



Celebrating 20 Years

September 17, 2013

Overview

For more than 20 years, the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice (Council) has been facilitating academic/practice collaboration to advance the field of public health. Established in 1992 to implement the recommendations of the Public Health Faculty/Agency Forum, the Council has led efforts in the areas of public health linkages, education and training, practice, and research. Highlights of Council activities include:

- *Academic/Practice Linkages Awards*. Between 1993 and 2006, the Council presented annual Linkages Awards to recognize exemplary community-based collaborative activities between public health practice organizations and academic institutions and highlight the impact of these linkages between academia and practice. More than 200 examples of academic/practice linkages were collected.
- *Academic Health Department (AHD) Learning Community*. Launched in 2011, the [AHD Learning Community](#) brings together public health practitioners, educators, and researchers to engage in collaborative learning, knowledge sharing, and resource development in support of AHD partnerships. The Learning Community currently has more than 300 members.
- *Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals (Core Competencies)*. Originally developed in 2001 and revised in 2010, the [Core Competencies](#) provide a foundation for public health workforce development and are widely used by public health practice organizations, including state and local health departments, and academic institutions. The Core Competencies and tools that facilitate use of the Core Competencies are among the most accessed resources on the Public Health Foundation website.
- *Academic Accreditation Standards*. The Council influenced the revision of Council on Education for Public Health accreditation criteria for schools and programs of public health to incorporate practice and other linkage activities. Practice are now required of public health students being educated at the master's level.
- *Health Department Accreditation Standards*. The Core Competencies are referenced in the Public Health Accreditation Board's [Standards and Measures](#) for national public health department accreditation. In applying for accreditation, health departments are required to provide workforce development plans that include nationally adopted public health core competencies.
- *Healthy People 2010 and 2020*. The Council participated in the development of the [Public Health Infrastructure](#) topic area within Healthy People, aimed at ensuring public health organizations have the infrastructure to provide essential public health services effectively. The first three objectives within this topic area for Healthy People 2020 focus on the Core Competencies.
- *Public Health Training Impact*. From 2011-2012, the Council convened [experts from both within and outside of the public health field](#) to explore ways to [improve and measure the impact of public health training](#). A set of strategies and methods aimed at enhancing and evaluating training was developed, and a collection of supporting literature, tools, and examples compiled, to form the foundation for an online resource. In draft form, these resources have already proven useful to professionals in Public Health Training Centers, health departments, and other organizations.
- *Recruitment and Retention Strategies*. In 2005, a Council forum brought together representatives from government, education, and the medical professions to share their

experiences with alleviating worker shortages. Based on this input and a review of evidence gathered through a literature search, the Council developed a set of possible strategies for improving the recruitment and retention of workers and students.

- *Public Health Workers Survey*. In 2010, the Council launched a [survey](#) to collect information about characteristics of public health workers and influences on their decisions to become and remain part of the public health workforce. Data were collected from nearly 12,000 public health professionals.
- *Public Health Practice Guidelines*. In 1994, the Council developed an initiative funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to determine the desirability and feasibility of public health practice guidelines, creating a set of draft guidelines related to cardiovascular disease prevention and tuberculosis treatment completion. This effort led to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's development of the Task Force on Community Preventive Services and [The Guide to Community Preventive Services](#).
- *National Public Health Practice Research Agenda*. In 1998, the Council began developing a plan, followed by a framework, which served as a foundation for a national public health practice research agenda. This framework identified, articulated, and prioritized public health research needs.
- *Public Health Services and Systems Research (PHSSR)*. The Council has engaged in a variety of activities to promote PHSSR (formerly Public Health Systems Research, PHSR), including convening annual PHSR Leadership Forums at American Public Health Association annual meetings, helping to establish the PHSR Interest Group within AcademyHealth, disseminating research agendas, and creating a series of brief agendas to highlight high priority research questions. Council efforts have stimulated increased funding for and publication of PHSSR studies.
- *Public Health Workforce Development Inventory*. From 2012-2013, the Council collected and synthesized information from its member organizations about their public health workforce development activities. This inventory provides a strong foundation to help organizations communicate, plan, and implement workforce development activities.

These efforts have had a positive impact on the public health community and have positioned the Council well to continue making meaningful contributions into the future.