

A Dwindling Public Health Workforce: *Are We Prepared to Act?*

133rd Annual American Public
Health Association Meeting
Session# 3083.0

Philadelphia, PA
Monday, December 12, 2005



Introductions

- Chris Day, MPH – Public Health Foundation
- Jean Moore, MSN – SUNY Albany School of Public Health, Center for Health Workforce Studies
- Jessica Kronstadt – Public Health Foundation

The Public Health Foundation: Who We Are

- Nonprofit, non-membership organization established in 1970
- Governed by 11 member Board of Directors
- Support national, federal, state, and local public health agency efforts including schools and programs in public health
- Focus on public health infrastructure
- Three core areas: workforce development, applied research, technical assistance



Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice

- **The overall objective of the Council is to improve the relevance of public health education to practice**
- **Grew out of the Public Health Faculty / Agency Forum**

17 NATIONAL MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

American College of Preventive Medicine
American Public Health Association
Association of Schools of Public Health
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials
Association of Teachers of Preventive Medicine
Association of University Programs in Health Administration
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Community-Campus Partnerships for Health
Council of Accredited Master of Public Health Programs
Health Resources and Services Administration
National Association of County and City Health Officials
National Association of Local Boards of Health
National Environmental Health Association
National Library of Medicine
National Network of Public Health Institutes
QUAD Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations
Society for Public Health Education



***Funded by HRSA and
Staffed by PHF***

Our task

- Frame some of the issues
- Engage in a discussion about what you think the answers are
- Highlight evidence and resources available
- Q/A

The Problem



Strong public health workforce = training + adequate numbers

"The extent to which we are able to address the complex challenges of the 21st century and make additional improvements in the health of the public depends, in large part, upon the quality and preparedness of our public health workforce..."

--Who Will Keep the Public Healthy? Educating Public Health Professionals for the 21st Century, Institute of Medicine, November 2002

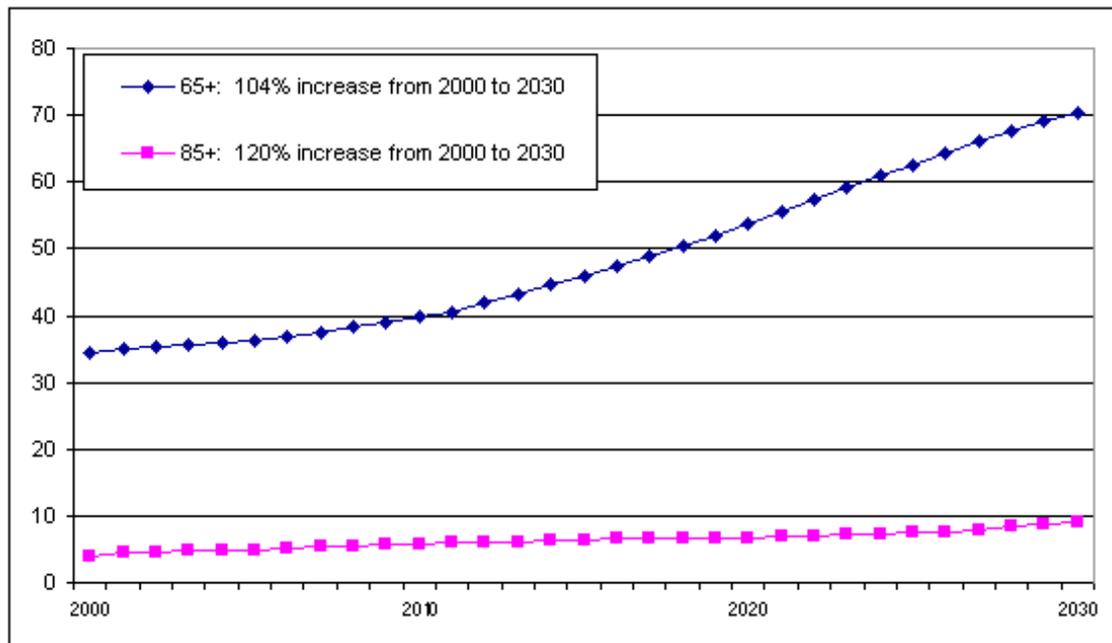
Strong public health workforce = training + adequate numbers

“[W]ill we have adequate *numbers* of public health personnel to train and educate to respond to these issues in the future? ... There is compelling evidence that serious depletion of critical human elements of the public health workforce will begin occurring in the next few years.”

