

03-05 PHIP WFD Committee -- Orientation Workgroup
Individual-Level Competencies
for
Local Public Health Leaders
(HO, Administrator, PHND, EHD)

Based on the “system-level” public health competencies published in the 2004 PHIP Report, Appendix 11, and drawing on a range of accepted public health competency sets, these individual-level competencies were developed as a part of the updated Public Health Officials Orientation. They form the basis for defining and focusing learning in these soon-to-be on-line orientation programs.

Systems Thinking

Definition: Seeing problems and issues in a larger perspective that understands relationships between units inside and outside the organization; anticipating consequences of alternative courses of action, and solving problems in ways that address total system needs, not just the immediate situation.

- Apply an understanding of the public health system to solving problems and addressing public health needs and priorities
- Describe political processes and variables operating at federal, state, and local levels that impact the public health system
- Describe the role of cultural, social, and behavioral factors in determining the delivery of public health services
- Describe public health as a system, including the interaction of public health and health care systems
- Communicate the role of governmental public health within the public health system
- Evaluate and interpret social, technological, environmental, economic and political influences on the community, the local health jurisdiction and public health system
- Identify and interpret the norms, values and influences of different cultures and their interaction in the community
- Scan the environment to identify key trends or drivers that may impact the local health jurisdiction and the delivery of essential public health services within the community
- Identify issues impacting public health that cross jurisdictional boundaries
- Describe the roles of various traditional (e.g. education, social services) and non-traditional partners (law enforcement, emergency response) in achieving public health goals within the community (PHEPR)
- Communicate public health information, roles, capacities and legal authority accurately to all emergency response partners during planning, drills and actual emergencies (PHEPR)

Public Health Policy, Authority, and Responsibility

Definition: Developing and advocating for policy that advances public health goals; using legal authority and regulatory processes as needed to implement policy; and managing policy to achieve desired outcomes

Boards of Health and legal authority

- Access, interpret and apply laws and regulations that pertain to public health authority and responsibility and/or impact public health practice (e.g. confidentiality, age of consent.)
- Identify elements of public health laws that are important to assess in developing public health emergency response plans. (PHEPR)
- Utilize the legal remedies available to local health jurisdictions for enforcing public health laws and regulations
- Develop and maintain effective collaborative processes for local Board of Health development, new member orientation and ongoing communication and problem-solving
- Policy development and implementation
- Describe theories and approaches that drive public health policy-making
- Analyze, evaluate, and communicate public policy choices
- Incorporate assessment and evaluation findings into public health planning and policy decisions
- Translate policy into organizational priorities, plans, structures and programs
- Apply an understanding of values and costs of public health services to make strategic decisions regarding funding choices
- Interpret and apply laws and regulations that pertain to public health authority and responsibility
- Evaluate/review the public health laws, local ordinances and plans on a regular schedule, to assure that they are current and up-to-date in all areas, including public health emergency response (PHEPR)
- New Coalitions and Alliances
- Definition: Managing and implementing responsibilities through collaboration, coordination, and stakeholder participation. Emphasizing community engagement, coalitions and partnerships in developing programs and services to meet community priorities.
- Identify and engage potential strategic partners

- Convene, lead and participate in state and local work groups, task forces, coalitions and consortia addressing specific public health issues
- Use political, coalition-building, advocacy and communication skills to engage the community and build partnerships and capacity for achieving public health goals
- Build trusting, effective and sustainable relationships with diverse groups and individuals within the community
- Use community mobilization methods and tools appropriate for the local community
- Promote an organizational environment that facilitates team building, team problem-solving and constructive conflict resolution
- Identify opportunities for internal and external collaboration across boundaries
- Develop and maintain written agreements with governmental bodies, schools, hospitals, and others to secure resources and assistance, ensure coordination and to clarify relationships and responsibilities related to public health issues and activities, including emergency preparedness and response (PHEPR)
- Develop and implement communication strategies to assure effective and continuous links between targeted partners and stakeholders, including emergency preparedness and response (PHEPR)
- Communication
- Definition: To use communication processes, methods and skills as strategic tools to increase knowledge and support for public health, improve community health status; address community concerns, and manage public health responsibilities
- Use the media, community networks and other forums to increase the public's knowledge of and support for public health
- Communicate across a broad range of agency, political, cultural, and community settings to promote understanding of public health issues
- Lead and participate in groups to address specific issues
- Use the most effective, efficient and expedient telecommunications media for individual public health situations
- Apply principles and tools of social marketing to improve community health
- Apply principles and tools of effective risk communication in addressing community concerns and public health emergencies (PHEPR)
- Foster open, culturally sensitive communication and dialogue within own organization and with partners and stakeholders
- Develop and implement communication strategies that assure effective and continuous links between targeted partners and stakeholders, including emergency preparedness and response (PHEPR)
- Manage external communication and information dissemination to diverse entities, including the public, legislators, local Board of Health, and the news media.
- Balance legal and confidentiality issues for the public benefit
- Develop and implement communication and public information plans and strategies for a variety of public health issues, including emergency events. (PHEPR)
- Describe the chain of command and incident command system (or similar protocol) for emergency response functions in the jurisdiction. (PHEPR).

