

# What Public Health Practice says about Data Gaps for Advancing Rural Health Equity

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**Betty Bekemeier, PhD, MPH, RN, FAAN**

Professor, UW School of Nursing

Director Northwest Center for PH Practice, UW School of PH

[bettybek@uw.edu](mailto:bettybek@uw.edu)



# A Functional Local Health Department...

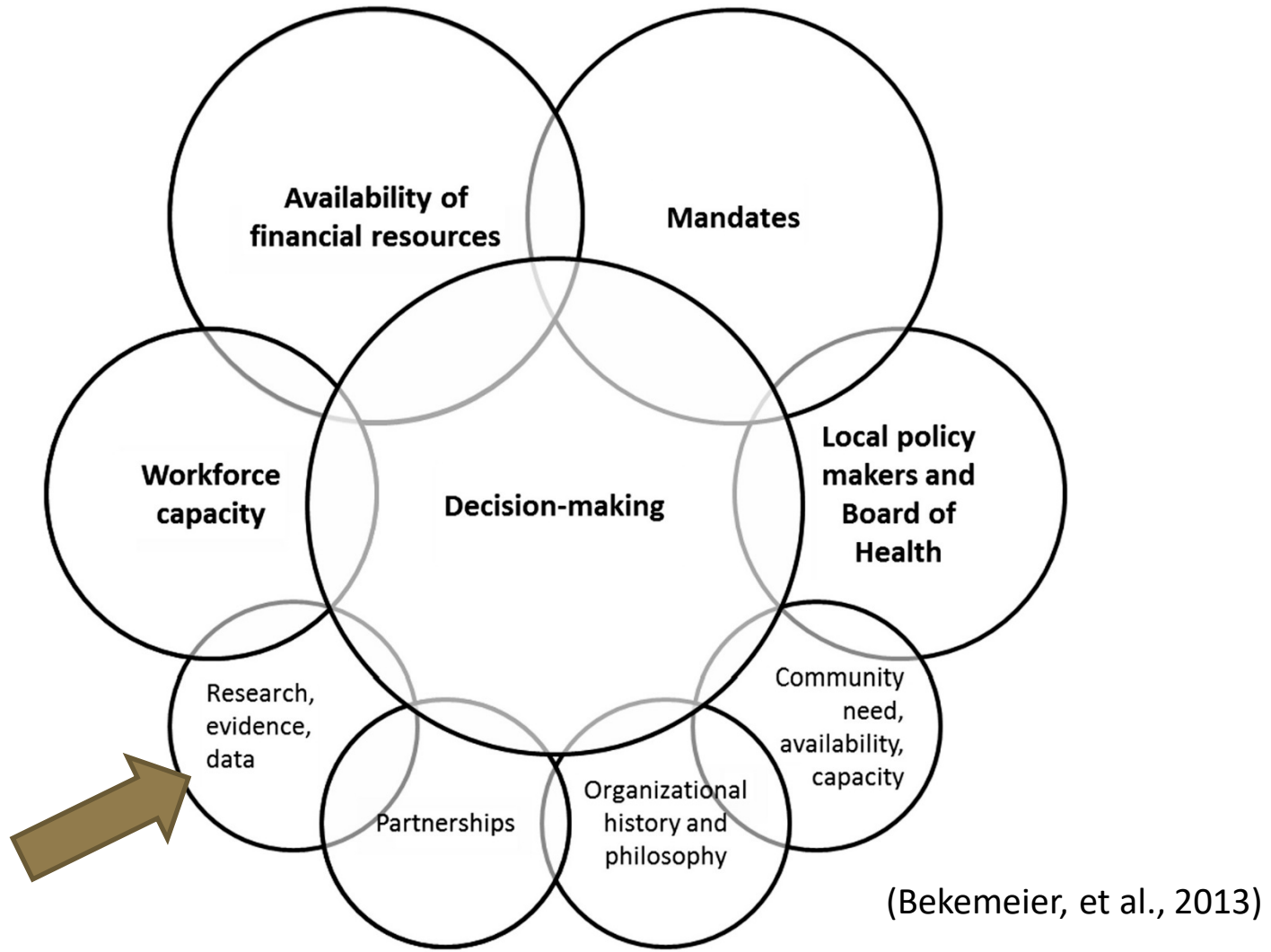
- “....addresses health disparities”
- “uses and contributes to”... the evidence-base for PH practice
- “provides expertise” in communities regarding PH issues