--Charles S. Mahan, MD, and Jean M. Malecki, MD, MPH *Florida Public Health Review*, 2004; 1:4-7

70 Million Baby Boomers

Figure 8: Projected Number of Americans Over 65 and Over 85,
in millions, 2000–2030

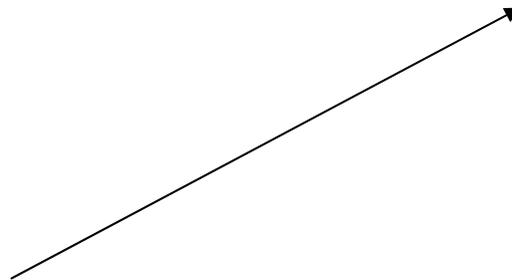


Our
population
IS aging

Aging Workforce



Up to 45% of the Governmental public health workforce will be eligible to retire by 2006



Is it time to re-tool?

Or retire?

Scary Statistics

- 46.6 = Average age of state PH employee**
- 45 = % of PH workforce some states might lose by 2006 due to retirement and competition with other jobs**
- 26 = % of local public health agencies reported a need for more PH nurses**
- 158 = Estimated # of PH workers for every 100,000 Americans in 2000; compared to 220 for 100,000 in 1980**

Some Sources of the Problem

- Budget constraints - single biggest barrier
- Shortages of qualified candidates
- Non-competitive salaries
- Lengthy processing time for new hires

From a study on public health departments in six states prepared for HRSA, *Public Health Workforce Study*, January 2005.

Some Sources of the Problem (cont.)

- Rural agencies have tougher time recruiting more educated, skilled PH workers
- Agencies reported need for training in core PH concepts for staff without formal PH training
- Lack of access to advanced education a problem, particularly in rural areas

We want to hear from YOU

- Are there issues we have not considered?
- What do you think the solutions are?
- Do you have any examples of what works?



SOLUTIONS



Academic/Practice Partnerships

- **2005 Linkages Awards -**
www.phf.org/Link/Fall2005.pdf
www.phf.org/Link/database-of-linkages.htm
- **Strengthen ties between education and practice**
 - Include practitioners on curriculum advisory committees
 - Recruit more PH faculty with governmental PH experience
 - Provide training to preceptors of PH student field work
 - Develop on-line training program on 'core public health' concepts for existing workforce
 - Increase support for applied PH research that links PH faculty with governmental PH practice

Improve Working Conditions

- Streamline hiring process
- Conduct workforce surveys
- Strengthen induction programs
- Improve management of employees
- Focus on the mission

Awareness About Public Health

- Kids Into Health Careers
- Websites:
 - www.whatispublichealth.org
 - www.explorehealthcareers.org
- Mentoring



Getting Started

- Health Career Overviews
- Preparation Timeline
- How to Pay for School
- Is a Health Career Right for You?
- Achievement Tips

Explore Health Careers

- Find a Career
- Find an Enrichment Program
- Find Funding

Diversity Matters

- A Day in the Life
- Equality in Healthcare
- Institutional Profiles

Home > Home

ExploreHealthCareers.org

This award-winning, totally *free* Website is for anyone who is planning (or even just imagining) a health career. The health field includes a wide range of professions that can take you in more directions than you may realize. Knowledge is power. When you know what your options are, you can make better choices. Check out this Website for pertinent, reliable information that can help you find and pursue your own health career.