Informatics

Definition: Using and managing information, information technology, and information systems as strategic tools to perform specific public health functions and improve individual, organizational, and system effectiveness

Apply information technology to public health practice

- Use information technology to increase individual effectiveness as a public health professional (e.g. web-based applications for searching and retrieving information, distance-learning technologies for ongoing learning)
- Use software available within the agency to perform research, record-keeping, communication, data analysis and interpretation, and reporting tasks
- Combine data and information from multiple sources to create new information to support public health decision-making
- Plan and manage information systems, projects and processes
- Use efficient and cost-effective approaches to integrate information technology into the workplace to improve individual, program, organization and system effectiveness.
- Guide the collection, analysis and evaluation of data available through key electronic systems and use the information in decision-making
- Implement relevant policies, procedures and technical means to the collection, maintenance, use and dissemination of data and information to ensure that confidential information is protected
- Apply systems thinking to planning and collaborating on information technology efforts

- Establish a public health communication infrastructure that receives and transmits data and information for decision support during an emergency event (PHEPR)

Quality Improvement

Definition: Developing and implementing systems, strategies, and processes for continually reviewing and improving the work of the agency, stimulating innovation, building knowledge, and achieving excellence.

Create an organizational culture that emphasizes quality, performance, and a strong customer focus

- Integrate a focus on quality into staff orientation and development, program planning and service delivery, and the day to day work of the local health jurisdiction
- Establish a quality improvement structure, and develop and implement a quality improvement plan for the agency or functional area of responsibility
- Engage agency employees and community partners and stakeholders in quality improvement efforts and communicate performance results.
- Use a systematic, organization-wide approach to measuring performance that is grounded in data, best practices and science
- Utilize quality improvement principles and tools to improve performance at all levels and in all parts of the organization
- Develop and implement administrative processes that assure the collection and reporting of appropriate data needed for continuous quality improvement efforts
- Analyze information and data from all parts of the organization to assess overall organizational health and changing organizational needs, and progress relative to performance goals and strategic objectives; share and use the information to support decision-making
- Use public health standards, best practices, benchmarking, research data, trend analysis and customer input to assess and improve services and agency operations.
- Evaluate emergency response drills (or actual response) to identify needed internal and external improvements (PHEPR)

Results-based Accountability

Definition: Managing strategic use of resources to set direction, ensure cost-efficient and effective operations, establish systems that track and monitor strategic objectives and outcomes, and deliver results

Plan; deploy resources, and monitor costs, activities and results to carry out mandates, priorities and policies in a cost-effective manner

- Develop a strategic plan that identifies goals, objectives and performance measures, and has a process to monitor and evaluate achievements
- Determine budget priorities and assure the budget is aligned with the agency strategic plan
- Evaluate resource utilization
- Use program evaluation and cost-efficiency, cost-effectiveness, cost-benefit and cost-utility analyses) to monitor and evaluate effectiveness of results and adjust as indicated
- Develop, maintain and evaluate written program and administrative policies, procedures and protocols
- Administer/manage financial and contract systems and processes
- Describe fiscal accountability within the context of public health funding and agency performance
- Manage budget processes, including budget development, monitoring and reporting
- Manage contract processes, including negotiation, billing, compliance with contract requirements, tracking and monitoring costs and deliverables, and reporting
- Allocate and monitor expenditures to ensure cost-efficient support of programs and policies
- Identify, interpret and apply federal and state regulations and local policies that impact grants, contracts, and development of fees and sliding fee schedules.
- Administer/manage personnel systems and processes
- Describe how the skills and actions of various professions and a diverse public health workforce contribute to performance of the public health mission
- Establish and reinforce an environment that encourages employee initiative, decision-making and innovation.
- Implement appropriate administrative tools, processes, and local policies for recruiting, hiring, evaluating, and terminating staff
- Access, interpret, and apply information related to state regulations and requirements for licensure, certification, registration and professional practice for multiple disciplines working in public health
- Access, interpret and apply federal and state laws and regulations that impact personnel.
- Manage labor relations effectively and appropriately address union contract issues
- Establish and maintain protocols to address public health needs required during an emergency, including 24/7 availability of specific staff and specialists, public health surge capacity, and use of volunteers (PHEPR)

