

Action Plan

Public Health Workforce Development

This framework presents a unified approach for CDC and our public health partners on shared priorities and strategies that strengthen public health workforce development. Our goal is to ensure a strong and sustainable public health workforce.

Need for an Integrated Approach

A strong public health workforce is vital to protecting the public's health, but investments in its development continue to fall short of needs. Although efforts to promote priorities for workforce development for specific disciplines are important, promoting shared priorities with an integrated approach will amplify the impact on the public health workforce as a whole and benefit all public health disciplines.

A well-trained public health workforce is our first line of defense to prevent disease, protect health, and keep people safe.

Shared Priorities

Working with partners on shared priorities will build the capacity of the public health workforce to protect and promote the public's health over the long term.

- 1 Data for Decisions:** Collect needed data about workforce gaps and training needs to inform decisions about public health workforce development.
- 2 Crosscutting Competencies:** Promote essential crosscutting skills to complement public health workers' discipline-specific skills.
- 3 Quality Standards for Training:** Use accepted education and training standards to guide investments towards high quality products.
- 4 Training Decision Tools and Access:** Provide tools for public health workers to define their training needs and locate high-quality trainings that address these needs.
- 5 Funding Integration:** Integrate workforce development into funding requirements to build workforce capacity and improve program outcomes.

Taking Action

CDC and other public health partners implement a variety of strategies to address these common priorities. Our combined efforts contribute to a strong, well-trained and sustainable public health workforce.

CDC is working with partners on our shared priorities to develop the public health workforce.

Shared Priorities and Strategies for Public Health Workforce Development

1

Data for Decisions

Rationale: Workforce data are collected in different ways, limiting the ability to determine common needs across public health and leaving significant gaps in information necessary for decision-making.

• Strategies

- Monitor public health workforce composition
- Assess workforce gaps and needs
- Harmonize workforce data across data sets
- Assess training needs, outputs, outcomes, and impact

• Outcomes

- Workforce data needed for decisions are collected and analyzed in a harmonized way
- Workforce data are available and used routinely to inform decisions about development

2

Crosscutting Competencies

Rationale: Public health requires the workforce to have crosscutting skills and competencies beyond their discipline-specific education.

• Strategies

- Integrate crosscutting competencies into existing training programs
- Promote training plans to acquire crosscutting skills
- Design training to balance crosscutting and discipline-specific competencies

• Outcomes

- Training incorporates cross-cutting competencies
- Public health workers in any discipline have crosscutting skills and competencies in communication, policy, culture and diversity, financial planning, leadership, systems thinking, social justice, analytic methods, program planning, ethics, and population health.

3

Quality Standards for Training

Rationale: Various quality learning standards exist but are applied inconsistently, resulting in poor quality training that doesn't meet the needs of learners and inefficient use of extremely limited resources.

• Strategies

- Build consensus on quality learning standards
- Encourage organizational self-assessments facilitating for implementing quality standards
- Apply quality standards in all areas of training

• Outcomes

- Quality standards are consistently applied in training development
- Quality training products are developed that meet the needs of the learners

4

Training Decision Tools and Access

Rationale: Current training systems make it difficult for public health workers to find quality training that best meets their needs.

• Strategies

- Improve training rating systems
- Provide tools for workers to select and access quality training from existing systems
- Promote access to training across learning management systems

• Outcomes:

- Public health workers have access to quality training and tools to select optimal, relevant training
- Public health workers participate in quality training that best meets their needs

5

Funding Integration

Rationale: Investments in new programs often neglect to include plans for workforce development activities that are needed for success.

• Strategies

- Include workforce development in program planning
- Incorporate language into funding requirements that supports workforce development
- Make workforce development more visible in organizational budgets and initiatives
- Communicate consistently to educate stakeholders about workforce development priorities

• Outcomes

- Workforce development is supported as a component of all public health programs
- Planning for, and incorporating, workforce development improves program outcomes

For more information about the Action Plan for Public Health Workforce Development, visit

<https://www.cdc.gov/ophss/csels/dsepd/strategic-workforce-activities/ph-workforce/action-plan.html>.



**Centers for Disease
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