



Revisiting Strategic Directions, 2011-2015

September 18, 2013

Overview

In June 2011, the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice (Council) adopted its [Strategic Directions, 2011-2015](#) to guide its work through 2015. These directions were developed through a strategic planning process begun at the March 2011 Council meeting and updated a previous set of objectives and strategies dating from 2006. Review of the actions taken by the Council to address its *Strategic Directions* and consideration of whether adjustments are desirable based on changes in the public health field will help ensure the Council continues to have a meaningful impact within the public health community.

Status of Strategic Directions

Over the past two years, the Council has undertaken activities within each of the four objective areas outlined in its *Strategic Directions, 2011-2015*, as well as in relation to the administrative priorities identified during the strategic planning process.

Objective A: Foster collaborations between academia and practice within the field of public health and between public health and healthcare professionals and organizations

Strategies under this objective focus on developing collaboration between academia and practice within public health and between public health and healthcare. To support these efforts, the [Academic Health Department \(AHD\) Learning Community](#) has been sustained and expanded, growing from approximately 80 professionals in June 2011 to more than 300 members currently. The AHD Learning Community has held meetings and encouraged discussion around building partnerships, created resources to support the development of AHDs, offered assistance to professionals interested in learning more about and establishing AHD partnerships, and conducted initial outreach to engage the primary care community.

Objective B: Enhance public health practice-oriented education and training

Within this objective area, activities have aimed to develop and support the use of competencies relevant to public health practice, encourage ongoing training of public health professionals, and increase the impact of training. With respect to competencies, the Council recently began the process of reviewing the [Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals](#) (Core Competencies) to determine whether revisions are desirable to keep pace with changes in the field of public health. In addition, the [Core Competencies Workgroup](#) continued to collect and develop [tools and resources](#) to assist public health professionals and organizations in integrating the Core Competencies into workforce development activities.

To encourage ongoing training and increase impact, the Council launched the [Public Health Training Impact](#) initiative focused on improving and measuring the impact of training. The Council's [Training Impact Task Force](#) developed a set of strategies and methods related to training and evaluation, and compiled a collection of supporting literature, tools, and other resources. An online resource to share this information with the public health community will be developed and made available by early 2014.

Objective C: Support the development of a highly skilled and motivated public health workforce with the competence and tools to succeed

Strategies to support workforce development focus on developing a comprehensive plan for ensuring an effective workforce and providing access to and assistance with tools to enhance competence. The Council has contributed to efforts to develop a national strategic and operational plan for public health workforce development through its Public Health Workforce Development Inventory initiative. Information collected through this inventory can provide a foundation for planning workforce development activities. In addition, Council members and staff have participated in the Public Health Accreditation Board's Public Health Workforce Think Tank, noting the continued importance of integrating the Core Competencies into workforce development needs assessments and gap analyses, job descriptions, training programs, and other workforce development planning efforts. The continued development of tools to facilitate use of the Core Competencies and the provision of assistance in this area helps to enhance workforce competence.

Objective D: Promote and strengthen collaborative research to build the evidence base for public health practice and its continuous improvement

Activities focused on collaborative research have received the least Council attention over the past two years, with efforts in this area limited to supporting refinement of the public health services and systems research (PHSSR) agenda by providing input on the [most recent agenda](#) developed through the National Coordinating Center for PHSSR.

Administrative Priorities

During strategic planning, [administrative priorities](#) were identified in the areas of communication, technology, governance, funding, staffing, and membership. While not focus areas in terms of the direction of Council activities, addressing these administrative areas helps to ensure effective operations of the Council. Communication of Council information has been sustained through maintenance of the [Council website](#), distribution of the [Council on Linkages Update](#), development of [news articles](#) and [blog posts](#) for the Public Health Foundation (PHF) website, and participation in national conferences and meetings, and new audiences have been reached due to the growth of the *Council on Linkages Update* to nearly 600 subscribers and the addition of outreach through social media, specifically Twitter and Facebook. Redesign of pages on the Council website has been ongoing to ensure effective use of this key resource. Regular elections have been held for the Council leadership position of Chair, and funding has been obtained to continue Council activities and provide for staffing through PHF. Finally, to better support and engage membership, Council leadership and staff met with representatives of all Council member organizations to discuss the Council and its directions, and information about participating in Council activities has been incorporated into orientation for new Council members.

Next Steps

The Council's *Strategic Directions* have guided the Council's efforts since adoption in 2011 and will continue to do so for the next two years. Revisiting the *Strategic Directions* at this time provides an opportunity for the Council to make revisions and adjust priorities, if desirable, to meet ongoing and emerging needs that can be addressed through the Council's work. Council members also will have an opportunity to begin discussing ways to determine, measure, and document the impact of Council initiatives. Understanding and documenting the Council's impact can help guide future activities and contribute to continuous quality improvement.