

CDC's Public Health Workforce Development Initiative

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Scientific Education and Professional Development Program Office (SEPDPO) has established a Public Health Workforce Development Initiative to strengthen the public health workforce by influencing policy and improving quality, availability, and accessibility of training and workforce development.

Activities to Date

- In spring 2011, SEPDPO began a series of meetings with the public health community to discuss the recent changes in public health and their effect on the public health workforce. SEPDPO recognized the need to bring partners together given the serious, ongoing public health workforce crisis; complex challenges include:
 - Budget and funding cuts
 - Reduced staffing in many disciplines
 - Disproportionate emphasis on health care and health care professionals vs. public health during health reform discussions
- In May 2011, SEPDPO convened key (mostly public health practice) partner organizations to define CDC's role as a leader in public health workforce, in the context of the changed public health environment and its shifting workforce, and followed up with discussions at partner meetings (e.g., CSTE, NACCHO, and ASTHO).
- Simultaneously, through the summer and early fall 2011, SEPDPO convened leaders of CDC Centers, Institutes and Offices (CIOs) to discuss national, state, and local level workforce issues and concerns shared by the partner organizations, including the need for improved collaboration and coordination within CDC, and the need to improve training and expand public health career pathways.
- In late October 2011, SEPDPO held an in-person update with partners, and other communication has occurred via phone and email.

Recurring Themes and Key Messages

There is an ongoing transformation in public health, a "new" public health, which is and requires:

- community-focus and to be less state-based
- a prevention-basis that needs more monitoring and measuring
- dealing with voluminous information from multiple sources
- engaging more stakeholders
- navigating new territory given the impact (short- and long-term) of health reform
- developing stronger links to health care and health care delivery

Core functions for the "new" public health include an emphasis on convening and collaborating (not always "doing"), improving the monitoring of the community's health status through improved community engagement, shared indicators and use of technology, leveraging policy change, and clear communications (including through social networks).

There is need to modernize the public health workforce which is multi-generational and, in the future, will consist of more generalists and non-traditional staff.

- Training should emphasize contemporary skills such as informatics and use of technology, leadership, business processes, community organizing and mobilization, and marketing
- Cross-training and mentorship are critical because of high turn-over and increasing mobility
- Health professional curriculum should increase content on population-based health; medical schools should emphasize epidemiology and preventive medicine
- Career pathways should be expanded to attract new talent and varying skill sets
- Accreditation standards for public health agencies provide impetus for support of rigorous, standardized workforce development

Leadership is critical; public health as a discipline and a practice needs better and stronger leadership. Public health as a whole needs to move beyond linear thinking used to set public health policy and practice in the past to a more progressive, proactive, and multipronged approach.

CDC has a leadership role, not always to do the work but to ensure that it gets done. CDC needs to move beyond the traditional “lanes” of public health; within the context of a broader model of health. CDC should encourage the development of a broader community and engage that community.

- Traditionally, CDC has used states as the primary node for connecting and centering the work of public health. With the expansion of the definitions of public health community and public health provider, the single approach through states must be augmented.
- CDC must consider broadening partnerships to include business and corporate leaders, healthcare executives and other clinical partners, community leaders, among others.

There is need to stabilize funding for core workforce activities and develop policies that would address that funding in a way that would allow for the consistent, rigorous development of the public health workforce that meets appropriate standards.

Next Steps

Wrap up the series of meetings and conclude this phase of work:

- Convene academic partners – February 29 – March 1, 2012
- Meet with the National Network of Public Health Institutes (NNPHI) and constituents – May 2012
- Hold Public Health Workforce Summit – Summer 2012

Continue to lead and coordinate workforce efforts across CDC.

In collaboration with partners, develop a public health workforce strategy document and implementation plan to include stated action items with roles, responsibilities, and timeline.

Scientific Education and Professional Development Program Office

SEPDPO helps to ensure a prepared, diverse, sustainable public health workforce ...

SEPDPO Mission

The Scientific Education and Professional Development Program Office (SEPDPO) provides leadership in public health training and education, and manages innovative, evidence-based programs to prepare the health workforce to meet 21st century public health challenges.