Welcome to
ExploreHealthCareers.org



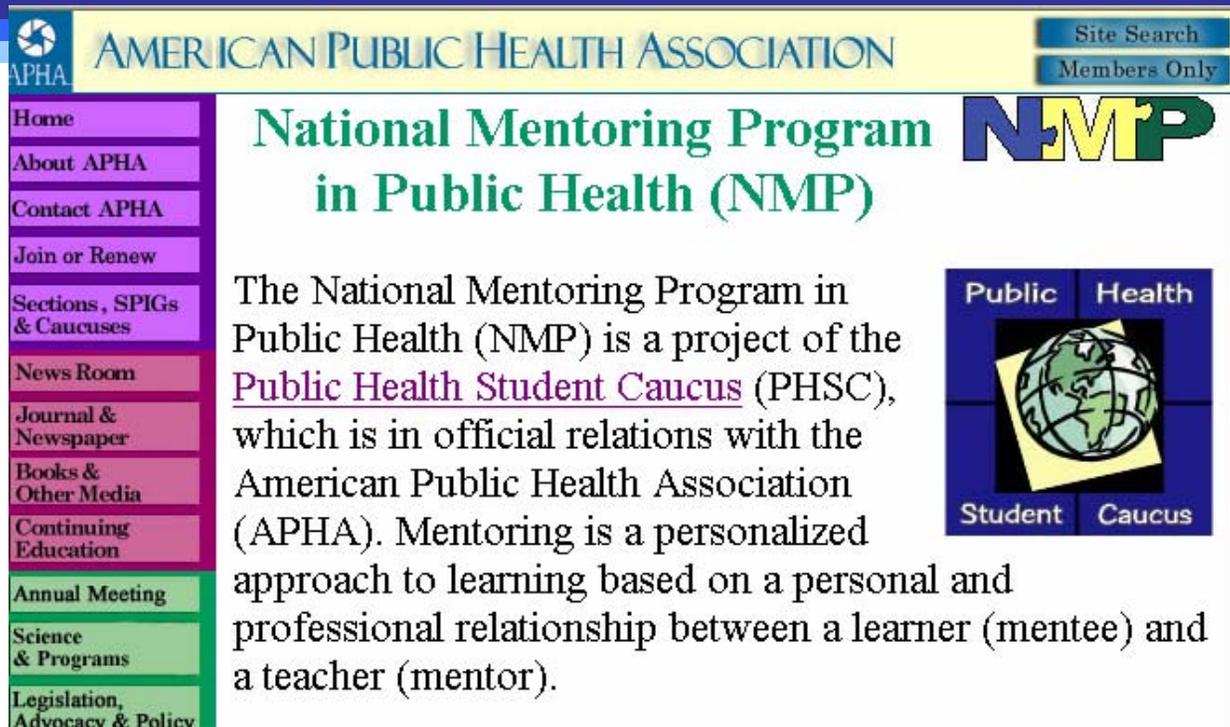
Explore Health Careers

Find out more about specific

Getting Started in Health Careers

Diversity in Health Careers

National Mentoring Program



The screenshot shows the APHA website header with the logo and navigation links. The main content area features the title "National Mentoring Program in Public Health (NMP)" and a description of the program. A sidebar on the left lists various website sections. A logo for the Public Health Student Caucus (PHSC) is also visible.

APHA AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Site Search
Members Only

Home
About APHA
Contact APHA
Join or Renew
Sections, SPIGs & Caucuses
News Room
Journal & Newspaper
Books & Other Media
Continuing Education
Annual Meeting
Science & Programs
Legislation, Advocacy & Policy

National Mentoring Program in Public Health (NMP)

The National Mentoring Program in Public Health (NMP) is a project of the Public Health Student Caucus (PHSC), which is in official relations with the American Public Health Association (APHA). Mentoring is a personalized approach to learning based on a personal and professional relationship between a learner (mentee) and a teacher (mentor).

Public Health
Student Caucus

- <http://www.apha.org/ppp/mentoring/>
- <http://www.phsc.org/NMP.htm>

Ideas from the Council on Linkages

- Strive to make the workforce more diverse
- Build career ladders for those currently working in PH and in other fields
- Advocate greater funds to support PH education and to make salaries more competitive

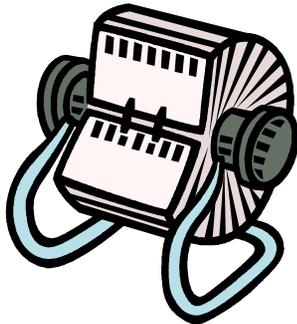
More Ideas

- Examine the perception of students and potential employees of working in governmental PH
- Engage retired PH workers in teaching and advising roles
- Assess workforce needs in your community
- Award service obligated scholarships in PH

Resources

www.phf.org/Link/tools.htm#Recruitment

- Strategies to Address Public Health Worker Shortages
- Presentations from experts from other fields
- Research questions



Contact Us:

Chris Day – cday@phf.org

Jean Moore – jmm04@health.state.ny.us

Jessica Kronstadt – jkronstadt@phf.org