**public health** n. The science and practice of protecting and improving the health of a community, as by preventative medicine, health education, control of communicable diseases, application of sanitary measures, and monitoring of environmental hazards.

- The American Heritage Dictionary

**Public Health Institute** n.
Promotes health, well being, and quality of life through research, training, and community building.
Florida Public Health Institute History

The Florida Public Health Institute (FPHI), acting as a neutral convener, works with various local, state and national leaders to develop public-private partnerships that provide recommendations and solutions to health-related matters for the citizens of Palm Beach County, the state of Florida and the national community. Its mission is to “...advance the knowledge and practice of public health to promote, protect and improve the health of all.” FPHI advances improvements in health through community education; health advocacy; health workforce training; and assessment, research and evaluation. FPHI participates as a collaborator, not a competitor, with a variety of partners in positioning the Institute as a vehicle for positive health system change wherever the opportunity may arise.

In 2001, The Miami Dade County Health Department (MDCHD) was the original incubator for FPHI and was incorporated as the Miami Dade County Public Health Institute. When the Institute was later incorporated as FPHI in 2006, MDCHD continued to provide administrative and operational support.

FPHI received operational core funding in 2007 totaling $1.25 million from the Quantum Foundation and the National Network of Public Health Institutes/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to expand the Institute’s infrastructure and program development capabilities. In a four-year time period, FPHI expanded its board to 15 members, developed a five-year strategic plan, created and executed a sustainability plan, increased its funding sources, enhanced internal IT infrastructure and developed several projects for each of its five centers of excellence and health policy bureau. The five centers include: workforce development; bio-preparedness and health system readiness; primary care and prevention; research, education and training; and a center for a sustainable environment and safe water.

Since its inception, FPHI has brought together leaders from academia; city, county, state and federal government; foundations; business and industry and the local communities to begin the dialogue of positive health system change. Partners include Nova Southeastern University, University of Miami, Florida Department of Health, Florida Public Health Association, County Health Departments, Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University, Florida Atlantic University, Florida International University, University of Florida, University of North Florida, University of South Florida, and Florida State University.

FPHI is enacting its vision to evolve into an institute with multiple governmental and private funding sources to further champion changes in health-related policy and implementation. These increasing affiliations bring intellectual capital to enhance health care services and improve the health system fabric across the state and nationally. FPHI continues to develop innovation projects focused on workforce retention, community mitigation and preparedness, primary care and oral health services for the uninsured and under-insured populations, online training course, electronic community messaging and environmental and safe water-related issues.

Claude Earl Fox, MD, MPH is a public health physician who has headed federal, state and local agencies in a greater than three-decade career dedicated to equal access to health care. He is currently a professor in the Department of Epidemiology Public Health at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and the founding director of the Florida Public Health Institute. He was previously the first permanent director of the Johns Hopkins Urban Health Institute and Professor of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health with joint academic appointments in the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing and School of Medicine.

From November 1995 to March 1997, Dr. Fox was Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health in the Department of Health and Human Services’ Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Prior to then, Dr. Fox was State Health Officer for the state of Alabama and Deputy State Health Officer. In addition, he held the position of Maternal and Child Health Director for the State of Mississippi.

Claude Earl Fox, MD, MPH
FPHI Executive Director

Debora Kerr, MA, has a 12-year non-profit background in healthcare, biotechnology, environmental health, education, youth programs, and workforce development sectors. Actively involved in planning and securing start-up funding for the Florida Public Health Institute through the Quantum Foundation and the NNPHI/Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Ms. Kerr helped evolve the agency through multiple government and private funding sources that focus on innovative project development. She works closely with Executive Director Claude Earl Fox, M.D., M.P.H., to oversee business/resource development, program planning, and operations for the Institute.

Ms. Kerr has been involved in numerous community leadership roles and is currently coordinating projects on FQHC expansion, oral health access, public health workforce, health policy, and water technologies and water security and is working with FAU’s departments of environmental science and engineering to study climate change and public health in South Florida.

Debora Kerr, MA
FPHI Assistant Director
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  - Oral Health Coalition Coordinator
- **Cristy Kovach Hom, LCSW**
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  - Deputy Secretary for Health
  - Director, Office of Minority Health
  - Florida Department of Health

### Consultants

- **John Foley, Esq.**
  - Legal Consultant
- **Jesse Leighton**
  - Community Health Center Consultant
- **Cindy Metzler**
  - Media Consultant
- **Nancy Schneider, MBA**
  - Sustainability Consultant
- **Claudia Serna, COA, RDH, MPH**
  - Oral Health Consultant
- **Leah Shaw, SPHR, CCP, CBP**
  - Human Resource Consultant
- **Jaime Stoll, LMHC, MS**
  - Program Manager
- **Greta von Unruh**
  - Research Consultant
- **Lisa Hoddinott**
  - Creative Marketing Consultant
The Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body campaign created by the Florida Public Health Institute and the Oral Health Coalition of Palm Beach County gave preschoolers and their parents free admission to the South Florida Science Museum and treated them to a healthier way to celebrate Halloween.
**Health Policy Bureau**
FPHI in collaboration with Georgia Health Policy Center is developing several Policy Briefs that will help Floridians better understand the impact of Federal Healthcare reform legislation. The goal of the project is to develop more information and tools to better inform policy makers and Public Health Departments. In addition, FPHI has been an instrumental partner in developing an online small business calculator.

