

Public Health and Policy

Kathy Mandeville, RN, MS, MPH
Co-Chair, Policy Committee
NH Public Health Association

What is public health?

Science and art of protecting and improving the health of communities

- education
- healthy lifestyles
- disease and injury prevention

Association of Schools of Public Health

Based on Key Values

- ❑ Society has an interest in extending life, and reducing disease, injury, and disability.
- ❑ Health is influenced by where and how people live, work and play.
- ❑ Lifestyles with reduced risk can result in longer quality lives.
- ❑ Prevention is preferable, and can be less costly, than treatment.

Public Health

1. Promotes healthy people in healthy places
2. Prevents disease, injury and disability
3. Protects against environmental hazards
4. Responds to public health emergencies
5. Ensures health equity

Who's responsible for the public's health?

Prime Public Health Strategies

- Education

- Individual and community

- Policy

- Statutes, regulations, ordinances

Public health policies should:

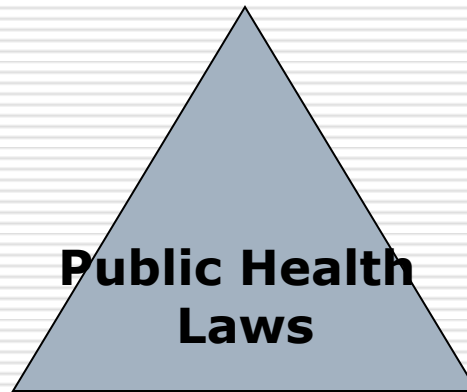
- ❑ be essentially preventive
- ❑ strive for the common good while respecting individual rights
- ❑ be informed by evidence
- ❑ reflect a genuine collaboration between the public health community, policymakers and state residents

