

Wood County Health Department
Workforce Competency Development Plan

October 2013

Updated February 2014

Updated December 2014

Updated April 2015



wood county
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Nationally Accredited

Introduction

The issues Wood County Health Department faces mirror the national concern of a widening gap between the Public Health system's charge to improve the health of populations and the capacity of the public health workforce to meet that challenge. Critical challenges facing the public health system are an aging workforce, workforce shortages, deep funding cuts, and greater demands on the public health system to support its broad mission to prevent new and emerging disease, promote healthy lifestyle behaviors, and protect the environment from hazards. In order to meet these demands, it is imperative that local public health agencies have a comprehensive workforce development plan that provides a roadmap to address these challenges. Another driving force for the development of a comprehensive workforce development plan is the Public Health Accreditation Board's (PHAB) identification of standards and measures around Workforce Development Plans as a requirement for national voluntary accreditation. According to PHAB, an accredited health department "must maintain, implement, and assess the health department workforce development plan that addresses the training needs of the staff and the development of core competencies."

Plan Purpose

The purpose of the Wood County Health Department (WCHD) Workforce Development Plan (WDP) is to ensure a systematic process is in place for WCHD professional staff to identify individual competency strengths and areas for improvement as compared to national standards, and to institute corrective actions to fulfill improvements. This will ultimately ensure that staff are using a continuous quality improvement (CQI) process to enhance their skill sets.

Plan Goal

The goal of this workforce development plan is to assure a competent, skilled, and dynamic professional public health workforce who systematically pursue opportunities to increase their skill sets so they can contribute to the goals of the WCHD Strategic Plan, and ultimately improve the quality of public health services and programs offered to the residents of Wood County.

Background

Nationally Accepted Public Health Competencies: The WCHD recognizes the Council on Linkages Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals as the benchmark for basic skills required of all WCHD professional staff. The Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals (Core Competencies) are a set of skills desirable for the broad practice of public health. They reflect the characteristics that WCHD staff need to possess in order to protect and promote health in the community. The Core Competencies address the following key dimensions of public health practice:

1. Analytic/Assessment
2. Policy Development & Program Planning
3. Communication
4. Cultural Competency
5. Community Dimensions of Practice
6. Public Health Sciences
7. Financial Planning and Management
8. Leadership and Systems Thinking

In addition, the agency evaluated staff competency relative to the 15 Preparedness Capabilities as determined by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). These capabilities are assessed annually in all Local Health Departments (LHDs) and tribes through the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS)

Public Health Preparedness program. Annually, WCHD's lowest scoring preparedness capability areas will be identified, corrective actions developed, and appropriate trainings and/or resources will be implemented to ensure that competency scores are increased. The 15 Preparedness Capabilities are as follows:

1. Community Preparedness
2. Community Recovery
3. Emergency Operations Coordination
4. Emergency Public Information and Warning
5. Fatality Management
6. Information Sharing
7. Mass Care
8. Medical Countermeasure Dispensing
9. Medical Material Management and Distribution
10. Medical Surge
11. Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions
12. Public Health Laboratory Testing
13. Public Health Surveillance and Epidemiological Investigation
14. Responder Safety and Health
15. Volunteer Management

History of Workforce Development Work within the WCHD

- 2006-Current: WCHD staff involved in Preparedness Related Competency Assessment and other Related Training; documentation of training on individual transcripts (WI-TRAIN transcript feature)
- 2010 to current: WCHD developed an agency strategic plan that outlines four major goals (one is to strengthen the WCHD workforce competency and capacity)
- 2011-Current: WCHD staff working in the Maternal and Child Health Program annually completed a competency assessment within the Secure Public Health Electronic Records Environment (SPHERE); trainings staff participate in throughout the year to build their competency are entered into SPHERE as well
- 2012: WCHD staff completed an electronic competency assessment tool; this tool was developed and released by the Wisconsin Center for Public Health Education and Training (WICPHET) and completed statewide by public health professionals; as results are released, training opportunities are sought to build on the competencies indicating the highest need for further development
- 2013: Updated Workforce Competency Development Plan to include an annual cycle of workforce competency assessment, identification of priority training needs, documentation of training completion and competency re-assessment; updated professional job descriptions to incorporate core competencies
- 2014: Additional technical updates
- 2015:

Wood County Health Department Workforce Demographics

Category	Number
Total Number of Employees	28
Number of Full Time Employees	16
Number of Part-Time Employees	12
Primary Professional Disciplines/Credentials	
Health Officer	1
Environmental Health/Communicable Disease Supervisor	1
Office Manager	1
Emergency Preparedness/Family Health Supervisor	1
Nutrition/Lactation Program Supervisor	1
Community Health Planner/Health Promotion Supervisor	1
Clerical/Administrative Support	6
Public Health Nurse	6
Registered Sanitarian	2
Health Educator	1
Health Educator/Nutritionist	2
Nutrition Assistant	1
WIC Peer Counselor	1
Health Screener	2
Dental Hygienist	1
Estimated Number of Employees <5 Years from Eligible Retirement (ages 55+):	
Management	1
Non-Management	5
Estimated Number of Employees Currently Eligible for Retirement (ages 62+):	
Management	0
Non-Management	1

Future Workforce

Currently 18% of our existing workforce is eligible to retire right now if we consider age 55 the retirement age. If we advance that threshold to 62, less than 1% of our workforce is eligible for retirement. The majority of the management team is not nearing retirement, which creates the potential for consistent leadership in the coming years. Nonetheless, it is a priority to assure all staff remain progressive with new technology, continuing education, and development of leadership skills to assure a strong public health workforce.