**Center for Workforce Development**
Dr. Fox chaired an Ad Hoc Committee established by the Florida Department of Health to identify physician shortages and to develop recommendations to the legislature & Department of Health on potential strategies to address these limitations. FPHI is also working with healthMETRICS to determine mechanisms to approve efficiency and effectiveness of County Health Departments. This project is a partnership with local Health Departments and looks at patient-provider satisfaction as well as financial revenue generation and quality of care.

**Center for Research, Education & Training**
FPHI has an academic advisory committee that is composed of Florida public health schools and programs to address public health issues. For three years, FPHI has provided distance-based training for public health departments as well as students and others focused on public health issues such as health disparities and unmet health needs. Most recently, in the summer of 2010, FPHI provided a series of web-based courses on various health topics.

FPHI is working with the University of Miami to develop a Palm Beach County-based program that would allow the last two years of a medical degree/public health degree to be spent in Palm Beach County working with local health departments’ federally qualified health centers. As an example of a community-based education project, the Community Foundation of Palm Beach and Martin Counties has funded FPHI in an electronic community forum providing health information and other resources to the community of Palm Beach County.

FPHI is working to achieve certification in conducting health impact assessments where needed. These assessments help determine the potential impact that certain transportation or environmental policies would have on health and hopefully provide better decision-making, and more informed policies to communities.

**Center for Sustainable Environment & Safe Water**
For the last two years, FPHI has convened a group of public and private individuals in South Florida looking at how to work with private business communities around improved access to sustainable environment and safe water. This project has also been engaged with CedaHeres Institute in the Netherlands around water issues.

FPHI is working with faculty at FAU and the Scripts Research Institute on adaptation and mitigation strategies in South Florida regarding sustainable environment and safe water. This partnership is also looking at use of health impact assessments as a strategy.

Recently, Florida Public Health Institute was one of many partners with the Southeast Florida Regional Partnership who were awarded a highly competitive Sustainable Communities Planning Grant (of $4.25 million) by an interagency federal partnership of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Department of Transportation. The national grant awarded by the U.S. HUD under this new program will support metropolitan and multi-jurisdictional planning efforts that support the integration of housing, land use, economic development, transportation infrastructure planning and investment.

**Center for Primary Care & Prevention**
FPHI provides technical assistance to private and non-profit organizations to develop community health centers that address unmet health needs within communities. Jupiter Medical Center and FPHI are conducting a community needs-assessment and potentially, the development of a Community Health Center, if appropriate, in Northern Palm Beach County.

FPHI, in partnership with Palm Beach County, has created a Community Health NETwork Map. The Map is an attempt to portray an accurate and up-to-date picture of Palm Beach County’s unmet health needs that can be addressed with new strategies. The goal is to make the map interactive and to link via the web to local community clinics.

FPHI is a statewide collaborator working with the Department of Health and dental schools to identify unmet oral health needs in children and adults. FPHI leads the local oral healthcare coalition in Palm Beach County that is made up of representatives from the community to address local oral health needs.

In addition, FPHI received grant funds from two local foundations to develop a web-based tool to help policy makers, government officials and families understand various medicaid CHIP options available in Florida to address unmet dental needs. This website will provide data on return on investment, prevention, restorative care and education.

FPHI also received funding from Boston-based DentaQuest Foundation to provide Oral Health information to the statewide community. The information is specific to oral health needs in Florida and what policy changes might be implemented to address these needs. FPHI together with local and statewide coalitions are working to develop messaging around a “Healthy Mouth, Healthy Body” public relations campaign. FPHI will be creating messaging for TV and radio while providing raw material that communities can use to develop custom message points surrounding oral health.

**Center for Bio-Preparedness & Health System Readiness**
The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) H1N1 preparedness project is a partnership between the private business community and five sites across the U.S., including local governmental public health. The goal of the project is to develop models for public and private partnership that can be used in additional communities to address public health emergencies such as an H1N1 pandemic. During 2009-2010, Dr. Fox served as Chairman of this international committee advising Roche on issues of pandemic influenza.

FPHI is working to achieve certification in conducting health impact assessments where needed. These assessments help determine the potential impact that certain transportation or environmental policies would have on health and hopefully provide better decision-making, and more informed policies to communities.

**Environment & Safe Water**

- **HealthyMouth HealthyBody**
- **Center for Sustainable Environment & Safe Water**
We are grateful to our generous donors and we continue to recognize the spirit of collaboration and support that the Florida Public Health Institute has received to date.

We are currently seeking donations that will aid in shaping policy statewide and make our strategic vision a reality across Florida while building and bridging partnerships nationwide.

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