Public health laws

Individual

Community

**Individual
Rights**

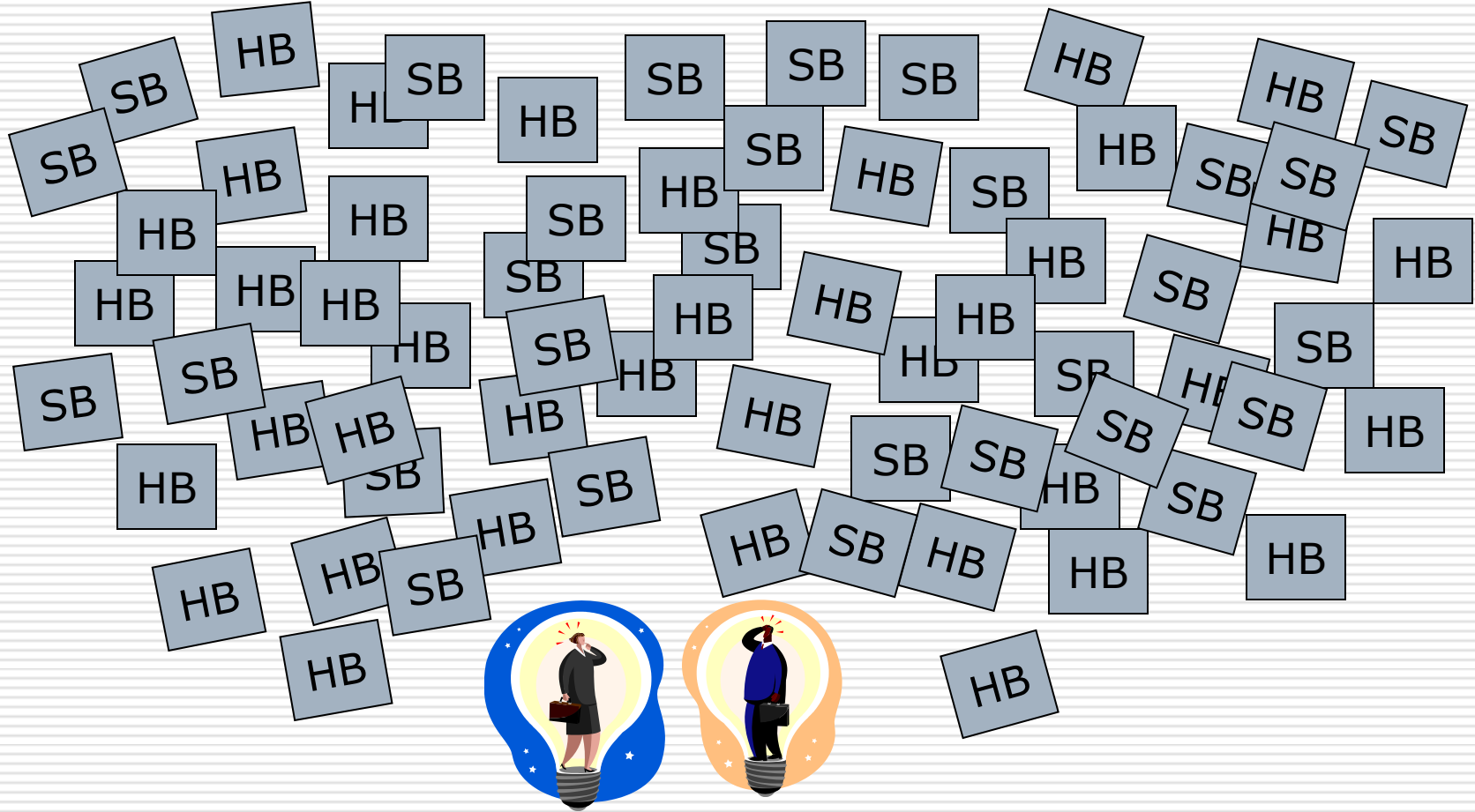


**Common
Good**

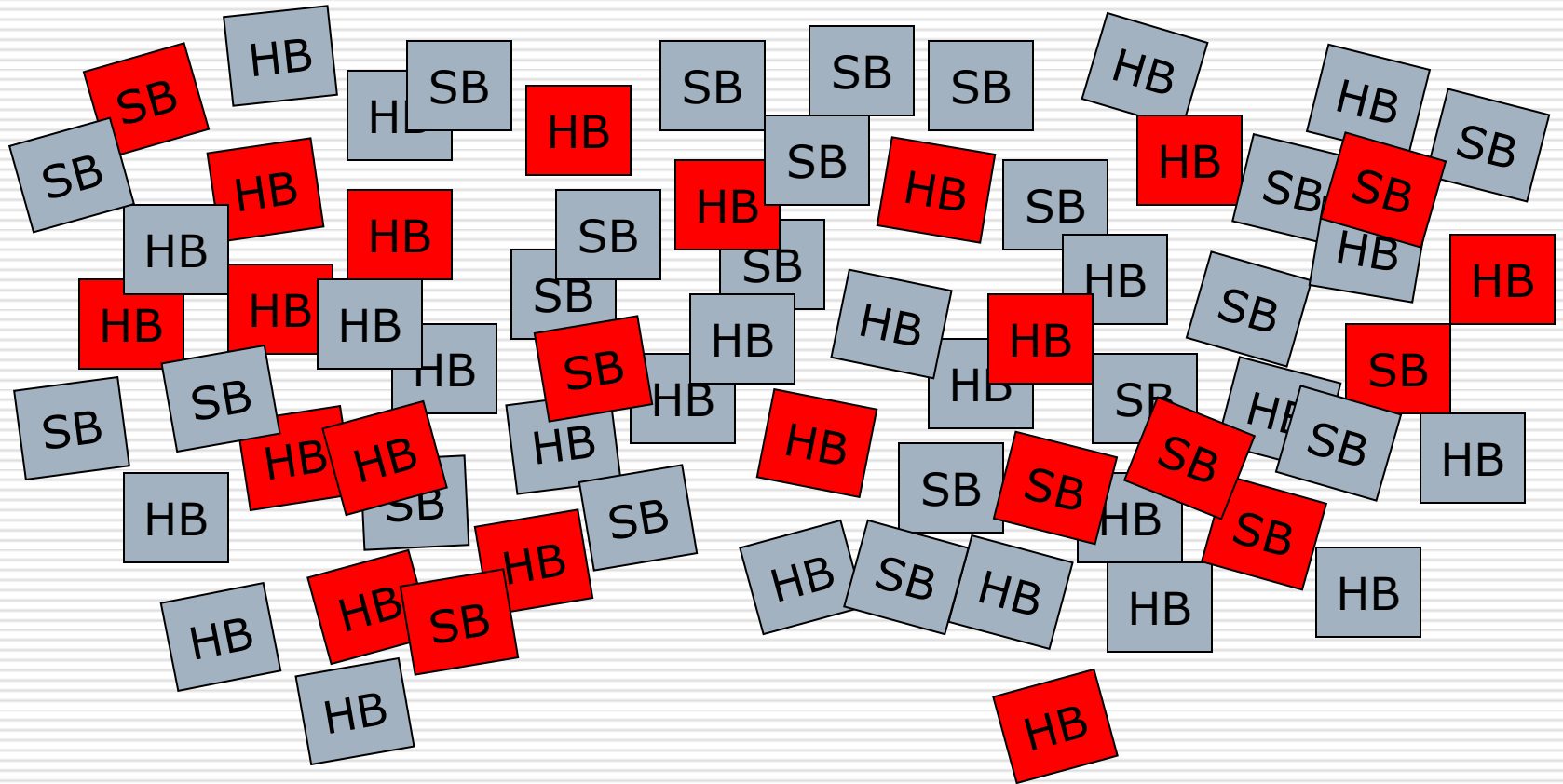
Elected officials – vital role

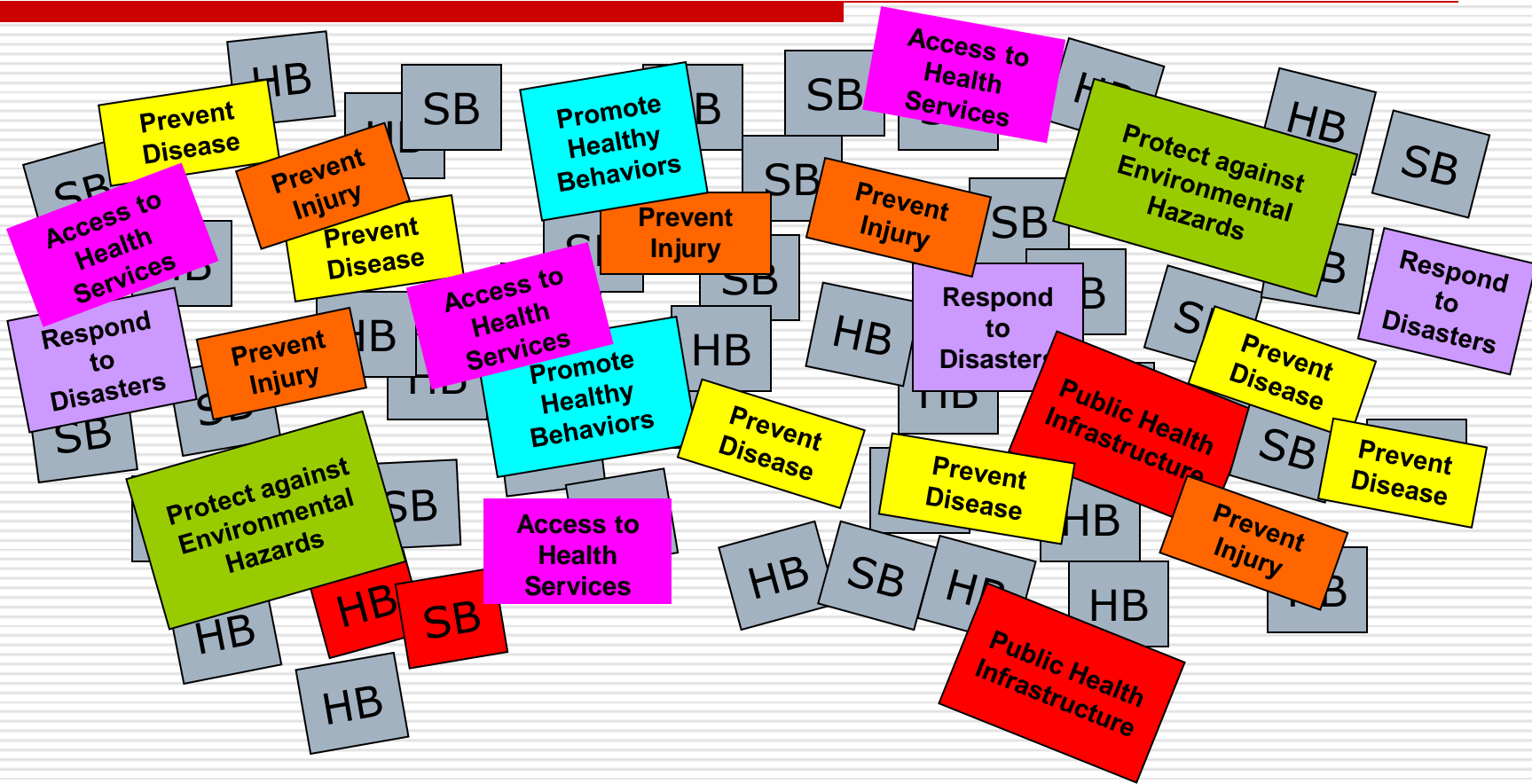
- ❑ Partners in making communities healthy
- ❑ Support fair debate on public health strategies
- ❑ Initiate and fund evidence-based public health programs
- ❑ Hold health agencies accountable
- ❑ Provide leadership for constituents

