

Public Health in North Carolina

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METHODS: NORTH CAROLINA WORKFORCE ASSESSMENT TRAINING PLAN

CORE COMPETENCIES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS: TIERS 1 AND 2

THE NORTH CAROLINA
Institute for Public Health

BACKGROUND

In 2013, to target training needs for the governmental public health workforce, the Southeast Public Health Training Center of the North Carolina Institute for Public Health (NCIPH) at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health conducted a survey on workforce competencies across all local health departments (LHDs) in North Carolina. Full reports of the statewide and regional competency assessments are available on the NCIPH workforce assessment [website](#). The competency assessments were based on the national [Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals](#) developed by the [Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice](#).

In the 2013 statewide LHD workforce assessment, approximately 4,600 respondents were asked to classify themselves into one of three professional Tiers associated with the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals: Tier 1 (entry level), Tier 2 (supervisors/managers) and Tier 3 (senior managers/CEOs). Based on their self-identified Tier, respondents were asked to rate Tier-specific competencies within each of the eight domains of the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals:

1. Analytical/assessment
2. Policy development/program planning
3. Communication
4. Cultural competency
5. Community outreach
6. Public health science
7. Financial planning and management
8. Leadership and systems thinking

Respondents assessed their skill level for each competency (using a rating scale of 1 to 4 with 1 the lowest level) and also how relevant the stated competency was to their job. These measures were combined to identify competencies where respondents reported both a high relevance (relevance ≥ 3) and a skill gap (relevance $>$ current skill level). For each Tier, the report identified “top 10” competencies where LHD employees have a skill gap in areas that are important to performing their job duties, highlighting targets for additional training.

TRAINING GUIDE

In 2015, an internal and external scan of available public health trainings linked to the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals was conducted to populate a set of training resources for the “top 10” competency gaps identified across LHDs in North Carolina. For the guide, NCIPH used the following training sources:

- **North Carolina Institute for Public Health (NCIPH) Training Website:** <http://nciph.sph.unc.edu/tws>
Offering public health professionals access to competency-based trainings on a variety of topics.
- **TrainingFinder Real-time Affiliate Integrated Network (TRAIN):** <http://www.train.org>
A free service of the Public Health Foundation, TRAIN is comprised of the national www.train.org site and participating TRAIN affiliate sites.

Competency-linked trainings from TRAIN were reviewed and scored based on the following criteria:

- Target Audience – public health
- Format – Online self-study training
- Language – English
- Content – Relevance to competency gap
- Content – Timeliness (under 1 hour)
- Content – Currency (5 yrs.)
- Content – Transferability
- Technical – Audio quality
- Technical – Streaming/video quality
- Technical – Interactive features

Using this scoring method, approximately 5 trainings were selected for each domain for Tiers 1 and 2.

Limitations

As a result of the advanced level and training requirements for Tier 3 competencies, an insufficient number of online self-study trainings were identified. For trainings listed in the guide a review of learning objectives is needed to account for variability in mapping from the 2010 to 2014 Core Competencies.