

# Competency Assessment

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## Tier 2 Public Health Professionals

January 2012

Developed by Janet Place, MPH, North Carolina Public Health Academy, University of North Carolina. Modified by the Public Health Foundation. Provided by the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice.

Technical Note: This assessment was designed for use with Adobe Acrobat/Reader. Scoring and other functions may not operate properly in other PDF viewers. To use the assessment, download and save this PDF form before entering your scores.

# Competency Assessment for Tier 2<sup>1</sup> Public Health Professionals

January 2012

## Introduction

The purpose of this competency assessment is to help you discover your level of competence on key dimensions of public health practice.

A competency is any knowledge or skill of an individual or organization that has been shown to cause or predict outstanding performance. A collection of competencies make up a behavioral roadmap that is directly related to both individual and organizational performance.

By assessing your level of knowledge or skill for each competency indicator described, you will be able to prioritize your learning time to focus on those areas that are most important to you and to concentrate where the need for training and learning may be greatest.

## How to complete this competency assessment

The competency assessment should take about 20 minutes to complete. It is divided into the following key dimensions of public health practice:

- Analytical/Assessment
- Policy Development/Program Planning
- Communication
- Cultural Competency
- Community Dimensions of Practice
- Public Health Sciences
- Financial Planning and Management
- Leadership and Systems Thinking

- 1) Read each competency indicator listed under the key dimension.
- 2) In each dimension, and for each competency indicator, think about what level you are currently able to perform the skill. Then rate your level of proficiency on each indicator by selecting the number on the continuum from “None” (1) to “Proficient” (4) that best describes your self-reported level of expertise for that indicator. Note: The competency indicators listed in each key dimension should be interpreted as broadly as possible to apply to your position and principal setting of employment.

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<sup>1</sup> Tier 2 (Mid Tier) public health professionals are (typically) individuals with program management and/or supervisory responsibilities. Other responsibilities may include: program development, program implementation, program evaluation, establishing and maintaining community relations, managing timelines and work plans, presenting arguments and recommendations on policy issues, etc.

In the example below, you would select number “4” for “Proficient” if you think you are excelling at this competency or select “1” for “None” if feel you need a great deal of improvement.

**Example:**

To what degree are you able to effectively...describe the characteristics of a population-based health problem?

1=None	I am unaware, or have very little knowledge of the item
2=Aware	I have heard of it; limited knowledge and/or ability to apply the skill
3=Knowledgeable	I am comfortable with knowledge or ability to apply the skill
4=Proficient	I am very comfortable, an expert; could teach this to others

- 3) At the end of each key dimension there is a place to write any comments you have. For example, if you feel like an expert but may still want training or learning opportunities in a particular skill, please enter your comments in the comments section. You may also want to share this assessment with your supervisor, colleagues, or others and ask them to add comments as well. These comments may be helpful to you and your supervisor in planning for your professional development.
- 4) After you have entered in your responses for each key dimension, the sum of your scores will appear in the column next to “Total score.” Your average score will also appear in the column next to “Average total” and in the corresponding row of the “Your results” section at the end of the competency assessment.
- 5) Review your results and follow the guidance offered in the “Interpreting your results” section to determine your next steps.

## AnalyticU/Assessment Skills

1=None

2=Aware

3=Knowledgeable

4=Proficient

I am unaware, or have very little knowledge of the item

I have heard of it; limited knowledge and/or ability to apply the skill

I am comfortable with knowledge or ability to apply the skill

I am very comfortable, an expert; could teach this to others

To what degree are you able to effectively...		
1	Assess the health status of populations and their related determinants of health and illness (e.g. factors contributing to health promotion and disease prevention, availability and use of health services)	
2	Describe the characteristics of a population-based health problem (e.g. equity, social determinants, environment)	
3	Generate variables that measure public health conditions	
4	Use methods and instruments for collecting valid and reliable quantitative and qualitative data	
5	Reference sources of public health data and information	
6	Examine the integrity and comparability of data	
7	Identify gaps in data sources	
8	Employ ethical principles in the collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of data and information	
9	Interpret quantitative and qualitative data	
10	Make community-specific inferences from quantitative and qualitative data (e.g. risks and benefits to the community, health and resource needs)	
11	Use information technology to collect, store, and retrieve data	
12	Use data to address scientific, political, ethical, and social public health issues	
	<b>Total score</b> (Add all scores and enter total here)	
	<b>Average total</b> (Divide the "Total score" by <b>12</b> and enter the result here and into the corresponding row of the "Your results" section)	