Each Legislative Session...



Many bills are public health bills...





Challenges

- ❑ Personal behaviors are difficult to change
- ❑ Cost-savings can take years
- ❑ Assertive policies can be divisive

NCSL Brief, 2011

As policymakers and public health professionals, we need to ask:

- What are the **current and future health risks** to NH residents and the **economic costs**?
- What current and proposed strategies are **evidence-based** and **cost effective**?

20th Century - Infection

Education

- Hand washing
- Hygienic practices

Policy

- Sanitation laws and regulation
- Safe drinking water
- Compulsory immunizations
- Improved medical care - antibiotics

21st Century - Chronic Diseases

- ❑ leading cause of death and disability.
- ❑ largest and fastest growing share of public and private US health expenditures. (NCSL Brief, February 2011)
- ❑ account for more than 75% of US health care costs. (CDC, 2011)

Chronic Diseases in US

- Heart disease
- Diabetes**
- Arthritis
- Some cancers
- Depression

Major Reasons

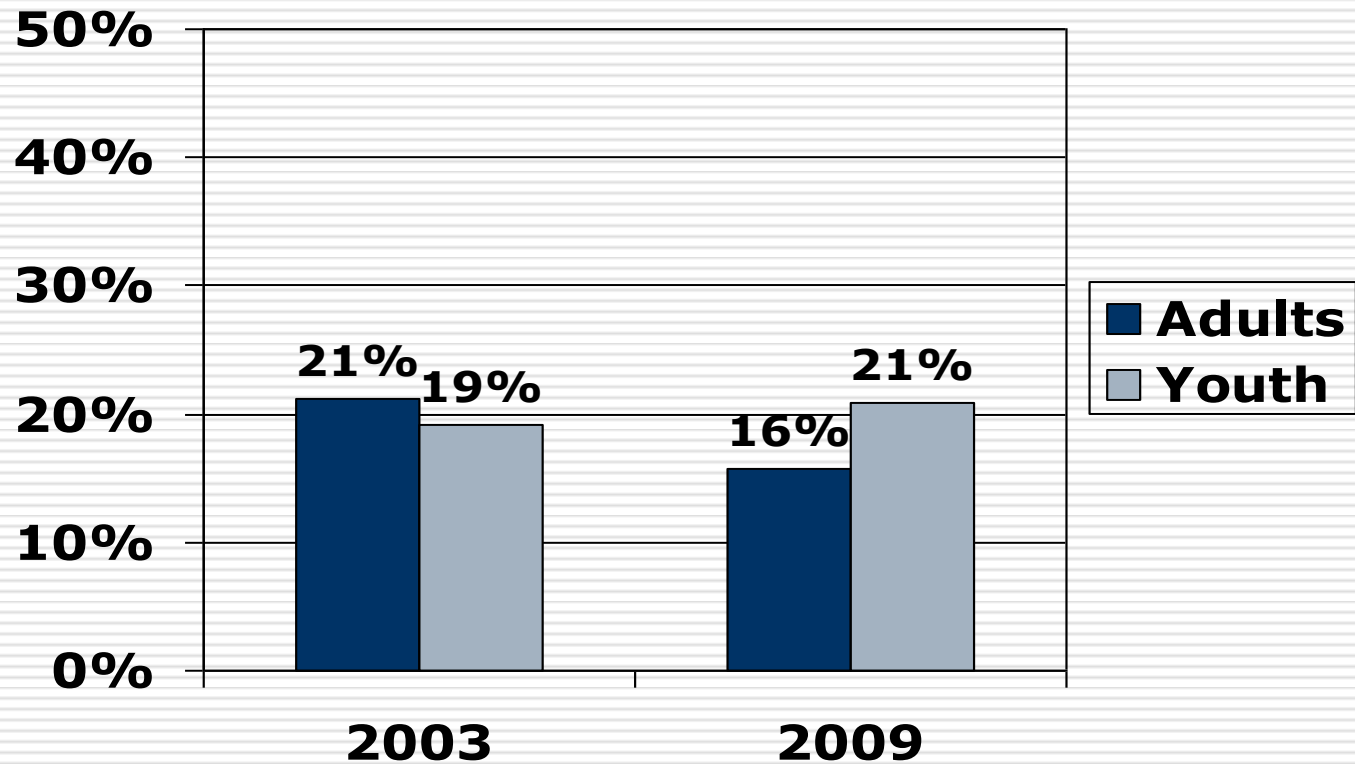
- Not enough physical activity
- Unhealthy eating
- Tobacco use

