

# Academic Point of View

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# Limitations and Challenges of EPHT

- EPHT is hypothesis generating not hypothesis testing.
- Better to tackle more approachable areas first, do well, then move on to more challenging areas.
  - Acute exacerbations of chronic diseases is linkable to Montana problems (asthma pilot programs were moderately successful)
  - Cancer is difficult due to latency (can map, but linking to exposure side is difficult)
  - Birth defects
  - Lack of mechanistic linkages makes it difficult to be certain
  - Exposures are complex (timing and agents)

- Looking for something that contributes only a portion to a given disease
- Does not address susceptibility, but could through hypothesis generating mechanism point to a susceptible population
- State should make effort to link different existing programs in asthma control, biomonitoring, etc to get most out of investment
- Bring in expertise from regional centers such as Berkeley
- Put in contingency plan to be followed if there is a loss of federal support
- May be able to take advantage of newly available \$2.5 million for biomedical research for nonprofit institutions to collaborate with MT University System
  - Disease/genetics mapping project (re: Maine cancer mapping/genetics project)