



COUNCIL ON LINKAGES BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE

Examples of Core Competencies Use

The Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals are a set of skills desirable for the broad practice of public health. They reflect the characteristics that staff of public health organizations (collectively) may want to possess as they work to protect and promote health in the community. The Core Competencies are designed to serve as a starting point for academic and practice organizations to understand, assess, and meet training and workforce needs.

Listed below are examples of how public health practice organizations and academic institutions (that use [TRAIN](#)) have used the Core Competencies to: 1) conduct workforce needs assessments; 2) develop discipline-specific competencies; 3) review curricula; and 4) refine personnel systems. You will also be able to view an abstract that was submitted for presentation at a national meeting in 2003 that documents information about Core Competencies use.

Workforce needs assessment

Health Federation of Philadelphia

The Health Federation of Philadelphia is working with program staff from two units of the Philadelphia Department of Public Health (Maternal/Child Health and AIDS). The project involves working directly with the staff affected to apply the PHF Core Competencies to the program development and monitoring jobs. This has involved creating a customized core competencies document that mirrors the 8 Domains and reflects the expectations of their jobs. The effort also involves the staff assessing their training and information needs in order to accomplish the agreed-upon competencies. And in response, a training and T/A plan is implemented and evaluated to support them and their performance of the core competencies.

Posted on **2/4/2004** by [M. Ann Ricksecker MPH](#)

Workforce needs assessment

Utah Department of Health, Division of Community and Family Health Services

The Utah Department of Health, Division of Community and Family Health Services, under the direction of Dr. George Delavan, has utilized the list of Public Health Core Competencies to develop a questionnaire for supervisory and managerial staff to self-assess their level of competence in each of the eight domain and skill areas. By using the list as a training assessment tool, the Division was able to determine in which areas their program managers had high levels of proficiency and where training needs were the greatest. The results have assisted to guide workforce-training development.

Posted on **7/10/2001** by [Shaheen Hossain, Ph.D.](#)

Workforce needs assessment

New York New Jersey Public Health Training Center, Columbia University

The New York New Jersey Public Health Training Center (NYNJPHTC) is a collaborative effort of Columbia University, Mailman School of Public Health; the University at Albany School of Public Health; the UMDNJ-School of Public Health; and each school's partner health department(s). The Center is one of 14 Centers funded by the Health Resources and Services Administration across the United States. The mission of the Center is to improve the nation's public health system for achieving Healthy People 2010 Objectives by strengthening the professional competence of the public health workforce in health departments to provide the Essential Public Health Services (ESPHS) to the communities of New York and New Jersey.

The NYNJPHTC conducted a comprehensive training needs assessment to identify educational needs of public health professionals in New York and New Jersey Health Departments using an assessment instrument adapted from that developed by the South Central Public Health Training Center and on the Council of Linkages (COL) Public Health Professional Core Competencies. Results from the assessment are guiding the design and evaluation of all Center training initiatives. Every program offered identifies up to three core competencies that are the focus of the program.

The nexus of all NYNJPHTC training efforts is the Center's web site where there is an educational plan linking training to competencies. To date, the Center has developed several web-based programs covering a wide array of Public Health topics. These modules include: Orientation to Public Health: an interactive one-hour module designed for employees new to public health. Our newest course, Introduction to Public Health: Comprehensive Curriculum Resource is a comprehensive resource package for trainers in health departments who do training with new employees. The program includes four learning modules: A Brief History of Public Health; Modern Public Health: Tools and Functions; Organization and Legal Basis of Public Health; and Public Health Ethics. For each, there are PowerPoint slides with speaker notes, instructor guides, and background material. Finally, the Center sponsors web-streaming of Third Thursday Breakfast Broadcasts. For additional information on the Center please visit us at www.nynj-phtc.org

Posted on **2/13/2004** by [Porsch Lauren](#)

Workforce needs assessment

State of Connecticut Department of Public Health

· Connecticut seeks have its public health workforce attain a level of expertise in their areas of specialty, interest, and responsibility. The Department of Public Health's (DPH) goal is to become a demonstration state for education and certification of the public health workforce.

