Competencies for Performance Improvement Professionals in Public Health:
Alignment with the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals

June 1, 2018

The Competencies for Performance Improvement Professionals in Public Health (PI Competencies) are a set of skills desirable for performance improvement (PI) professionals working in public health. Based on the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals (Core Competencies) and the Core Competencies for Performance Improvement Managers, these competencies were developed to offer additional guidance in PI for public health professionals with responsibilities related to developing or implementing plans and activities in the areas of quality improvement, performance management, workforce development, accreditation readiness, or community health assessment and improvement planning.

The PI Competencies are an additional set of competencies for public health professionals that align with the Core Competencies, a set of foundational skills for all professionals working in public health, and PI-related skills that are addressed in the Core Competencies are not repeated in the PI Competencies. This resource presents the PI Competencies along with a list of competencies from the Core Competencies that are especially relevant for PI professionals.

To facilitate use with the Core Competencies, the PI Competencies are organized using the same domain structure and names used in the Core Competencies. Please note that there are not specific PI Competencies in every Core Competencies domain. The PI Competencies expand on competencies addressed in the Core Competencies within five of the Core Competencies domains:

- Analytical/Assessment Skills
- Policy Development/Program Planning Skills
- Community Dimensions of Practice Skills
- Financial Planning and Management Skills
- Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills

The PI Competencies are designed to be used along with the Core Competencies to help guide development of job descriptions, performance objectives, training, workforce development plans, academic curricula, tools, and other resources to support the activities and growth of PI professionals. Together, the PI Competencies and the Core Competencies describe areas of skills and knowledge beneficial to PI professionals. These competencies do not describe specific tasks or activities performed by these professionals, as those are determined by places of employment. As the field of PI encompasses a number of distinct jobs or positions within public health organizations, individual competencies within the PI Competencies and the Core Competencies may be more or less relevant for individual PI professionals based on

their specific job responsibilities. Individual PI professionals are encouraged to focus on developing competencies in the areas most relevant to their jobs.

For More Information
For more information or assistance using this resource, please contact Kathleen Amos at kamos@phf.org or competencies@phf.org.

Competencies for Performance Improvement Professionals in Public Health	Performance Improvement-Related Competencies from the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals
Domain 1: Analytical/Assessment Skills	
• Demonstrates how data and information are used to improve individual, program, and organizational performance (e.g., selection and use of valid and reliable quantitative and qualitative data, data-driven decision making, data management, performance measurement) • Uses evidence (e.g., literature, best practices, model/promising/emerging practices) in determining how to evaluate and improve performance	• Describes factors affecting the health of a community (e.g., equity, income, education, environment) • Determines quantitative and qualitative data and information needed for assessing the health of a community • Applies ethical principles in accessing, collecting, analyzing, using, maintaining, and disseminating data and information • Uses information technology in accessing, collecting, analyzing, using, maintaining, and disseminating data and information • Analyzes the validity and reliability of data • Resolves gaps in data • Collects valid and reliable quantitative and qualitative data • Analyzes quantitative and qualitative data • Interprets quantitative and qualitative data • Assesses community health status and factors influencing health in a community (e.g., quality, availability, accessibility, and use of health services; access to affordable housing and food) • Develops community health assessments using information about health status, factors influencing health, and assets and resources • Makes evidence-based decisions (e.g., using recommendations from The Guide to Community Preventive Services, the Cochrane Collaboration) • Advocates for the use of evidence in decision making that affects the health of a community (e.g., helping policy makers understand community health needs, demonstrating the impact of programs)

Competencies for Performance Improvement Professionals in Public Health	Performance Improvement-Related Competencies from the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals
Domain 2: Policy Development/Program Planning Skills	
- Describes how quality improvement, performance management, and workforce development are used to improve individual, program, and organizational performance - Coordinates development and implementation of an organization-wide quality improvement plan - Coordinates development and implementation of an organization-wide workforce development plan - Applies quality improvement, performance management, and workforce development frameworks, methods, tools, and models to improve individual, program, and organizational performance - Evaluates the effectiveness and quality of the organization's quality improvement, performance management, and workforce development plans and practices - Integrates quality improvement methods into organizational policies, plans, programs, and services - Aligns quality improvement plan and performance management system with other organization and community plans (e.g., strategic plan, community health improvement plan, workforce development plan, communication plan, all hazards emergency operations plan)	- Ensures state/Tribal/community health improvement planning uses community health assessments and other information related to the health of a community (e.g., current data and trends; proposed federal, state, and local legislation; commitments from organizations to take action) - Contributes to development of organizational strategic plan (e.g., includes measurable objectives and targets; incorporates community health improvement plan, workforce development plan, quality improvement plan, and other plans) - Implements organizational strategic plan (e.g., tracks measures, suggests improvements to reach targets) - Explains the importance of evaluations for improving policies, programs, and services - Implements strategies for continuous quality improvement - Uses public health informatics in developing, implementing, evaluating, and improving policies, programs, and services (e.g., integrated data systems, electronic reporting, knowledge management systems, geographic information systems)