**Comments:**

## Policy Development#Program Planning Skills

1=None

2=Aware

3=Knowledgeable

4=Proficient

I am unaware, or have very little knowledge of the item

I have heard of it; limited knowledge and/or ability to apply the skill

I am comfortable with knowledge or ability to apply the skill

I am very comfortable, an expert; could teach this to others

<b>To what degree are you able to effectively...</b>		
1	Analyze information relevant to specific public health policy issues	
2	Analyze policy options for public health programs	
3	Determine the feasibility and expected outcomes of policy options (e.g. health, fiscal, administrative, legal, ethical, social, political)	
4	Describe the implications of policy options (e.g. health, fiscal, administrative, legal, ethical, social, political)	
5	Use decision analysis for policy development and program planning	
6	Manage public health programs consistent with public health laws and regulations	
7	Develop plans to implement policies and programs	
8	Develop policies for organizational plans, structures, and programs	
9	Develop mechanisms to monitor and evaluate programs for their effectiveness and quality	
10	Incorporate public health informatics practices (e.g. 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)	
11	Develop strategies for continuous quality improvement	
	<b>Total score</b> (Add all scores and enter total here)	
	<b>Average total</b> (Divide the "Total score" by <b>11</b> and enter the result here and into the corresponding row of the "Your results" section)	

**Comments:**

## Communication Skills

1=None	I am unaware, or have very little knowledge of the item
2=Aware	I have heard of it; limited knowledge and/or ability to apply the skill
3=Knowledgeable	I am comfortable with knowledge or ability to apply the skill
4=Proficient	I am very comfortable, an expert; could teach this to others

To what degree are you able to effectively...		
1	Assess the health literacy of populations served	
2	Communicate in writing and orally, in person, and through electronic means, with linguistic and cultural proficiency	
3	Solicit input from individuals and organizations	
4	Use a variety of approaches to disseminate public health information (e.g. social networks, media, blogs)	
5	Present demographic, statistical, programmatic, and scientific information for use by professional and lay audiences	
6	Apply communication and group dynamic strategies (e.g. principled negotiation, conflict resolution, active listening, risk communication) in interactions with individuals and groups	
	<b>Total score</b> (Add all scores and enter total here)	
	<b>Average total</b> (Divide the "Total score" by 6 and enter the result here and into the corresponding row of the "Your results" section)	

**Comments:**

## Cultural Competency Skills

1=None	I am unaware, or have very little knowledge of the item
2=Aware	I have heard of it; limited knowledge and/or ability to apply the skill
3=Knowledgeable	I am comfortable with knowledge or ability to apply the skill
4=Proficient	I am very comfortable, an expert; could teach this to others

<b>To what degree are you able to effectively...</b>		
1	Incorporate strategies for interacting with persons from diverse backgrounds (e.g. cultural, socioeconomic, educational, racial, gender, age, ethnic, sexual orientation, professional, religious affiliation, mental and physical capabilities)	
2	Consider the role of cultural, social, and behavioral factors in the accessibility, availability, acceptability, and delivery of public health services	
3	Respond to diverse needs that are the result of cultural differences	
4	Explain the dynamic forces that contribute to cultural diversity	
5	Describe the need for a diverse public health workforce	
6	Assess public health programs for their cultural competence	
<b>Total score</b> (Add all scores and enter total here)		
<b>Average total</b> (Divide the "Total score" by <b>6</b> and enter the result here and into the corresponding row of the "Your results" section)		

**Comments:**

## Community Dimensions of Practice Skills

1=None

2=Aware

3=Knowledgeable

4=Proficient

I am unaware, or have very little knowledge of the item

I have heard of it; limited knowledge and/or ability to apply the skill

I am comfortable with knowledge or ability to apply the skill

I am very comfortable, an expert; could teach this to others

<b>To what degree are you able to effectively...</b>		
1	Assess community linkages and relationships among multiple factors (or determinants) affecting health	
2	Collaborate in community-based participatory research efforts	
3	Establish linkages with key stakeholders	
4	Facilitate collaboration and partnerships to ensure participation of key stakeholders	
5	Maintain partnerships with key stakeholders	
6	Use group processes to advance community involvement	
7	Distinguish the role of governmental and non-governmental organizations in the delivery of community health services	
8	Negotiate for the use of community assets and resources	
9	Use community input when developing public health policies and programs	
10	Promote public health policies, programs, and resources	
	<b>Total score</b> (Add all scores and enter total here)	
	<b>Average total</b> (Divide the "Total score" by <b>10</b> and enter the result here and into the corresponding row of the "Your results" section)	