· Toward this end DPH has established an Office of Public Health Workforce Development under the direction of the Commissioner's Office/Chief of Staff. The Office

of Public Health Workforce Development studies, monitors, and evaluates workforce issues including health care professions recruitment, professional workforce shortages, and public health workforce competencies.

- To achieve the goal of an expert public health workforce, DPH is working closely with Connecticut's academic community and local public health agencies through the Connecticut Partnership for Workforce Development (CPWD). CPWD is an academic-practice partnership that includes Connecticut's schools of public health, and Area Education Health Centers (AHECs). CPWD assesses, plans, and employs a variety of training formats and distance learning modalities to make available competency based training and education to the currently employed public health workforce. Discussions are focusing on providing basic technical, scientific, managerial, and leadership training opportunities, centered on skills needed to provide the 10 essential public health services.

- CPWD is part of a larger grant initiative, the New England Alliance for Public Health Workforce Development, which unites statewide initiatives from the six New England states to increase educational opportunities for practitioners, particularly those who worked in underserved areas.

- To apply the Council on Linkages' core competency tool for state public health employees, DPH is working with CPWD and its partners. The tool will be used by DPH staff to self-evaluate their own core competencies, including basic public health skills, cultural competencies, communication skills, community dimensions of practice, financial planning and management, leadership and systems training, and policy development/program planning skills. Once the data is collected, a gap analysis will be conducted to identify training needs and to develop and provide appropriate educational opportunities, leading to staff certification in specific core competencies. In the future, we intend to extend this program to local public health staff when resources become available.

- EXAMPLE OF APPLICATION OF CORE COMPETENCIES TO M.P.H. ALUMNI:

University of Connecticut (UCONN) MPH program surveys public health competencies of its alumni

The University of Connecticut Graduate Program in Public Health periodically asks its alumni how well their educational experience in the program prepared them for their professional roles. Our summer 2001 survey will use the list of core competencies for public health professionals developed by the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice.

Each skill is scored according to three considerations: importance to the person's current job responsibilities, the person's proficiency compared to others who do similar work, and contribution of the program's education to skill development. A 5-point rating scale is used, ranging from 5=very high to 1=very low.

The primary mission of the UCONN program is to contribute to public health workforce development for Connecticut. Its course schedule facilitates part-time evening study of

working professionals. One-half of its faculty of about 60 instructors are community based public health practitioners. The program, accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health, has produced close to 400 MPH graduates.

· FUTURE APPLICATION

In addition to the core competencies, DPH is interested in field testing the Council on Linkages' Core Legal Competencies for Public Health Practitioners.

Posted on 7/10/2001 by [Marie Roberto, Dr. P.H. and Eric Opin, M.P.H.](#)

Discipline-specific competencies

Georgetown University School of Nursing and Health Studies and Arlington, VA Department of Human Services

Information about the COL Core Public Health Competencies has been incorporated throughout the 6th Edition (released Jan 2004) of *Community and Public Health Nursing*, Stanhope and Lancaster. This text is used as the core public health nursing text at many undergraduate schools of nursing and a supplemental text at graduate schools of nursing throughout the US. Nurses graduating from BSN programs are now likely to have been exposed to these core competencies. This is a step towards meeting one of the IOM report's recommendations to strengthen public health learning in schools of nursing.

Posted on 1/19/2004 [Diane Downing](#)

Discipline-specific competencies

University of Texas at Brownsville, Department of Nursing

Core public health functions and basic public health sciences skills have been combined with public health nursing courses in a discipline-specific program: a Masters of Science in Public Health Nursing. The 5 basic public health sciences skills are taught by faculty at the University of Texas Health Science Center-Houston, Brownville Campus through a collaborative agreement, and courses are taken with their Master of Science in Public Health students. Public health nursing specific courses are given by nursing specialists in the field of Public/Community health. This highly effective program has been in existence since 2000.