SEPDPO in Action

- Develops a diverse workforce through CDC-sponsored fellowships, internships and student programs, where participants provide service while learning at CDC and in public health agencies across the country and abroad <http://www.cdc.gov/Fellowships/>
- Directs programs that engage students (middle and high school, undergraduate) and health professionals in considering public health as a career
- Provides training in core public health sciences, as well as providing curricula, consultation, and technical assistance
- Conducts workforce-related research and ensures the use of best practices for professional development programs
- Works with partners in academia, state and local health agencies, and professional organizations to address training and education needs

Major Activities in Office of the Director

- **Career Paths to Public Health (CPP)**
SEPDPO directs programs that engage students and promotes public health careers by supporting science, public health, and epidemiology education for students and educators.
- **CDC-Hubert Global Health Fellowship**
A 6- to 12-week overseas rotation in public health for third- and fourth-year medical or veterinary students; 10 students each year.
- **Epidemiology Elective Program**
A 6- to 8-week rotation in applied epidemiology and public health for fourth-year medical or veterinary students; 50 students each year.
- **The CDC Experience Applied Epidemiology Fellowship**
A 1-year fellowship in applied epidemiology and public health for third- and fourth-year medical students; 8 fellows each year.
- **Competency Development**
SEPDPO collaborates with partners to develop and refine rigorous competencies for various public health disciplines.
 - Applied Epidemiology Competencies
<http://www.cdc.gov/AppliedEpiCompetencies/>
 - Public Health Informatics Competencies
<http://www.cdc.gov/InformaticsCompetencies/>

Office of Surveillance, Epidemiology, and Laboratory Services

Scientific Education and Professional Development Program Office





SEPDPO Divisions

Division of Applied Sciences provides training in applied public health sciences through experiential learning and service internships and fellowships. Fellows provide technical assistance to state and local public health agencies in the areas of epidemiology, informatics, and economic analysis.

CDC Steven M. Teutsch Prevention Effectiveness Fellowship (PEF) is a 2-year postdoctoral fellowship for economists, health services researchers, decision scientists, operations researchers, and other quantitative policy analysts; 5–10 fellows each year.

Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) is a 2-year program of training and service in applied epidemiology, largely for persons holding doctoral degrees (MD, DVM, PhD, DDS, also RN/MPH, PharmD/MPH); 75–80 officers each year.

Preventive Medicine Residency and Fellowship (PMR/F) is a 1-year program focusing on leadership, management, policy development, and program evaluation, largely for EIS graduates (MD or DVM); 6–8 residents each year.

Public Health Informatics Fellowship Program (PHIFP) is a 2-year fellowship for individuals with a minimum of a master's degree (e.g., MD, PhD, MPH, MS) and with training and experience in a health-related field and information/computer science and technology; 6–8 fellows each year.

Division of Leadership and Practice provides experiential training in public health leadership and management, and provides educational development for the existing public health workforce.

CDC's Continuing Education Program maintains continuing education accreditation for disciplines, accredits offerings, and awards credits to health professionals. In 2010, this program accredited 450 CDC-sponsored offerings and awarded CE credit to various health professionals in over 78,000 course registrations. <http://www2a.cdc.gov/TCEOnline/>

CDC Learning Connection provides critical training and education programs and maximizes the use of technology for accessing quality public health learning products for health professionals. <http://www.cdc.gov/learning>

Emerging Leaders Program (ELP)—SEPDPO coordinates CDC participation in this Department of Health and Human Services' program, a 2-year fellowship for individuals with a minimum of a bachelor's degree (with qualifying work experience) or a graduate degree, with a focus in leadership and management; 5–10 fellows each year.

Presidential Management Fellows (PMF)—SEPDPO coordinates CDC participation in this Office of Personnel Management's program, a 2-year fellowship for individuals with a master's, law, or doctoral-level degree, with a focus on leadership and management of policy and programs; 10–15 fellows each year.

Public Health Prevention Service (PHPS) is a 3-year training and service program focusing on public health program management, for persons holding a master's degree and with work experience; 25 prevention specialists each year.

For more information on the Scientific Education and Professional Development Program Office, please visit www.cdc.gov/osels/scientific_edu/index.html