The Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice

Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals Report

September 16, 2024

Overview

The [Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals](#) (Core Competencies) reflect foundational or crosscutting knowledge and skills for professionals engaged in the practice, education, and research of public health. Guidance for [Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice](#) (Council) efforts related to the Core Competencies is provided by the [Core Competencies Workgroup](#), which includes members representing a variety of practice and academic organizations and interests within the public health field. The most recent version of the Core Competencies was approved by the Council in October 2021.

Core Competencies Use

The Core Competencies are widely used within public health workforce development efforts across the US. Data show that approximately 80% of state health departments, [60% of Tribal health organizations](#), [55% of local health departments](#), and 25% of territorial health departments use the Core Competencies. Since the release of the 2021 version, the Core Competencies have been accessed online nearly 100,000 times, with an additional 101,000 visits to resources and tools designed to support implementation of the competency set. In that same time period, Council staff have responded to 100 requests for assistance with the Core Competencies, serving 69 organizations in 29 states, DC, Canada, China, Tanzania, United Arab Emirates, and the United Kingdom. Numerous [tools and resources](#) have been developed and presentations and workshops delivered to raise awareness about the Core Competencies and assist public health professionals and organizations in using the Core Competencies for workforce development.

Core Competencies Review Cycle

The Core Competencies are regularly reviewed and revised to keep pace with changes in the field of public health and ensure they continue to meet the needs of the public health workforce. The Council reviews the Core Competencies every three years to determine if there is a need for revisions and to ensure that the Core Competencies reflect evolving public health workforce roles, responsibilities, and functions. As the most recent revision of the Core Competencies was approved by the Council in October 2021, the Council is due to discuss the possibility of revision.

The Council has previously received requests to consider lengthening the review and revision cycle for the Core Competencies to minimize disruption and allow time for organizations and individuals to integrate the latest Core Competencies into their work before revisions are made. The Council must balance the needs of those relying on the Core Competencies with responsiveness to changes in the field in order to ensure continued use. With the three-year anniversary of the current version of the Core Competencies in October, the Council is asked to consider whether significant enough changes have occurred in the public health field to necessitate potential revision of the Core Competencies or whether the current version of the Core Competencies is likely to meet the anticipated needs of the near future. It should be noted in this discussion that a decision not to begin the review and revision process at the present time does not mean that the Council must wait another three years before revisiting this question again, as this can be done at any time.

During this meeting, the Council will discuss whether the time is right to engage in a Core Competencies revision process. Topics for this discussion may include feedback on use of the Core Competencies and suggestions related to content, as appropriate. Further comments and suggestions are also welcome following the meeting by email to Mayela Arana at marana@phf.org.

Additional information about activities related to the Core Competencies can be found through the Core Competencies section of the Council website or by contacting Mayela Arana at marana@phf.org.