Posted on 11/24/2003 by [Marge Chavez, EdD, RN, CNS-CH](#)

Discipline-specific competencies

Community Safety Programs

The Core Competencies are used in "Training for dealing with Weapons of Mass Destruction/ Hazardous Material Incidents."

Posted on 4/5/2008 by [Cadieux Michelle](#)

Curriculum review and development

The University of Illinois-Chicago School of Public Health

The University of Illinois-Chicago School of Public Health and the Illinois Public Health Preparedness Center under the direction of Dr. Bernard Turnock developed online training programs in a unique instructor-led, self directed format which address the need for: 1) basic "Public Health 101" and "Bioterrorism Preparedness 101" courses for all public health workers who lack formal education and training in public health; and 2) a more extensive series of approximately 45 courses based on a framework that emphasizes cross cutting public health skills for key categories of public health professionals. The Core Competencies served as a framework for designing the courses and all 68-core competencies are addressed in the overall training series. For more information about this training program, please visit:

<http://www.uic.edu/sph/prepare/>.

Posted on **3/15/2002** by [Turnock Bernard](#)

Curriculum review and development

New Jersey

In 1998, New Jersey adopted the core competencies included in "Public Health Workforce: An Agenda for the 21st Century" and implemented a new initiative to build workforce competencies. The completion of continuing education and training courses, accredited by the State Health Department, was added as a requirement for the re-licensure of local health officers and environmental health specialists (Note: For over 100 years, NJ has required that these professionals be licensed). A total of 15 contact hours must be completed annually to maintain an active license and to practice public health in New Jersey. For local health officers, 8 of these hours must be from approved public health leadership and management courses. New Jersey will be expanding this program to include other public health professionals, e.g., nurses, health educators, etc, in 2001.

- New Jersey is a partner in the Northeast Regional Public Health Leadership Institute which provides leadership training and competency development education to state and local public health officials.

- In partnership with colleges, universities, hospitals, local health departments and others, a statewide distance learning network which takes advantage of CDC's Public Health Training Network and other programming has been implemented and is under continuous development. This activity is tied to and partially supported by federal funding for Bioterrorism Preparedness/Health Alert Network activities. Greater access to desktop and self-paced distance learning opportunities is also being developed and will include courses offered by the Public Health Foundation's TrainingFinder clearinghouse.

- New Jersey's Local Health Performance and Practice Standards are currently under revision (to be adopted in 2001). These regulations will bring greater focus to the importance of a competent public health workforce based on entry-level qualifications,

continuing education and competency development. They will also build a high level of regional specialized expertise at the local level for epidemiology, disease surveillance, community health planning, nursing, health education, information technology, emergency preparedness and response, etc. New Jersey expects to be adopting CHES certification for its health educators and, in cooperation with the state's nurse associations, will be developing a workforce development program for public health nurses.

- In partnership with the New Jersey School of Public Health, new initiatives have been developed that increase public health worker access to educational programs that will lead to a Master in Public Health degree. The Department also works close with the School in curriculum development for its degree program.

- Funding is provided to Rutgers -The State University for the development and provision of a 12 week preparatory course for prospective environmental health specialists. This program provides both classroom training and field internships with the state health department and local health departments. Participants are also eligible to sit for New Jersey's Registered Environmental Health Specialist (sanitarian) licensing examination. In cooperation with the New Jersey City State University, a similar but web-based program is being developed for prospective local health officers.

- Organizations and agencies receiving state health service grants are encouraged to set aside a portion of their funding to support summer public health internships for high school students. More than twenty students participated in this program at a variety of public health settings across the state during the summer of 2000.

- State Aid funding is provided on an annual basis to local health departments, a portion of which supports workforce development through training, education, competency and leadership development.

- A chapter has been included in Healthy New Jersey 2010 entitled "Strengthening Public Health Capacity." An objective aimed at increasing workforce competencies is one of several objectives pertaining to public health infrastructure and tied to performance standards.