- Administer/manage systems and processes related to property, facilities and risk
- Develop and implement effective, cost-efficient policies and procedures for procurement, maintenance, and control of agency property, facilities, grounds, equipment and other resources.
- Access, interpret, and implement ADA, HIPAA and other federal, state and local laws and regulations that apply to agency facilities.
- Identify financial and operational risk and develop and implement appropriate risk management strategies for the agency or functional area of responsibility
- Develop and implement policies and procedures addressing federal, state and local health and safety regulations
- Specify safety measures to be taken by public health responders in an emergency event, including use of personal protective equipment (PHEPR)

Visionary Leadership

Definition: Taking the long-term view and initiating change to move the organization toward the future; building vision with others and capitalizing on opportunities to move the organization and/or the community toward the vision.

Use political, communication, advocacy and interpersonal skills to effect change and influence the use of community resources to promote the public health mission

- Create a culture of ethical standards within the organization
- Facilitate creation of a shared vision and values and use these principles to guide action
- Keep the mission in focus and coach, inspire and motivate others to accomplish the mission
- Identify personal leadership style and determine the strengths and limits of this style
- Adapt leadership style as needed for various situations, (e.g. crisis leadership for emergency preparedness and response, collaborative leadership for building community involvement and partnerships,) (PHEPR)
- Develop new insights into situations; apply innovative solutions, and model innovative practices in making organizational improvements
- Lead and readily adapt to changes in public health practice and the environment in which the public health system functions

Local Public Health Officer Technical and Professional Competencies

Definition: Applying professional practices and technical knowledge and skill to fulfill job requirements

- Use the powers and perform the duties of the local Health Officer as specified by state law and determined by the local Board of Health
- Perform the local health officer's role in emergency preparedness and response (PHEPR)
- Interpret and communicate health data and information to the community
- Work with, coordinate and/or lead community efforts to address public health problems
- Conduct, or provide consultation for, surveillance and epidemiological investigations of disease outbreaks and patterns of infectious and chronic diseases and injuries, environmental hazards and other health threats
- Public Health Sciences Skills
- Identify the individual's and organization's responsibilities within the context of the essential public health services and core functions
- Apply the basic public health sciences including behavioral and social sciences, biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health, and prevention of injuries and chronic and infectious diseases
- Obtain and evaluate published information to inform public health decisions.
- Define, assess and communicate the health status of populations, determinants of health and illness, factors contributing to health promotion and disease prevention, and factors influencing the use of health services
- Collaborate with colleagues and the community to investigate and manage public health problems
- Mobilize resources in the community needed to increase access to public health and health care services
- Describe the public health aspects of emergency planning (PHEPR)
- Professional Practice
- Appropriately apply regulations, policies and procedures related to your specific roles, responsibilities, and specialized expertise
- Maintain established standards for your profession (e.g. licensure, certification, continuing education, etc.)
- Maintain and apply up to date best practice knowledge and stay current on new developments and trends within areas of expertise and scope of responsibility
- Engage in on-going professional knowledge and skill development
- Manage personal workload effectively to accomplish priorities
- Apply creative problem-solving and flexible thinking to unusual challenges within functional responsibilities and evaluate effectiveness of all actions taken (PHEPR)

Local Public Health Nursing Director Technical and Professional Competencies

Definition: Applying professional practices and technical knowledge and skill to fulfill job requirements

- Plan, set priorities, and manage resources and operational systems within functional area of responsibility
- Coordinate with all parts of the organization and the local Board of Health to accomplish agency goals and objectives
- Work with, coordinate and/or lead community efforts to address public health problems
- Develop, implement and evaluate programs and services consistent with the core functions of public health, essential public health services, state statute, and local policy
- Supervise professional, technical and support staff in direct line of authority
- Apply an understanding of local economic and political conditions in efforts to find appropriate solutions to community health issues
- Identify public health issues requiring legal enforcement activities and work with the Health Officer, Administrator and legal counsel to implement appropriate remedies
- Public Health Sciences Skills
- Identify the individual's and organization's responsibilities within the context of the essential public health services and core functions
- Apply the basic public health sciences including behavioral and social sciences, biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health, and prevention of injuries and chronic and infectious diseases
- Obtain and evaluate published information to inform public health decisions.
- Define, assess and communicate the health status of populations, determinants of health and illness, factors contributing to health promotion and disease prevention, and factors influencing the use of health services
- Collaborate with colleagues and the community to investigate and manage public health problems
- Mobilize resources in the community needed to increase access to public health and health care services
- Describe the public health aspects of emergency planning (PHEPR)
- Professional Practice
- Appropriately apply regulations, policies and procedures related to your specific roles, responsibilities, and specialized expertise
- Maintain established standards for your profession (e.g. licensure, certification, continuing education, etc.)
- Maintain and apply up to date best practice knowledge and stay current on new developments and trends within areas of expertise and scope of responsibility
- Engage in on-going professional knowledge and skill development
- Manage personal workload effectively to accomplish priorities
- Apply creative problem-solving and flexible thinking to unusual challenges within functional responsibilities and evaluate effectiveness of all actions taken (PHEPR)