Strategies

Tobacco-related disease

- Parent and child education
- Reduce youth access
- Smoke-free environments
- Smoking cessation support and access

Smoking Rates NH Adults and Youth



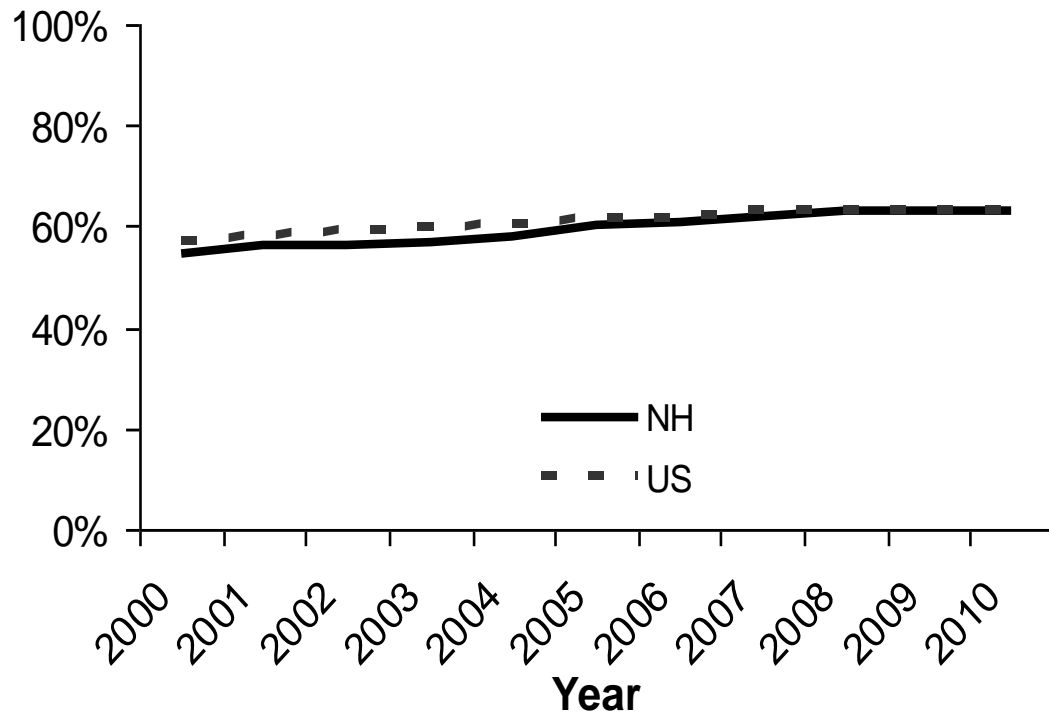
Strategies

Overweight and Obesity

- Public education
- Increase access to healthy foods
- Livable/walkable communities
- School programs
- Worksite wellness program

