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1872 American Public Health Association established. Two of the association's functions were advocacy for the most current scientific advances relevant to public health, and public education on how to improve community health.

1896 The Communicable Disease Center (CDC) was established, forerunner of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Previously a branch of the Public Health Service that focused on malaria control, the new institution expanded its interests to include all communicable diseases and their impact in all of the states.

1900 The Communicable Disease Center renamed the Center for Disease Control to reflect a broader mission in preventive health.

1946 The International Smallpox Eradication program was established by the US Public Health Service. The worldwide eradication of smallpox by preventative inoculations was accomplished by 1977.

1966 Healthy People Initiatives begin following recommendations from the Surgeon General’s report on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention. Purpose of the initiatives is for nation to reach a number of targeted health goals by the end of the decade.

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1975 The Office of Substance Abuse Prevention was created, later succeeded by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. Its goal is to improve accessibility and quality of substance abuse prevention services nation wide.

1976 The Prevention Institute is founded to address health and social issues of the community rather than the individual.

1980 Mothers Against Drunk Driving was established and held its first national press conference, putting the drunk driving issue on the nation’s radar screen.

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1932 The Public Health Service established the Tuskegee studies on the effects of syphilis by allowing black men to remain untreated. Decades later this study was transferred to the CDC; eventually the unethical and racist practices were brought to the public’s attention by the media, laying a foundation of distrust of public health officials in many communities that still lingers.

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