Competencies for Performance Improvement Professionals in Public Health	Performance Improvement-Related Competencies from the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals
Domain 3: Communication Skills	
	• Communicates in writing and orally with linguistic and cultural proficiency • Solicits input from individuals and organizations for improving the health of a community • Selects approaches for disseminating public health data and information (e.g., social media, newspapers, newsletters, journals, town hall meetings, libraries, neighborhood gatherings) • Conveys data and information to professionals and the public using a variety of approaches (e.g., reports, presentations, email, letters, press releases) • Facilitates communication among individuals, groups, and organizations

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Domain 4: Cultural Competency Skills	
	• Describes the concept of diversity as it applies to individuals and populations (e.g., language, culture, values, socioeconomic status, geography, education, race, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, profession, religious affiliation, mental and physical abilities, historical experiences) • Describes the diversity of individuals and populations in a community • Recognizes the ways diversity influences policies, programs, services, and the health of a community • Supports diverse perspectives in developing, implementing, and evaluating policies, programs, and services that affect the health of a community • Ensures the diversity of individuals and populations is addressed in policies, programs, and services that affect the health of a community • Assesses the effects of policies, programs, and services on different populations in a community • Describes the value of a diverse public health workforce • Advocates for a diverse public health workforce

Competencies for Performance Improvement Professionals in Public Health	Performance Improvement-Related Competencies from the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals
Domain 5: Community Dimensions of Practice Skills	
• Describes how quality improvement, performance management, and workforce development can be used to achieve equity within the organization and health equity within the community • Uses input of and feedback from internal and external customers in developing, implementing, and evaluating quality improvement, performance management, and workforce development activities • Collaborates with others internal and external to the organization (e.g., relationships with HR office, partnerships with health systems) in developing, implementing, and evaluating activities to improve individual, program, and organizational performance	• Facilitates collaborations among partners to improve health in a community (e.g., coalition building) • Engages community members to improve health in a community (e.g., input in developing and implementing community health assessments and improvement plans, feedback about programs and services)
Domain 6: Public Health Sciences Skills	
	• Applies public health sciences (e.g., biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental health sciences, health services administration, social and behavioral sciences, and public health informatics) in the delivery of the 10 Essential Public Health Services • Retrieves evidence (e.g., research findings, case reports, community surveys) from print and electronic sources (e.g., PubMed, *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*, *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, *The World Health Report*) to support decision making • Determines limitations of evidence (e.g., validity, reliability, sample size, bias, generalizability) • Uses evidence in developing, implementing, evaluating, and improving policies, programs, and services • Develops partnerships that will increase use of evidence in public health practice (e.g., between practice and academic organizations, with health sciences libraries)

Competencies for Performance Improvement Professionals in Public Health	Performance Improvement-Related Competencies from the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals
Domain 7: Financial Planning and Management Skills	
• Demonstrates interpersonal skills that support activities to improve individual, program, and organizational performance (e.g., encouragement, optimism, compassion, empathy, resilience, recognition of the value of performance improvement) • Builds teams from all levels of the organization to improve program and organizational performance • Coordinates development and implementation of an organization-wide performance management system • Uses evaluation results and the performance management system to improve individual, program, and organizational performance	• Justifies programs for inclusion in organizational budgets • Develops program budgets • Defends program budgets • Uses financial analysis methods in making decisions about policies, programs, and services (e.g., cost-effectiveness, cost-benefit, cost-utility analysis, return on investment) • Manages programs within current and projected budgets and staffing levels (e.g., sustaining a program when funding and staff are cut, recruiting and retaining staff) • Motivates personnel for the purpose of achieving program and organizational goals (e.g., participating in teams, encouraging sharing of ideas, respecting different points of view) • Develops performance management systems (e.g., using informatics skills to determine minimum technology requirements and guide system design, identifying and incorporating performance standards and measures, training staff to use system)

Competencies for Performance Improvement Professionals in Public Health	Performance Improvement-Related Competencies from the Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals
Domain 8: Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills	
- Develops skills of others within the organization in quality improvement and performance management - Ensures continuous improvement of quality improvement policies and programs, the performance management system, and workforce development policies and programs - Advocates for the use of quality improvement, performance management, and workforce development methods, tools, and practices throughout the organization (e.g., creates organization buy-in, overcomes resistance, communicates value, develops a culture of quality, supports a culture of learning, encourages innovation)	- Incorporates ethical standards of practice (e.g., Public Health Code of Ethics) into all interactions with individuals, organizations, and communities - Describes public health as part of a larger inter-related system of organizations that influence the health of populations at local, national, and global levels - Explains the ways public health, health care, and other organizations can work together or individually to impact the health of a community - Analyzes internal and external facilitators and barriers that may affect the delivery of the 10 Essential Public Health Services (e.g., using root cause analysis and other quality improvement methods and tools, problem solving) - Provides opportunities for professional development for individuals and teams (e.g., training, mentoring, peer advising, coaching) - Ensures use of professional development opportunities by individuals and teams - Modifies organizational practices in consideration of changes (e.g., social, political, economic, scientific) - Contributes to continuous improvement of individual, program, and organizational performance (e.g., mentoring, monitoring progress, adjusting programs to achieve better results)