**** For additional information on New Jersey's Workforce Development Program and initiatives, please contact Ms. Beverly Rivell, Project Manager, Workforce Development at 609-292-4993 x 8 or at brivell@doh.state.nj.us

Posted on **5/3/2001** by [Matzer Richard](#)

Curriculum review and development

Tulare County, CA

In Tulare County, California the Core Competencies are used to develop curricula that in turn is used to train Public Health Nurses and first responders for Bioterrorism Disaster Preparedness.

Personnel system refinement

Washtenaw County, Public Health Department

We have begun using behavioral based interviewing in our County recruitment and hiring process. This involves defining competencies for each position when you begin the process of recruitment and hiring. We have made extensive use of these competencies in the professional/technical area in particular but also in the areas of quality service, communication, individual leadership/influencing, and teamwork. It has helped us refine a generic County process to better meet the needs of the Public Health Department. We are having success with this new hiring process.

Posted on **7/23/2002** by [Clement Ellen](#)

Expanding Use of the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals (*APHA Annual Meeting, 2003*)

During its session entitled, *Core Competencies: A Roadmap for Action*, conducted at the 131st annual American Public Health Association (APHA) meeting in San Francisco, CA the Council was pleased to learn that the type and amount of national initiatives utilizing the Core Competencies is on the rise. The Council identified efforts by over 14 different academic and practice organizations to integrate the Core Competencies the into their workforce development initiatives. Session participants engaged in group dialogue about their experiences using the Core Competencies and suggested potential modifications to improve the applicability of the Core Competencies in the field.

Interested in competencies-based training? Visit www.train.org to search for hundreds of distance learning and on-site Core Competencies courses. For additional information about how to use the Core Competencies, contact psaungweme@phf.org.

View the abstract "*Core Competencies: A Roadmap for Action*" below:

Core Competencies: A Roadmap for Action

131st Annual APHA Meeting in San Francisco, CA (Nov 15-19, 2003)
Session # 4016.0, scheduled for Tuesday, November 18, 2003 from 8:30 am-10:00 am.

In April 2001, the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice's (Council) 14 member organizations finalized and endorsed a consensus set of core competencies for public health professionals. The Council will be review the final list for potential revision by April 2004, taking into consideration its use by the practice and academic communities and the changing nature of public health practice. Since their inception, the core competencies have been used to varying degrees by public health agencies and organizations to conduct workforce needs assessments, develop competency-based curricula, develop search criteria for competency-based training available through learning management systems, and to evaluate the effectiveness of MPH programs in preparing students for practice.

The recently published Institute of Medicine Report, *"The Future of the Public's Health in the 21st Century,"* recommended that, "All federal, state, and local government public health agencies should develop strategies to ensure that public health workers who are involved in the provision of essential public health services demonstrate mastery of the core public health competencies." In light of the recommendations cited in this report, the public health field is challenged to identify: 1) ways to most appropriately integrate the competencies into course learning objectives and curriculum; 2) create incentives for integrating the competencies into workforce development efforts; 3) develop strategies to integrate the competencies into other health professions training programs; and 4) measure the impact of competency-based education.

This session will identify national initiatives and strategies designed to integrate competency-based training into public health workforce development efforts. A major focus of this session will also be a group dialogue about the audience's experience using the competencies to: 1) suggest strategies to better use and evaluate the existing competencies in academia and practice; and 2) suggest potential modifications that can improve their applicability and assist the Council refine the competencies list by April 2004.

Program Selection: APHA-Innovations Project

Topic Selection: Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals

Keywords: Competency, Public Health Infrastructure, Workforce Development

Learning Objectives:

- Describe how core competencies for public health professionals have been used by public health agencies, organizations and academic institutions for workforce development.
- Discuss opportunities to use the competencies for improved workforce performance and capacity building efforts.
- Develop strategies and recommendations to assist the Council in refining the Competencies by April 2004.