

# FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS FOR PUBLIC HEALTH WORKERS: A CALL TO ACTION

**Brian C. Castrucci**  
Chief Program & Strategy Officer

**Jim Pearsol**  
Workforce Consultant



## de Beaumont Foundation

- Strong governmental public health system
- Fund
  - Training
  - Infrastructure
  - Data & Information
- National, domestic funder
- Bethesda, Maryland



**“The workforce is the most essential element in our collective efforts in assuring the public’s health.”**

-Woltring & Novick



## Challenges to Our Workforce

- Retirements
- Shrinking workforce
- Competition amongst ourselves for limited funds
- Focus on our silos
- Categorical funding streams



### WORKFORCE TURNOVER

**48**

AVERAGE AGE OF STATE PUBLIC HEALTH WORKER

**38%**

plan to leave governmental public health before 2020

**18%**

of workers intend to leave their job within 1 year

**Who's Planning to Leave?**

- Those aged 25 to 40 years
- Racial/ethnic minorities
- Those earning less than \$35,000/yr
- Those with less than 10 years of experience in public health

**Expected Turnover by Region**

The ratio of public health workforce to US population has increased drastically.

**Number of Public Health Workers (per 100,000 People)**

12% of positions at state health agencies are vacant

**24\***

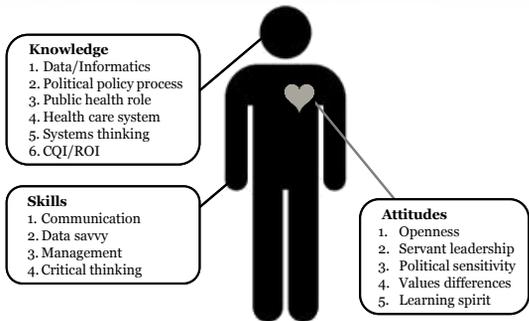
Only 24% of these vacancies are being recruited for



**Are We Greater Than the Sum Of Our Parts?**



## Public Health Worker Attributes



## Top Training Needs

1. Systems thinking
2. Change management
3. Communicating persuasively
4. Information and analytics
5. Problem solving
6. Diversity and inclusion
7. Resource management
8. Policy engagement

## Top Training Needs

- Consortium model to monitor training needs and identify needed trainings
  - Bring stakeholders together
  - Bottom up collaboration
  - Agreement on priorities
- Centralized quality training that maps to position types

# National Consortium for Public Health Workforce Development

## Goal

- By 2020, equip the public health workforce with the cross-cutting skills that assure successful application of public health solutions.

## National Consortium for Public Health Workforce Development



ASTHO Peer Networks: Senior Deputies, Environmental Health Directors, Preparedness Directors, CFOs, Accreditation Coordinators, Primary Care Directors, Informatics Directors, State Legislative Liaisons/Legal Counsel, HR Directors

## Consortium Process

- Six months dialogue, engagement, drafting
  - Consortium members & small workgroup
- Two day convening of practitioner Consortium members
  - Validate and refine
- Preliminary, unofficial recommendations
  - Seeking your input prior to finalization

## Target Audiences

- Federal, state, and local public health workforce
- Tribal public health workforce
- Territorial public health workforce
- ...and their agencies, affiliate associations, academia, and federal program sponsors

## Potential Impacts

- Improves short term public health impacts linked to longer term health gains
- Supports focus on effectiveness and efficiency
- Assures transferable skills for a mobile, changing workforce
- Builds employee flexibility, diversity, inclusion and retention through cross cutting skills development

## Practice-driven Priorities

- Consensus-building process (NCPHWD)
- Data-driven (PHWINS)
- Supports and enables basic science of public health (preparedness blend?)
- Addresses both individual skills development and organizational responsiveness (preparedness model?)
- Addresses changing U.S. demographics

## Alignment with National Initiatives

- Council on Linkages Core Competencies
- CDC and HRSA workforce development priorities (including preparedness?)
- Public Health Accreditation Board standards and measures
- IOM-based Foundational Capabilities
- ASPPH Framing the Future recommendations
- PH role in health transformation

## Priorities for Action

- Parity
- Funder Re-Investment
- Health Systems Impact
- New, Specific Training
- Coordination

## Top Training Needs

1. Systems thinking
2. Change management
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## Preliminary Recommendations for State and Local Public Health

1. Include key cross-cutting skills/core competencies in all relevant job descriptions.
2. Include knowledge, skills, abilities in cross-cutting areas as preference in hiring.
3. Establish rewards systems and incentives for currently employed staff to improve cross-cutting skills.
4. Include key skills in performance standards and evaluation metrics for all relevant employees.