**Comments:**

## Public Health Science Skills

1=None

2=Aware

3=Knowledgeable

4=Proficient

I am unaware, or have very little knowledge of the item

I have heard of it; limited knowledge and/or ability to apply the skill

I am comfortable with knowledge or ability to apply the skill

I am very comfortable, an expert; could teach this to others

To what degree are you able to effectively...		
1	Discuss the scientific foundation of the field of public health	
2	Distinguish prominent events in the history of the public health profession	
3	Relate public health science skills to the Core Public Health Functions and Ten Essential Services of Public Health	
4	Apply the basic public health sciences (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	Conduct a comprehensive review of the scientific evidence related to a public health issue, concern, or intervention	
6	Retrieve scientific evidence from a variety of text and electronic sources	
7	Determine the limitations of research findings (e.g. limitations of data sources, importance of observations and interrelationships)	
8	Determine the laws, regulations, policies, and procedures for the ethical conduct of research (e.g. patient confidentiality, human subject processes)	
9	Contribute to building the scientific base of public health	
	<b>Total score</b> (Add all scores and enter total here)	
	<b>Average total</b> (Divide the "Total score" by 9 and enter the result here and into the corresponding row of the "Your results" section)	

**Comments:**

## Financial Planning and Management Skills

1=None

2=Aware

3=Knowledgeable

4=Proficient

I am unaware, or have very little knowledge of the item

I have heard of it; limited knowledge and/or ability to apply the skill

I am comfortable with knowledge or ability to apply the skill

I am very comfortable, an expert; could teach this to others

To what degree are you able to effectively...		
1	Interpret the interrelationships of local, state, and federal public health and health care systems for public health program management	
2	Interpret the organizational structures, functions, and authorities of local, state, and federal public health agencies for public health program management	
3	Develop 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	Implement the judicial and operational procedures of the governing body and/or administrative unit that oversees the operations of the public health organization	
5	Develop a programmatic budget	
6	Manage programs within current and forecasted budget constraints	
7	Develop strategies for determining budget priorities based on federal, state, and local financial contributions	
8	Evaluate program performance	
9	Use evaluation results to improve performance	
10	Prepare proposals for funding from external sources	
11	Apply basic human relations skills to the management of organizations, motivation of personnel, and resolution of conflicts	

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## Financial Planning and Management Skills (continued)

1=None	I am unaware, or have very little knowledge of the item
2=Aware	I have heard of it; limited knowledge and/or ability to apply the skill
3=Knowledgeable	I am comfortable with knowledge or ability to apply the skill
4=Proficient	I am very comfortable, an expert; could teach this to others

<b>To what degree are you able to effectively...</b>		
12	Apply public health informatics skills to improve program and business operations (e.g. business process analysis, enterprise-wide information planning)	
13	Negotiate contracts and other agreements for the provision of services	
14	Use cost-effectiveness, cost-benefit, and cost-utility analyses in programmatic prioritization and decision making	
	<b>Total score</b> (Add all scores and enter total here)	
	<b>Average total</b> (Divide the "Total score" by <b>14</b> and enter the result here and into the corresponding row of the "Your results" section)	

**Comments.**

## Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills

1=None	I am unaware, or have very little knowledge of the item
2=Aware	I have heard of it; limited knowledge and/or ability to apply the skill
3=Knowledgeable	I am comfortable with knowledge or ability to apply the skill
4=Proficient	I am very comfortable, an expert; could teach this to others

<b>To what degree are you able to effectively...</b>		
1	Incorporate ethical standards of practice as the basis of all interactions with organizations, communities, and individuals	
2	Incorporate systems thinking into public health practice	
3	Participate with stakeholders in identifying key values and a shared vision as guiding principles for community action	
4	Analyze internal and external problems that may affect the delivery of Essential Public Health Services	
5	Promote individual, team, and organizational learning opportunities	
6	Establish mentoring, peer advising, coaching, or other personal development opportunities for the public health workforce	
7	Contribute to the measuring, reporting, and continuous improvement of organizational performance	
8	Modify organizational practices in consideration of changes in the public health system, and the larger social, political, and economic environment	
<b>Total score</b> (Add all scores and enter total here)		
<b>Average total</b> (Divide the "Total score" by 8 and enter the result here and into the corresponding row of the "Your results" section)		

**Comments:**

## Your results

Enter the average total from each key dimension in the corresponding row below.

Key dimension	Average total
Analytical/Assessment	
Policy Development/Program Planning	
Communication	
Cultural Competency	
Community Dimensions of Practice	
Public Health Sciences	
Financial Planning and Management	
Leadership and Systems Thinking	

### Interpreting your results

Based on the averages you have for each key dimension in the “Your results” section above, you are now ready to identify the strengths in your practice and the areas that you would like to improve or strengthen.

For example, if you have scored a “1” in any dimension, you will want to consider focusing your time and energy towards achieving the competency indicators in that dimension, followed by dimensions in which you score a “2,” with a lower priority given to dimensions in which you scored a “3” or higher.

Once you have identified your priorities, you can use this information to guide you in developing a learning plan with one or more personal professional goals for the next year, in guiding a discussion with your supervisor, mentor or coach and in choosing learning opportunities that will help you reach your goals and meet the requirements for continuing competence in your occupation or discipline.

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Original tool developed by Janet Place, MPH - North Carolina Public Health Academy at the University of North Carolina (modified by the Public Health Foundation). It may be modified as needed.