Process

The WCHD will use the Council on Linkages Core Competencies and CDC capabilities to:

1. Annually assess staff competency relevant to job functions. The assessment used will be the electronic survey available through the Wisconsin Center for Public Health Education and Training and will be conducted in the first quarter of the year for all professional staff. Results will be analyzed by the agency supervisory staff and individual competency training plans will be developed with each employee. The assessment can be accessed electronically at:

<http://wicphet.org/content/workforce-assessment>

- Scroll down and click on **Assessment Link**.

- Complete the appropriate assessment:
 - Director/Health Officer – Tier 3
 - Management – Tier 2
 - Non-Supervisory Staff – Tier 1
 - Click [Download pdf](#).
 - The employee will email the pdf to their supervisor.
2. The training plan will identify the top two areas for improvement for each employee (of the General Public Health Domains) based on the results of the competency assessment and other performance indicators.
 3. Areas for improvement will be transferred to an Individual Staff Competency Development Training Plan to document the Plan of Action.
 4. The supervisor will assist the employee in identifying competency based training content and curricula available from recognized institutions. If none are found, the agency will create trainings internally.
 5. The employee will request to attend trainings through the supervisor, who will add the trainings to the Excel training log.
 6. The completed training plan will be reviewed during the employee’s annual performance review.
 7. The agency Director will compile agency wide competency assessment data that is non-identifiable, to report to the Health and Human Services Committee.

Supporting Professional Development

The WCHD supports the continued growth and development of its workforce to ensure a competent staff who can meet the needs of its ever changing work environment. Outlined below are opportunities for professional development at WCHD:

- Membership in professional organizations
- Conferences sponsored by professional organizations
- Continuing education related to maintaining professional licensure/certification
- Training opportunities for staff related to nationally recognized core competencies
- Educational financial assistance when funds are available
- Serving as a clinical site for employees pursuing higher education

Work/Life Balance

Wood County Health Department leadership strives to create a positive and supportive work environment that is conducive to work/life balance. This is accomplished by:

- Implementation of a flexible scheduling policy that allows employees to propose non-traditional work schedules.
- Implementation of a wellness policy that allows employees to combine breaks with lunch to create a longer period of uninterrupted time to engage in physical activity or other activities that promote overall health and wellness.
- Allowing casual Fridays throughout the year and extended periods of casual dress as incentives for a job well done.

- Allowing social events in the workplace, such as baby showers, potlucks, and other events for special occasions.
- Having a monthly luncheon to honor a specified team of employees for the work that they do.
- Supporting employee utilization of the Employee Assistance Program during work time to help employees through challenging and stressful times.
- Support for breastfeeding moms.
- Assessment of organizational climate.

Employee Recognition

Wood County Health Department has the Distinguished Public Health Employee Award that serves to encourage and recognize outstanding job performance. This award is provided to two employees annually based on nominations from their peers. Nominees are evaluated on the following areas:

- Displays a positive attitude towards the Wood County Health Department, its policies and procedures
- Any outstanding duties performed
- Team work and commitment to the department
- Attitude towards co-workers, colleagues, clients, and visitors
- Strives for improvement
- Extraordinary job performance
- Exemplary punctuality and attendance
- Shows initiative
- Appearance/grooming standard
- Fulfilling the mission of the Wood County Health Department—To maximize the quality of life across the lifespan by promoting health, protecting the environment, and preventing disease and injury.
- Contributions toward achieving the goals in the Health Department Strategic Plan

Those employees selected to receive the awards receive:

- A framed certificate.
- A gold star to be hung on door or wall.
- Their name added to the “Distinguished Public Health Employee Award” plaque.
- Individual photograph to be placed in plaque.
- A congratulatory letter from our Health Officer.
- Distinguished Public Health Employee Award article in the Public Health Press.
- A gift, to be determined by the Selection Committee and Supervisory Staff, will be given.
- One-half day (4 hours) off with pay to be used within two months of receiving the award.

In addition, employees are annually recognized for years of service (in 5-yr increments) every December. And on a monthly basis, employees are acknowledged for their support to the department as part of a luncheon in their honor.

Acknowledgement

Thank you to Polk County Health Department for generously sharing their workforce plan with us.

**Wood County Health Department
Individual Staff competency Development Training Plan**

Employee Name: _____ Date Plan Developed: _____

Key Dimensions of Practice	Check Top 3 Strengths	Check 2 Relevant Areas for Improvement
1. Analytic/Assessment		
2. Policy Development/ Program Planning		
3. Communication		
4. Cultural Competency		
5. Community Dimensions of Practice		
6. Public Health Sciences		
7. Financial Planning & Management		
8. Leadership & Systems Thinking		

<p>Plan of Action (What trainings, resources, or tools will you use/complete to strengthen your practice?) NOTE: Only identify Plan of Action for TOP 2 Areas for Improvement</p>
<p>Identify First Dimension to be Strengthened:</p> <p>Identify Plan of Action: (Example: Listen to webinar “xxxxx” on TRAIN by xx/xx/xxxx)</p>
<p>Identify Second Dimension to be Strengthened:</p> <p>Identify Plan of Action: (Example: Listen to webinar “xxxxx” on TRAIN by xx/xx/xxxx)</p>

<p>Please list other additional trainings you regularly attend or plan to attend this training year and what competency domain they link to (example: Communicable Disease Seminar - Domains 5 & 6)</p>		
Name of Meeting/Training and Date	Relevant Domain/s	Complete (check box below)
<p>Please list any boards or organizational committees that you participate in as a WCHD employee</p>		