



Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals¹
Tier 3 (DRAFT #6)—10/16/09

Analytic/Assessment Skills

- 1) Assesses the health status of populations and their related determinants of health and illness²
- 2) Describes the characteristics of a population-based health problem³
- 3) Selects variables that measure public health conditions
- 4) Critiques methods and instruments for collecting valid and reliable quantitative and qualitative data
- 5) References sources of public health data and information
- 6) Evaluates the integrity and comparability of data
- 7) Identifies gaps in data sources
- 8) Ensures the application of ethical principles in the collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of data and information
- 9) Interprets quantitative and qualitative data
- 10) Reviews community-specific inferences from quantitative and qualitative data⁴
- 11) Uses information technology to collect, store, and retrieve data
- 12) Synthesizes data to address scientific, political, ethical, and social public health issues
- 13) Identifies the resources to meet community health needs

Policy Development/Program Planning Skills

- 1) Analyzes information relevant to specific public health policy issues
- 2) Decides the policy for the public health organization
- 3) Contrasts the feasibility and expected outcomes of various policy options⁵
- 4) Defends selected policy⁶
- 5) Critiques decision analyses that result in policy development and program planning
- 6) Ensures public health programs are consistent with public health laws and regulations
- 7) Implements programs consistent with policy
- 8) Ensures the consistency of policy integration into organizational plans, structures, and programs
- 9) Develops mechanisms to evaluate programs for their effectiveness and quality
- 10) Oversees public health informatics practices⁷
- 11) Implements organizational – or system-wide strategies for continuous quality improvement

¹ Tier 3 Core Competencies apply to individuals at a senior/management level and leaders of public health organizations. In general, an individual who is responsible for the major programs or functions of an organization, setting a strategy and vision for the organization, and/or building the organization's culture can be considered to be a Tier 3 public health professional. Tier 3 public health professionals (e.g. health officers, executive directors, CEOs etc.) typically have staff that report to them, and are educated at a similar or higher level than their Tier 2 counterparts.

² Examples include: factors contributing to health promotion and disease prevention, the 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

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 data and information technology standards across the agency where applicable, and use of standard software development life cycle principles when developing new IT applications

- 12) Integrates emerging trends into the fiscal, social and political environment in public health strategic planning

Communication Skills

- 1) Ensures that the health literacy of populations served is considered throughout all communication strategies
- 2) Communicates in writing and orally, in person, and through electronic means, with linguistic and cultural proficiency
- 3) Ensures that the public health organization seeks input from other organizations and individuals
- 4) Ensures a variety of approaches are considered and used to disseminate public health information⁸
- 5) Presents demographic, statistical, programmatic, and scientific information for use by professional and lay audiences
- 6) Applies communication strategies⁹ in interactions with individuals and groups
- 7) Communicates the role of public health within the overall health system

Cultural Competency Skills

- 1) Incorporates strategies for interacting with persons from diverse backgrounds¹⁰
- 2) Ensures the consideration of 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) Assesses the dynamic forces that contribute to cultural diversity
- 5) Assesses the need for a diverse public health workforce
- 6) Assesses the public health organization for its cultural competence
- 7) Ensures the public health organization's cultural competence

Community Dimensions of Practice Skills

- 1) Evaluates the community linkages and relationships among multiple factors (or determinants) affecting health¹¹
- 2) Encourages community-based participatory research efforts within the public health organization
- 3) Establishes linkages with key stakeholders
- 4) Ensures the collaboration and partnerships of key stakeholders
- 5) Maintains partnerships with key stakeholders
- 6) Advances community involvement through the use of group processes
- 7) Teaches others the role of governmental and non-governmental organizations in the delivery of community health services
- 8) Negotiates for the use of community assets and resources
- 9) Ensures community input when developing public health policies and programs
- 10) Defends the use of public health policies, programs, and resources
- 11) Evaluates effectiveness of community engagement strategies on public health policies, programs, and resources

Public Health Sciences Skills

- 1) Describes the scientific foundation of the field of public health
- 2) Explains prominent events in the history of the public health profession

⁸ Examples include: social networks, media, blogs

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

¹⁰ Examples include: cultural, socioeconomic, educational, racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, professional

¹¹ "Ecological Perspective" as cited by the **Committee on Educating Public Health Professionals for the 21st Century**, Institute of Medicine (IOM), *Who Will Keep the Public Healthy? Educating Health Professionals for the 21st Century*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press; 2003

- 3) Incorporates the Core Public Health Functions and Ten Essential Services of Public Health into the practice of the public health sciences
- 4) Applies the basic public health sciences¹²(including, but not limited to biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health sciences, health services administration, and social and behavioral health sciences) to public health policies and programs
- 5) Integrates a review of the scientific evidence related to a public health issue, concern, or, intervention into the practice of public health
- 6) Synthesizes scientific evidence from a variety of text and electronic sources
- 7) Critiques the limitations of research findings¹³
- 8) Advises on the laws, regulations, policies and procedures for the ethical conduct of research¹⁴
- 9) Contributes to building the scientific base of public health

Financial Planning and Management Skills

- 1) Leverages financial, human, and technical resources through the interrelationships of local, state, and federal public health and health care systems for public health program management
- 2) Explains the organizational structures, functions, and authorities of local, state, and federal public health agencies for public health program management
- 3) Develops partnerships with agencies within the federal, state, and local levels of government that have authority over public health situations or with specific issues, such as emergency events
- 4) Implements the judicial and operational procedures of the governing body and/or administrative unit that oversees the operations of the public health organization
- 5) Defends a programmatic and organizational budget
- 6) Ensures that programs are managed within current and forecasted budget constraints
- 7) Critiques strategies for determining budget priorities
- 8) Evaluates program performance
- 9) Uses evaluation results to improve performance
- 10) Prepares proposals for funding from external sources
- 11) Applies basic human relations skills to the management of organizations, motivation of personnel, and resolution of conflicts
- 12) Integrates public health informatics skills into program and business operations¹⁵
- 13) Approves contracts and other agreements for the provision of services
- 14) Demonstrates the use of cost-effectiveness, cost-benefit, and cost-utility analyses in programmatic prioritization and decision making
- 15) Synthesizes data and information to improve organizational processes and performance
- 16) Establishes a performance management system¹⁶

Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills

- 1) Incorporates ethical standards of practice as the basis of all interactions with organizations, communities, and individuals
- 2) Integrates systems thinking into public health practice

¹²Council 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.SQ5.pdf>

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

¹⁴ Examples include: patient confidentiality, human subject processes

¹⁵ Examples include: business process analysis, enterprise-wide information planning

¹⁶ Turning Point, *From Silos to Systems: Using Performance Management to Improve the Public's Health*, 2003

- 3) Partners with stakeholders to determine key values and a shared vision as guiding principles for community action
- 4) Rectifies internal and external problems that may affect the delivery of Essential Public Health Services
- 5) Promotes individual, team and organizational learning opportunities
- 6) Promotes mentoring, peer advising, coaching or other personal development opportunities for the public health workforce
- 7) Contributes to the measuring, reporting and continuous improvement of organizational performance
- 8) Ensures organizational practices are in concert with changes in the public health system, and the larger social, political, and economic environment
- 9) Ensures the management of organizational change

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