



Enhancing Council on Linkages Communication

January 27, 2012

The Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice's (Council on Linkages) [Strategic Directions, 2011-2015](#) detail several administrative priorities, including the desire to "use communication tools effectively to increase access for diverse audiences to Council initiatives and products." The Council on Linkages uses several methods to communicate with the public health community and is working to determine the impact of these communications and explore targeted opportunities for enhancement. Current communication methods include the Council on Linkages website, news articles, blog posts, the *Council on Linkages Update* newsletter, conference attendance, and Twitter.

Website

Hosted by the Public Health Foundation (PHF), the [Council on Linkages website](#) features introductory information about the Council on Linkages and its initiatives, as well as relevant documents and resources. News articles and blog posts are shared through the website, as is information regarding meetings. Council on Linkages staff aim to post news items weekly to encourage individuals to visit the website regularly. Recent articles have addressed topics such as upcoming meetings, highlights from recent meetings, progress on initiatives, and how the work of the Council on Linkages ties in with the broader public health system. In addition to news articles, blog posts from experts in the field are periodically added to the website. Webpages containing resources, news, and blog posts are designed to accept comments in order to stimulate discussion. Council on Linkages staff can monitor the number of views for each page on the website to estimate usage. Information about the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals (Core Competencies) consistently ranks among the most viewed on the PHF website as a whole.

Council on Linkages Update

Approximately once a month, the [Council on Linkages Update](#) newsletter is emailed to over 300 individuals, including Council on Linkages members, executive directors and staff of member organizations, Workgroup and Task Force members, and Academic Health Department (AHD) Learning Community members. The newsletter is also posted online for those who do not receive it directly. Council on Linkages staff can track clicks of the links embedded in the newsletter to identify popular content. Current data suggest that individuals who click these links spend more time on the PHF website and view more pages than the average visitor.

Conferences

Having a presence at conferences, whether through presentations or exhibiting, is another way in which the Council on Linkages communicates with the public health community. At the most recent [American Public Health Association Annual Meeting](#), the Council on Linkages gave four presentations on the AHD Learning Community, the Core Competencies, the Competencies to Practice Toolkit, and the Public Health Workers Survey. The Council on Linkages also distributed general information, copies of the Core Competencies, AHD Learning Community information, and more. Turnout at the presentations was strong, and many individuals who attended presentations came by the exhibit booth afterward to discuss the presentations and obtain additional materials.

Twitter

In late October, the Council on Linkages became active on Twitter using PHF's account, [@thepfh](#). The Council on Linkages posts approximately once a week sharing information on the *Council on Linkages Update*, news articles, and meetings and presentations related to Council on Linkages activities with over 5,000 followers. As with the *Council on Linkages Update*, links posted can be tracked to determine how many individuals access the Council on Linkages website through Twitter. These data will be collected and studied over the coming months.

Feedback

Feedback is appreciated at any time from Council on Linkages members on strategies for enhancing communication to promote the work of the Council on Linkages. Are there communication methods that Council on Linkages members have found effective within their organizations? How do member organizations measure the impact of their communications? How can Council on Linkages members help the Council on Linkages communicate? The Council on Linkages strives to continue to improve its communication efforts to make Council on Linkages initiatives and products more accessible.