



Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals¹
Tier 1 (DRAFT #5)—10/16/09

Analytic/Assessment Skills

- 1) Identifies the health status of populations and their related determinants of health and illness²
- 2) Describes the characteristics of a population-based health problem³
- 3) Recognizes variables that measure public health conditions
- 4) Uses valid and reliable methods and instruments for collecting quantitative and qualitative data
- 5) Identifies sources of public health data and information
- 6) Recognizes the integrity and comparability of data
- 7) Identifies gaps in data sources
- 8) Applies ethical principles in the collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of data and information
- 9) Describes the public health applications of quantitative and qualitative data
- 10) Makes community-specific associations from quantitative and qualitative data⁴
- 11) Uses information technology to collect, store, and retrieve data
- 12) Describes how data are used to address scientific, political, ethical, and social public health issues

Policy Development/Program Planning Skills

- 1) Discusses information relevant to specific public health policy issues
- 2) Discusses policy options
- 3) Recognizes the expected outcomes of policy options⁵
- 4) Gathers information that will inform policy decisions⁶
- 5) Describes the public health laws and regulations governing public health programs
- 6) Describes a planning process to implement policy and programs
- 7) Incorporates policy into organizational plans, structures, and programs
- 8) Identifies mechanisms to monitor and evaluate programs for their effectiveness and quality
- 9) Describes the importance of informatics to public health⁷
- 10) Applies strategies for continuous quality improvement

Communication Skills

- 1) Identifies the health literacy of populations served
- 2) Communicates in writing and orally, in person, and through electronic means, with linguistic and cultural proficiency

¹ Tier 1 Core Competencies apply to public health professionals who carry out the day-to-day tasks of public health organizations and are not in management positions. Responsibilities of these public health professionals may include basic data collection and analysis, fieldwork, program planning, outreach activities, programmatic support, and other organizational tasks. In general, an individual at the Tier 1 level may be educated at the baccalaureate level, or educated at a higher level with limited experience as a public health professional.

² Examples include: factors contributing to health promotion and disease prevention, the quality, availability and use of health services

³ Examples include: equity, social determinants, environment

⁴ Examples include: risks and benefits to the community, health and resource needs and assets

⁵ Examples include: health, fiscal, administrative, legal, ethical, social, political

⁶ Examples include: health, fiscal, administrative, legal, ethical, social, political

⁷ Examples include: use of information systems infrastructure to improve health outcomes

- 3) Solicits input from individuals and organizations
- 4) Provides public health information using a variety of approaches⁸
- 5) Supports the development of demographic, statistical, programmatic and scientific presentations
- 6) Applies communication strategies⁹ in interactions with individuals and groups

Cultural Competency Skills

- 1) Incorporates strategies for interacting with persons from diverse backgrounds¹⁰
- 2) Recognizes the role of cultural, social, and behavioral factors in the accessibility, availability, acceptability and delivery of public health services
- 3) Responds to diverse needs that are the result of cultural differences
- 4) Describes the dynamic forces that contribute to cultural diversity
- 5) Describes the need for a diverse public health workforce
- 6) Participates in the assessment of the cultural competence of the public health organization

Community Dimensions of Practice Skills

- 1) Recognizes community linkages and relationships among multiple factors (or determinants) affecting health¹¹
- 2) Describes community-based participatory research efforts
- 3) Collaborates with community partners to promote the health of the population
- 4) Maintains partnerships with key stakeholders
- 5) Uses group processes to advance community involvement
- 6) Describes the role of governmental and non-governmental organizations in the delivery of community health services
- 7) Identifies community assets and resources
- 8) References community input to policymakers and program developers when developing public health policies and programs
- 9) Promotes public health policies, programs, and resources

Public Health Sciences Skills

- 1) Describes the scientific foundation of the field of public health
- 2) Identifies prominent events in the history of the public health profession
- 3) Relates public health science skills to the Core Public Health Functions and Ten Essential Services of Public Health
- 4) Identifies the basic public health sciences¹² (including, but not limited to biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health sciences, health services administration, and social and behavioral health sciences)
- 5) Describes the scientific evidence related to a public health issue, concern, or, intervention
- 6) Retrieves scientific evidence from a variety of text and electronic sources
- 7) Discusses the limitations of research findings¹³
- 8) Describes the laws, regulations, policies and procedures for the ethical conduct of research¹⁴

⁸ Examples include: community-based efforts, traditional and emerging media

⁹ Examples include: principled negotiation, conflict resolution, active listening, risk communication

¹⁰ Examples include: cultural, socioeconomic, educational, racial, gender, age, ethnic, sexual orientation, professional, religious affiliation, mental and physical capabilities

¹¹ The Socio-Ecological Model

¹² Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). *Public Health Program Criteria - Amended June 2005 (PDF file)*.

Retrieved March 13, 2009 from: <http://www.ceph.org/files/public/PHP-Criteria-2005.SO5.pdf>

¹³ Examples include: limitations of data sources, importance of observations and interrelationships

¹⁴ Examples include: patient confidentiality, human subject processes

- 9) Partners with other public health professionals in building the scientific base of public health

Financial Planning and Management Skills

- 1) Describes the local, state, and federal public health and health care systems
- 2) Describes the organizational structures, functions, and authorities of local, state, and federal public health agencies
- 3) Uses the judicial and operational procedures of the governing body and/or administrative unit that oversees the operations of the public health organization
- 4) Participates in the development of a programmatic budget
- 5) Operates programs within current and forecasted budget constraints
- 6) Identifies strategies for determining budget priorities
- 7) Reports program performance
- 8) Translates evaluation report information into performance improvement action steps
- 9) Contributes to the preparation of proposals for funding from external sources
- 10) Applies basic human relations skills to internal collaborations, motivation of colleagues, and resolution of conflicts
- 11) Describes public health informatics skills to improve program and business operations¹⁵
- 12) Participates in the development of contracts and other agreements for the provision of services
- 13) Describes how cost-effectiveness, cost-benefit, and cost-utility analyses affect programmatic prioritization and decision making

Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills

- 1) Incorporates ethical standards of practice as the basis of all interactions with organizations, communities, and individuals
- 2) Describes how public health operates within a larger system
- 3) Participates with stakeholders in identifying key values and a shared vision as guiding principles for community action
- 4) Identifies internal and external problems that may affect the delivery of essential public health services
- 5) Uses individual, team and organizational learning opportunities for personal and professional development
- 6) Contributes to the measuring, reporting and continuous improvement of organizational performance
- 7) Recognizes the impact of changes in the public health system, and larger social, political, economic environment on organizational practices

For more information, please contact:

*Pamela Saungweme
Public Health Foundation
1300 L Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 218-4424
Fax: (202) 218-4409
Email: psaungweme@phf.org*

¹⁵ Examples include: performance management and improvement