



COUNCIL ON LINKAGES BETWEEN ACADEMIA AND PUBLIC HEALTH PRACTICE

1300 L Street, NW, Suite 800, Washington, DC 20005 • TEL (202) 218-4400 • FAX (202) 218-4409 • www.phf.org/link

Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals¹ ADOPTED June 11, 2009

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) Uses 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) Employs ethical principles in the collection, maintenance, use, and dissemination of data and information
- 9) Interprets quantitative and qualitative data
- 10) Makes community-specific inferences from quantitative and qualitative data⁴
- 11) Uses information technology to collect, store, and retrieve data
- 12) Utilizes data to address scientific, political, ethical, and social public health issues

Policy Development/Program Planning Skills

- 1) Analyzes information relevant to specific public health policy issues
- 2) Articulates policy options
- 3) Determines the feasibility and expected outcomes of policy options⁵
- 4) Articulates the implications of policy options⁶
- 5) Utilizes decision analysis for policy development and program planning
- 6) Manages public health programs consistent with public health laws and regulations
- 7) Develops a plan to implement policy and programs
- 8) Incorporates policy into organizational plans, structures, and programs
- 9) Develops mechanisms to monitor and evaluate programs for their effectiveness and quality
- 10) Incorporates public health informatics practices⁷
- 11) Develops strategies for continuous quality improvement

¹ These core competencies are for the “mid tier” public health professional. A mid tier public health professional is an individual with an MPH (or related degree) and at least 5 years experience working in the public health field, or an individual without an MPH but at least 10 years experience working in the public health field.

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

Communication Skills

- 1) Assesses the health literacy of populations served
- 2) Communicates in writing and orally, in person, and through electronic means, with linguistic and cultural proficiency
- 3) Solicits input from individuals and organizations
- 4) Utilizes a variety of approaches 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

Cultural Competency Skills

- 1) Incorporates strategies for interacting with persons from diverse backgrounds¹⁰
- 2) Considers 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) Explains the dynamic forces that contribute to cultural diversity
- 5) Describes the need for a diverse public health workforce
- 6) Assesses the public health organization for its cultural competence

Community Dimensions of Practice Skills

- 1) Assesses community linkages and relationships among multiple factors (or determinants) affecting health¹¹
- 2) Collaborates in community-based participatory research efforts
- 3) Establishes linkages with key stakeholders
- 4) Facilitates collaboration and partnerships to ensure participation of key stakeholders
- 5) Maintains partnerships with key stakeholders
- 6) Uses group processes to advance community involvement
- 7) Describes 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) Uses community input when developing public health policies and programs
- 10) 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) 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

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.

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>

- 5) Conducts a comprehensive review of 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) Determines the limitations of research findings¹³
- 8) Determines 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) Interprets the interrelationships of local, state, and federal public health and health care systems for public health program management
- 2) Interprets 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) Develops a programmatic budget
- 6) Manages programs within current and forecasted budget constraints
- 7) Develops 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) Applies public health informatics skills to improve program and business operations¹⁵
- 13) Negotiates contracts and other agreements for the provision of services
- 14) Utilizes cost-effectiveness, cost-benefit, and cost-utility analyses in 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) Incorporates systems thinking into public health practice
- 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) Promotes individual, team and organizational learning opportunities
- 6) Establishes 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) Modifies organizational practices in consideration of changes in the public health system, and the larger social, political, and economic environment

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

NOTE: [Click here](#) to view the core competencies with examples appearing in the text, rather than footnotes.