US and New Hampshire

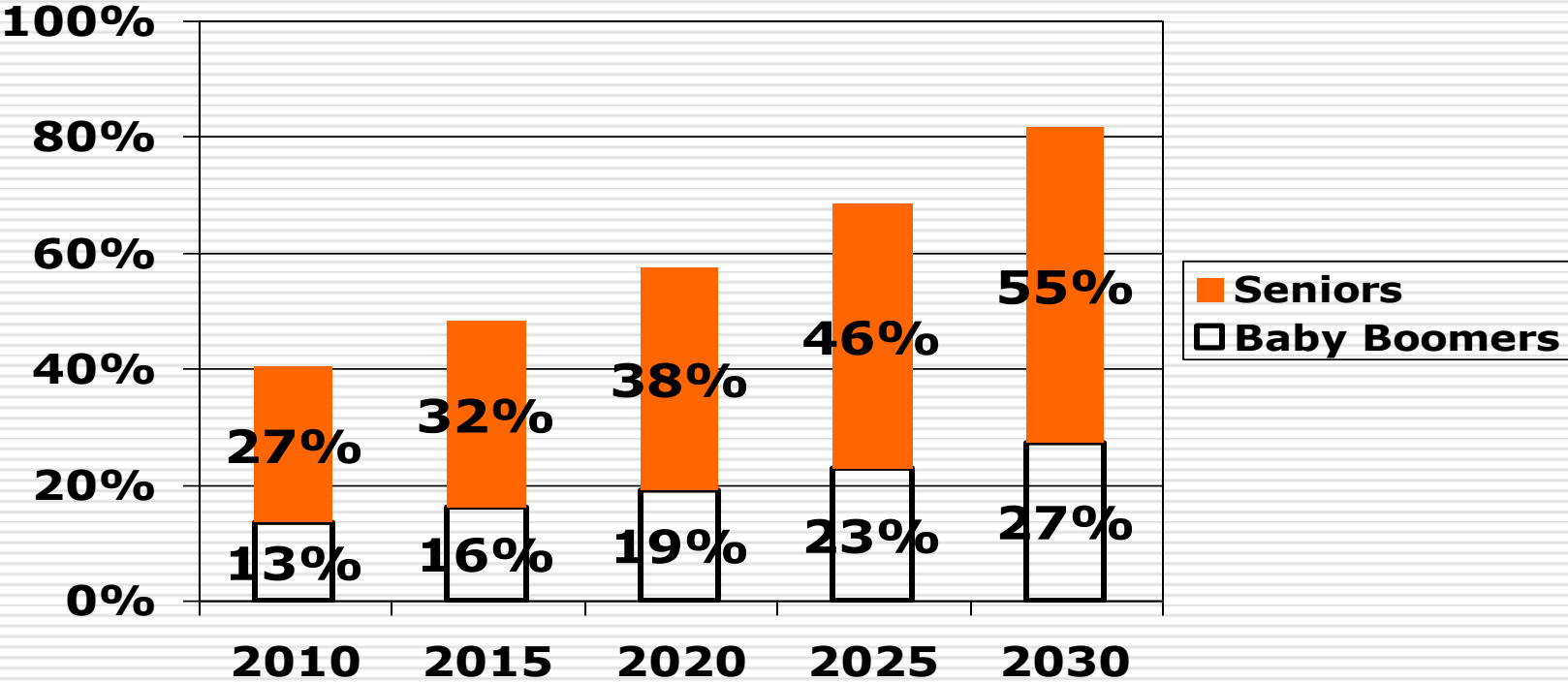
**Prevalence of Overweight and Obesity –
Adults - NH and US**



Diabetes

Worrisome trends....

Diabetes – Future Projections (US)



Waidmann, Ormond, Bovbjerg (2011)

The Bigger Picture...

New Hampshire is aging....

By the year 2030, nearly half a million NH residents will be 65 years or older, representing almost one third of the population.

NH Center for Public Health Studies (2011)

Strategies for NH?

- chronic diseases escalating...
- aging population...
- costly health care...
- protect individual rights, promote the common good...
- balance our budget...

NH Public Health Association and public health partners

www.nhpha.org