(NACCHO, 2005)



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

# Evidence-based Decision-making Lacking



**FIGURE** Factors that influence resource allocation decisions.

# Public Health *Administrative* Data

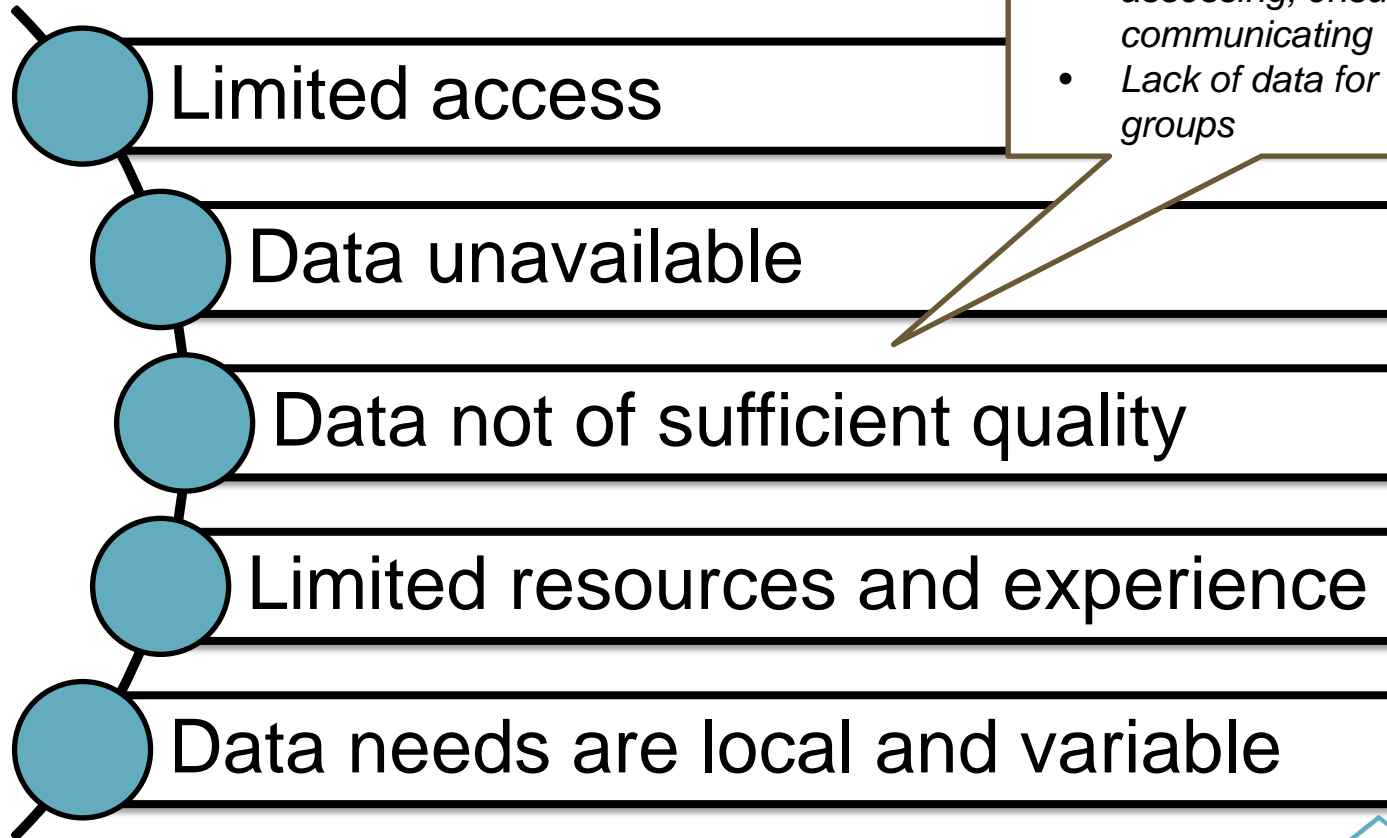
**2800**    
local health departments in all **50** states

