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Letters to the Editor

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Letters to the Editor

Improving Public Health

Dear Dr. Nash,

Your June editorial was right on target ("A Healthy Public: Whose Job Is It?").

I share the leadership of a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) initiative called Turning Point: Collaborating for a New Century in Public Health. This initiative has been funded by RWJF since 1997 and carries the mission of strengthening the public health system through the use of collaborative models. One of the important partners for collaboration has been the medical community.

Over the past seven years, 21 states, funded by RWJF, have been working to improve their public health systems and to create innovative solutions to the public health infrastructure problems that plague public health. These include outdated public health laws, lack of performance management systems, indifferent policymakers, lack of information technology, leadership gaps, workforce training needs, etc.

One of the greatest challenges has been developing strong partnerships with those entities who are essential to the public health mission but have traditionally been outside of the public health system. We have worked closely with hospital associations, academic medical centers, and physician leaders and have made good progress in many communities and states.

I invite you to learn more about this initiative by visiting the Turning Point website at www.turningpointprogram.org.

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