## Preliminary Recommendations for State and Local Public Health

5. Establish policies and practices to ensure that employees are provided with time and other support to take advantage of available training.
6. Recognize that cross-cutting skills development is needed to prepare staff for PHAB accreditation and is a by-product of successful accreditation.
7. Establish workforce policies and practices that encourage training and development, along with strategies to promote retention of key staff, and succession/transition planning to ensure continuity.

## Preliminary Recommendations for Funders

1. Support the development and demonstration of cross-cutting workforce development skills by highlighting and leveraging expectations within national standards (e.g. PHAB), programmatic requirements and grant requirements.
2. CDC should maintain and continue to build cross-cutting skills training into programs like the Public Health Associate Program, EIS, CDC TRAIN, and others in order to reinforce the importance of these skills and to build future leadership in public health.
3. In all Federal grants, training for workforce development in key cross-cutting skills should be an allowable expense.

## Preliminary Recommendations for Funders

4. Funders (Federal, Foundations) should continue to support the development of high quality training, including cross-cutting skills development, and identify programs and locations where such training is still needed.
5. HRSA, CDC and partners should develop a joint approach for coordinating Federal support for cross-cutting training.
6. Steps should be taken to enable public health training centers to support cross-cutting training priorities of governmental public health.

## Preliminary Recommendations for Employees

1. Public health workers should demand that their agencies support and provide the cross-cutting skills training and experience needed to be successful in public health.
2. Membership organizations should advance the expectation that members of discipline-based organizations should develop skills in these cross-cutting areas, and participate in efforts to advance such training among peers.
3. Agencies should ensure that cross-cutting skills are reflected in needs assessments of public health workforce development skills across disciplines and job positions.

## Preliminary Recommendations for Employees

4. State, Territorial, Tribal and Local public health agency grant applicants should address the need for cross-cutting skills training in their Federal grant applications; for example, advocate for the inclusion of cross-cutting training support and technical assistance as components of grant applications.
5. Individual employees should encourage peer learning and cross-training to develop one's own cross-cutting skills and those of others.

## Preliminary Recommendations for Learning Development and Availability

1. Develop and align academic curricular offerings within academic public health programs for PH worker preparation in the cross-cutting skills topics.
2. Develop a focus on cross-cutting skills development in training-in-place activities and programs (e.g., academic and public health agency partnerships) for existing health department employees, particularly those individuals moving up the supervisory ladder.
3. Training providers should follow quality learning standards for training that are designed to engage adult learners.
4. Systems should be put in place to make it easier for agencies and individuals to identify high quality training (both content and method of delivery).

## Preliminary Recommendations for Learning Development and Availability

5. Public health associations (e.g., ASTHO, NACCHO, APHA, ASTHO affiliates, etc.) should actively promote specific cross-cutting skills development training for their members.
6. Build continuous education options in the workplace (about the work) through mentoring, just-in-time training, web-based training, etc.
7. Leadership training programs provided by Federal agencies and professional associations should explicitly address cross-cutting skills as a key component of effective leadership.

## Next Steps

- Solicit your feedback and engagement
- Release report
- Outreach to partners and implementers
- Inform Foundation planning and strategy

## Discussion

- Does this resonate with you and your peers?
- Knowing we want to remain focused on cross-cutting skills, what's missing?
- How do we address learner motivation to develop the cross-cutting skills?
- Will this make things better than what you're doing now?

## For more information:

Brian Castrucci  
 Chief Program and Strategy Officer  
 de Beaumont Foundation  
[castrucci@debeaumont.org](mailto:castrucci@debeaumont.org)  
 or  
 Jim Pearsol  
 Workforce Consultant  
 de Beaumont Foundation  
[jpearsol@outlook.com](mailto:jpearsol@outlook.com)