

Extract from *FP Report 3* (January 1997).

Family physicians historically have led the crusade to improve public health, says David Satcher, MD, PhD, an FP [Family Practitioner] and director of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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Dr. Satcher tells the story of John Snow, a general practitioner in England. In 1854, Dr. Snow and other doctors were battling an outbreak of cholera. Dr. Snow determined that many patients were drinking contaminated water from the Broad Street pump, so he left his office and took the handle off the pump. When Dr. Satcher and his staff are faced with complex public health issues, they frequently ask, "Where is the handle on this Broad Street pump?" (7).