     
measure their activities & services **differently**

        
but need standardized, comparable data for



# Rural *Public Health* Data Gaps



COVID-19 Interviews with rural PH leaders

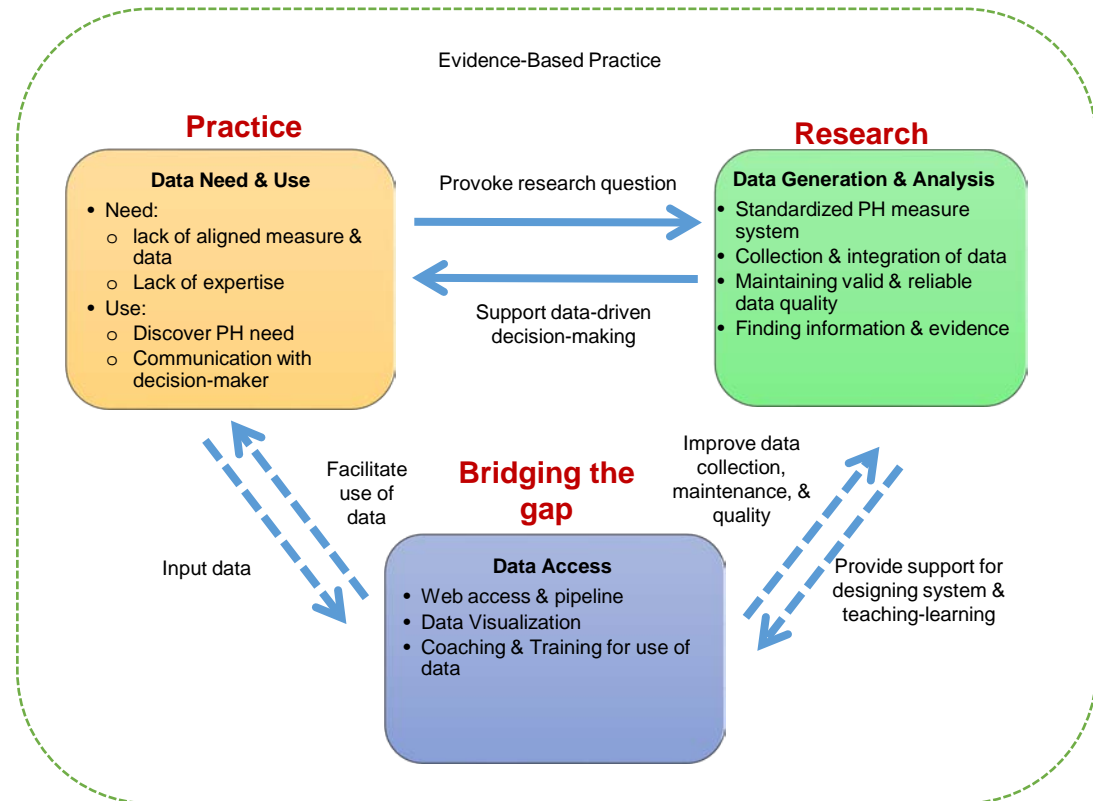
- *Overwhelmed by data volume*
- *Data trustworthiness*
- *Lack of capacity for assessing, ensuring quality, communicating*
- *Lack of data for underserved groups*

(Bekemeier, B., Park, S, Backonja, U, Ornelas, I, Turner, A., & 2019)



