On June 5, 2000, the University of Hawaii School of Public Health, with a rich and proud history, ended its accredited status with the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH), primarily due to budgetary constraints imposed by the State’s depressed economy. The remaining faculty, staff and students will join the John A. Burns School of Medicine as a Department of Public Health Sciences and Epidemiology beginning in the Fall 2000 semester.

The School of Public Health began as a Department in 1962 and was accredited as a School in 1965. The School’s primary goal was "to promote the appropriate application of public health principles, both in those U.S. communities with multicultural populations and the international arena." The School’s activities specifically addressed the public health needs of Hawaii and the Asia/Pacific Basin Region. The School’s curricula offered specialization areas in community health education and development, health services administration and planning, maternal and child health, biostatistics, environmental and occupational health, and epidemiology.

By its thirty-eighth year, the School had graduated 3,027 students with a Master of Public Health, 310 students with a Master of Science in Public Health, 85 with a Doctorate of Public Health, and 40 with a Doctor of Philosophy in Biomedical Sciences (Biostatistics and Epidemiology). Today, graduates are located throughout the world with concentrated numbers in Hawaii, the Pacific Basin countries, South and Southeast Asia and Asia. Many are in the highest offices of health and government.

An Associate Dean for Public Health will lead the conversion of the School into a Department. The Associate Dean’s responsibility will be to oversee the redevelopment of the new academic program to assure that there will be strength in the not too distant future to seek reaccreditation as a School of Public Health.

Timely, efficient, and smooth transition of the School of Public Health into the School of Medicine was planned by twenty-three faculty and staff from both schools, appointed by the Dean of the School of Medicine. Four subcommittees were organized; Finance/Administrative Support, Space Allocation, Student Services, and Educational/Faculty Resources. The key features of the reports from the subcommittee included the following: establishing a Department of Public Health Sciences and Epidemiology in the School of Medicine; transferring three of the 12 remaining faculty to positions within the University; assigning all non-faculty personnel to appropriate positions within the new department and the school of medicine; merging the finance office and personnel with that of the School of Medicine; expanding the School of Public Health library to support both the Department and the School of Medicine; providing up to seven FTEs for recruitment (four from the Department of Biostatistics and Epidemiology).