safety of Workers Who Respond to Disasters: Achieving Equity Through Education and Training	3. Insufficient Evidence b. Requires a lot of additional evidence 2. Sufficient Scientific Reasoning
B3: A Multi-Component Approach to Increasing Prescription Drug Safety	3. Insufficient Evidence a. Requires minimal additional evidence 3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning a. Requires minor revision
Group C: International Health and Human Rights	

C1: Meeting the Health and Psychosocial Needs and Ensuring the Human Rights of Refugees from Nagorno Karabakh	3. Insufficient Evidence b. Requires a lot of additional evidence 3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning b. Requires major revision
C2: A Call for Comprehensive Solutions: Addressing Puerto Rico’s Public Health and Healthcare Crisis	3. Insufficient Evidence b. Requires a lot of additional evidence 3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning b. Requires major revision
C3: Antisemitism as a Public Health Crisis	3. Insufficient Evidence b. Requires a lot of additional evidence 3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning b. Requires major revision
C4: Considering Public Health in International Sanctions	3. Insufficient Evidence b. Requires a lot of additional evidence 3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning b. Requires major revision
C5: Support for Health Equity and Justice in the Occupied Palestinian Territories	3. Insufficient Evidence b. Requires a lot of additional evidence 3. Insufficient Scientific Reasoning b. Requires major revision

Throughout the year, the Science Board also met, as needed, as one of three committees, Joint Policy Committee, Annual Meeting Scientific Session, and Archiving Review.

Joint Policy Committee (JPC)

Four Science Board representatives served on the Joint Policy Committee. Dr. Kevin Sykes served as co-chair of the JPC and Dr. Toby Levin, Dr. Krista Mincey and Dr. Catherine Troisi served as the additional three representatives of the Science Board on JPC. Science Board representatives on the JPC appropriately participated in JPC functions and meetings.

2024 Sponsored Scientific Session

The Science Board planned and will host scientific session 4283.0 - Artificial Intelligence and Public Health- Rebuilding Trust Using AI on Tuesday, October 29, 2024 from 4:30-6:00PM CT.

Drawing on the expertise of leaders from across the country, this panel session will help attendees to describe how artificial intelligence (AI) contributes to the improvement of public health; explain how AI can contribute to trust in the public health system; and identify key elements that will help people understand public health with AI

The session will be moderated by Toby Levin, PhD and will feature Polina Durneva, PhD- University of Memphis; Jason Wang, PhD- Northwell/Hofstra Medical School; and Jing Wu, PharmD, MPH- American Society of Consultant Pharmacists

Archiving Review

There are 14 policy statements originally adopted in 2004, and 15 policy statements originally adopted in 2014 scheduled for archiving at the close of the 2024 Annual Meeting (see list below). *Policy statements adopted in 2014 or later are scheduled after 10 years vs. the previous 20 years.

APHA members were asked to review these policy statements and consider three potential options for each policy statement of interest:

1. Allow the policy statement to remain on the archiving consent agenda
2. Update a policy statement scheduled for archiving
3. Request to keep active a policy statement proposed for archiving

The Science Board received two requests to keep policy statements active, [20049- Promoting Public Health and Education Goals through Coordinated School Health Programs](#) and [20143- Sexuality Education as Part of a Comprehensive Health Education Program in K to 12 Schools](#)

The Board will meet on October 27, 2024 for a business meeting during the APHA Annual Meeting and Expo. At this time, it will finalize its recommendation regarding the archiving of Policy Statement 20049 and 20143. This recommendation will then be forwarded to the JPC who will provide the Governing Council the recommendation in its report issued on the evening of October 27th.

Ex Officio Representation on Executive Board

The Chair of the Science Board served as an Ex Officio member of the Executive Board, as outlined in the APHA bylaws.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Sykes, PhD, MPH
2023-2024 Chair, Science Board