# The PH Activities & Services Tracking (PHAST) Model

- Practice
- Research
- Bridging the gap

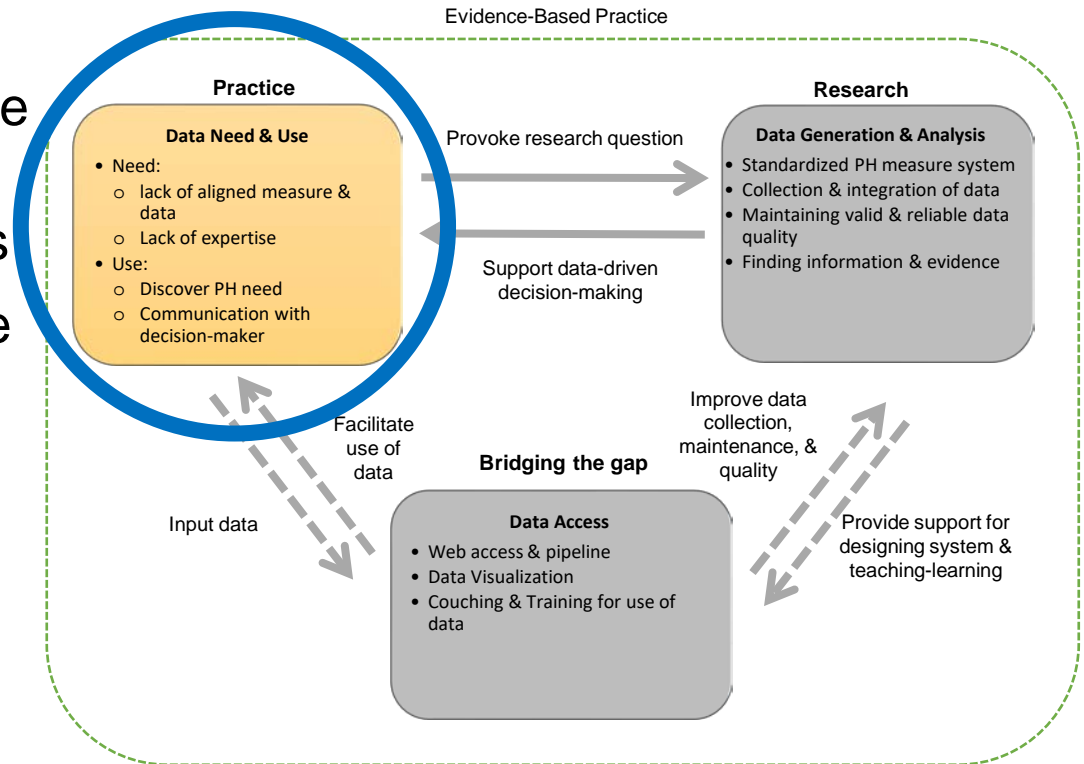


(Bekemeier & Park, 2018)

# Practice: Data Need & Use

From PH Practitioners: Need for

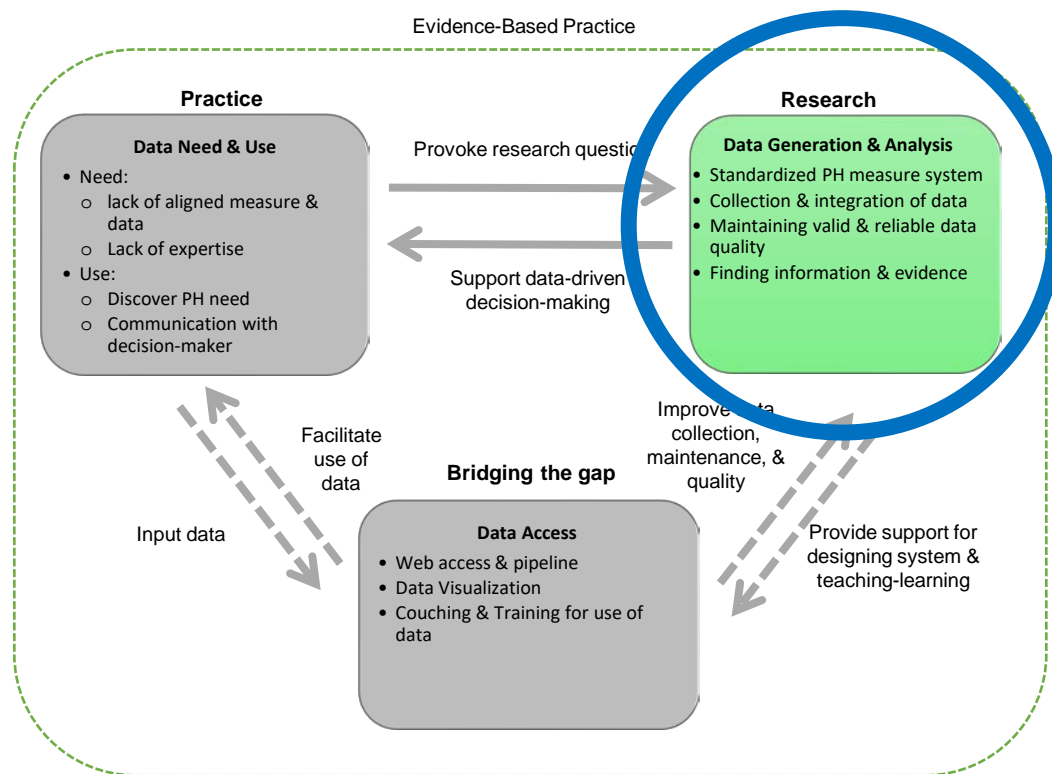
- Standardized comparable data
  - To allocate resources
  - To advocate, educate
- ‘Accessible’ data
  - To identify, address PH equity
  - To communicate with decision makers