Local Public Health Administrator Technical and Professional Competencies

Definition: Applying professional practices and technical knowledge and skill to fulfill job requirements

- Assess the capacity of the agency to carry out mandates, address priorities, and meet community needs and expectations
- Plan and deploy resources to carry out mandates, priorities and policies for the local health jurisdiction in a cost-effective manner, and evaluate how agency resources are allocated in light of changing or conflicting priorities
- Coordinate with all parts of the organization and the local Board of Health to accomplish agency priorities, goals and objectives
- Work with, coordinate and/or lead community efforts to address public health problems
- Utilize the legal remedies available to local health jurisdictions for enforcing public health laws and regulations
- Assure that effective controls are developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the agency
- Oversee and manage resources and administer operational systems for the agency
- Supervise professional, technical and support staff in direct line of authority
- Assure that the agency has a written, updated plan for major categories of emergencies that respects the culture of the community and provides for continuity of agency operations (PHEPR)
- Public Health Sciences Skills
- Identify the individual's and organization's responsibilities within the context of the essential public health services and core functions
- Apply the basic public health sciences including behavioral and social sciences, biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health, and prevention of injuries and chronic and infectious diseases
- Obtain and evaluate published information to inform public health decisions.
- Define, assess and communicate the health status of populations, determinants of health and illness, factors contributing to health promotion and disease prevention, and factors influencing the use of health services
- Collaborate with colleagues and the community to investigate and manage public health problems

- Mobilize resources in the community needed to increase access to public health and health care services
- Describe the public health aspects of emergency planning (PHEPR)
- Professional Practice
- Appropriately apply regulations, policies and procedures related to your specific roles, responsibilities, and specialized expertise
- Maintain established standards for your profession (e.g. licensure, certification, continuing education, etc.)
- Maintain and apply up to date best practice knowledge and stay current on new developments and trends within areas of expertise and scope of responsibility
- Engage in on-going professional knowledge and skill development
- Manage personal workload effectively to accomplish priorities
- Apply creative problem-solving and flexible thinking to unusual challenges within functional responsibilities and evaluate effectiveness of all actions taken (PHEPR)
- Local Environmental Health Director Technical and Professional Competencies
- Definition: Applying professional practices and technical knowledge and skill to fulfill job requirements
- Plan, set priorities, and manage resources and operational systems within functional area of responsibility
- Coordinate with all parts of the organization and the local Board of Health to accomplish agency goals and objectives
- Work with, coordinate and/or lead community efforts to address public health problems
- Develop, implement and evaluate programs and services consistent with the core functions of public health, essential public health services, state statute, and local policy
- Supervise professional, technical and support staff in direct line of authority
- Apply an understanding of local economic and political conditions in efforts to find appropriate solutions to environmental health issues
- Identify public health issues requiring legal enforcement activities and work with the Health Officer, Administrator and legal counsel to implement appropriate remedies
- Public Health Sciences Skills
- Identify the individual's and organization's responsibilities within the context of the essential public health services and core functions
- Apply the basic public health sciences including behavioral and social sciences, biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health, and prevention of injuries and chronic and infectious diseases
- Obtain and evaluate published information to inform public health decisions.
- Define, assess and communicate the health status of populations, determinants of health and illness, factors contributing to health promotion and disease prevention, and factors influencing the use of health services
- Collaborate with colleagues and the community to investigate and manage public health problems
- Mobilize resources in the community needed to increase access to public health and health care services
- Describe the public health aspects of emergency planning (PHEPR)
- Professional Practice
- Appropriately apply regulations, policies and procedures related to your specific roles, responsibilities, and specialized expertise
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- Engage in on-going professional knowledge and skill development
- Manage personal workload effectively to accomplish priorities
- Apply creative problem-solving and flexible thinking to unusual challenges within functional responsibilities and evaluate effectiveness of all actions taken (PHEPR)