



## Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals Report

December 12, 2017

### **Overview**

The [Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals](#) (Core Competencies) reflect foundational skills desirable for professionals engaged in the practice, education, and research of public health and are used in education, training, and other workforce development activities across the country. The [current version of the Core Competencies](#) was released by the [Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice](#) (Council) in June 2014.

### **Activities and Accomplishments for 2017**

The [Core Competencies Workgroup](#) continues to lead activities related to the Core Competencies, with a noted increase in usage, new tools and resources being developed, and existing tools and resources being enhanced. The following summary details activities and accomplishments for 2017.

#### *Usage of the Core Competencies*

- To date in 2017, the Core Competencies have been accessed nearly 37,000 times, and resources and tools that support use of the Core Competencies have been accessed close to 70,000 times. This brings online usage since the current version of the Core Competencies was released to more than 151,000 times for the Core Competencies, and more than 292,000 times for related resources and tools. The most popular resources and tools include [competency assessments](#) and collections of [job descriptions](#), [examples of how organizations use the Core Competencies](#), and [workforce development plans](#).
- Both the [Association of State and Territorial Health Officials](#) (ASTHO) and [National Association of County and City Health Departments](#) (NACCHO) released updated data about use of the Core Competencies within health departments through their Profile studies.
  - The [ASTHO Profile of State and Territorial Public Health, Volume Four](#), based on research conducted in 2016, indicates that approximately 80% of state health departments use the Core Competencies. The study also reports that 100% of state health departments are familiar with the Core Competencies, and demonstrates increases in use of the Core Competencies for conducting performance evaluations, developing training plans, and preparing job descriptions.
  - The [2016 National Profile of Local Health Departments](#) study conducted by NACCHO shows a 73% increase in use of the Core Competencies among local health departments since the study was last completed in 2013 – with usage growing from 26% to 45%. In addition to an overall increase in usage, the NACCHO study highlights increases in use of the Core Competencies for assessing training needs, developing training plans, writing position descriptions, and conducting performance evaluations, with use for training plans and position descriptions doubling between 2013 and 2016.

#### *Tools and Resources Related to the Core Competencies*

- A [modified version of the Core Competencies](#) was developed to support organizations in using the Core Competencies. Based on Tier 2 of the Core Competencies, this version

groups competencies that share a common theme together to reduce the number of individual items to focus on in workforce development efforts.

- The tool, [Determining Essential Core Competencies for Public Health Jobs: A Prioritization Process](#), was released in June and was featured during a workshop at the 2017 Public Health Improvement Training (attended by approximately 55 participants), [webinar](#) (attended by nearly 200 participants), and [session](#) at the [2017 American Public Health Association Annual Meeting](#) (attended by approximately 40 participants).
- Twelve new [job descriptions](#) and a new [workforce development plan](#) that incorporate the Core Competencies were added to the existing online collections. Additional examples that can be included in either of these collections, as well as other examples of how the Core Competencies are being used, are welcome by email to Janelle Nichols at [jnichols@phf.org](mailto:jnichols@phf.org).
- Competency sets that draw on the Core Competencies continued to be developed, including the [Priority Competencies for Population Health Professionals](#) and the [Competencies for Performance Improvement Professionals in Public Health](#) (Performance Improvement Competencies). Both of these competency sets are currently in draft form; feedback collected in the coming months will be used to refine the drafts for anticipated release of the competency sets in 2018.

#### *Additional Highlights*

- After considering requests from the public health community and usage of the Core Competencies, the Council determined that the Core Competencies would not be opened for review this year, allowing additional work to be done to develop tools and resources to continue to support use of the Core Competencies.
- Council staff participated in a [PH WINS](#) (Public Health Workforce Interest and Needs Survey) workgroup to support the incorporation of concepts from the Core Competencies into their assessment tool.
- The Core Competencies Workgroup grew to nearly 100 members, representing a variety of practice and academic organizations and interests within the public health field.
- The [Performance Improvement Competencies Subgroup](#) was formed to support the refinement of the Performance Improvement Competencies and includes nearly 90 members.
- Council staff responded to more than 40 technical assistance requests, serving nearly 40 organizations in 19 states, Guam, and Uganda.
- Three blog posts and one news article highlighting work related to the Core Competencies were published on the PHF website and viewed more than 500 times.
- The Core Competencies Workgroup began a discussion of Council involvement in recognition of discipline-specific competency sets based on the Core Competencies.

More information about these activities and accomplishments related to the Core Competencies is available through the [Core Competencies](#) section of the Council website or by contacting Janelle Nichols at [jnichols@phf.org](mailto:jnichols@phf.org).

## Core Competencies Workgroup Members

### Co-Chairs:

- Amy Lee, Northeast Ohio Medical University
- Janet Place, Arnold School of Public Health, University of South Carolina

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- Liz Amos, National Library of Medicine
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