# Research: Data Generation & Analysis

From Practice-based  
Researchers: Need to

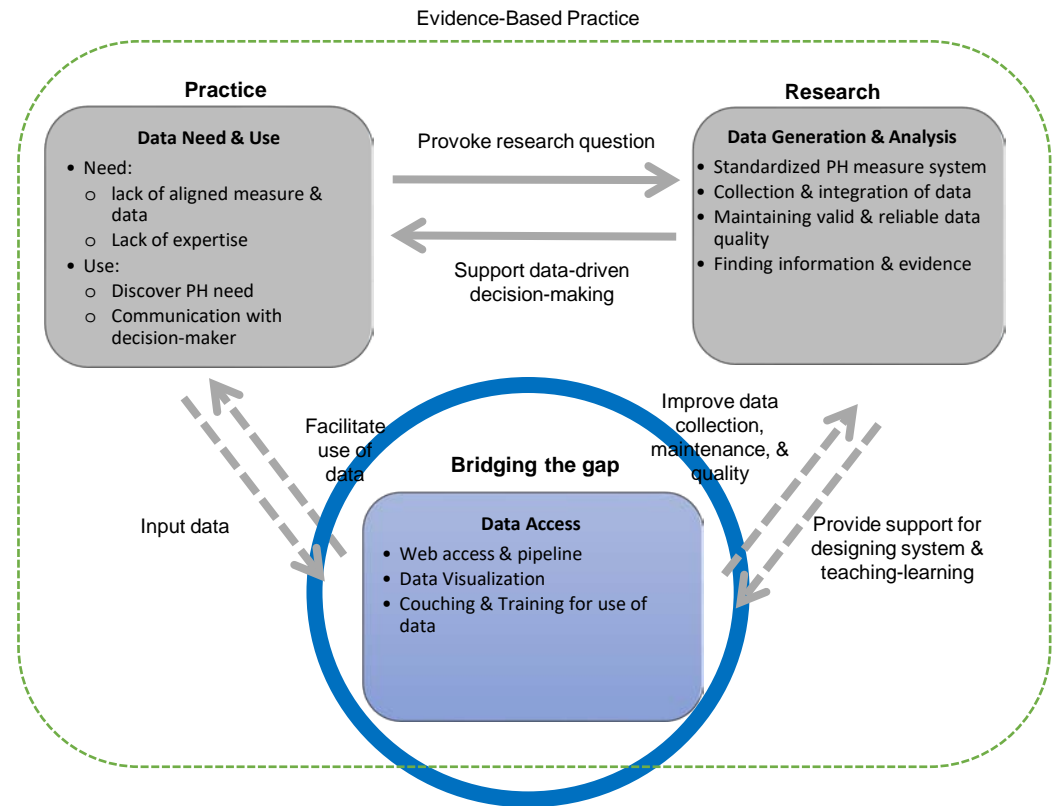
- Develop standardized PH data
- Increase support for data collection & data integration
- Incentivize quality data collection
- Producing information & evidence to support practice





# Bridging the Gap: Data Access

- Reduce the gap between practice & research
- Develop supports:
  - Online data capture tools,
  - Linking datasets
  - User-centered data dashboard,
  - Training to facilitate data use



## Data Gaps in Addressing Equity

## Modifiable SHARE-NW Solutions to Help Address Gaps

Limited Access

- Link **datasets**
- Create **dashboard** with multiple data sources
  - Include **visualization** and easy-to-populate **infographics** for communicating

Data Unavailable

- Training to **collect** data, **use** available data creatively

Data Quality

- **Incentivize** better data collection through data use
- Training
  - To evaluate data for its **utility**
  - To evaluate when data are “**good enough**”
  - About **alternative** sources of data

Limited Capacity for Data Use

- Training
  - To lead community **conversations** about data
  - How to navigate and use a data **dashboard**

Heterogeneity of Rural Jurisdictions

- Training
  - To **compare** data with peers
  - To collect/identify **alternative** sources of data

Address & Identify Health Inequities

- Training to use an **equity lens** in decision-making



# Larger Lessons Learned for Rural PH Data

- *PH Administration* data for assuring equitable resource allocation
  - Standardization
  - Substantial resources and time
  - Coordination
  - Mandates, incentives
- *Public health status* data for addressing local inequities
  - Data accessibility
  - Training—data use, understanding, collection, sharing, engagement with small populations to collect/share data
  - Resources for oversampling and data collection

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