The Future of Public Health Nursing: An Update on Standards and Credentialing

September 2011

Featured Speaker

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  University at Albany School of Public Health
  Center for Public Health Continuing Education

Conflict of Interest Statement

The speakers and their viewpoints represent no conflicts of interest.

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• University at Albany School of Public Health
• New York State Department of Health
• New York State Association of County Health Officials
• The New York State Nurses Association

Learning Objectives

At the end of this broadcast, the learner will be able to:

• Associate public health performance standards with the core competencies for public health and public health nurses.
• Discuss various ways PHNs take accountability for their practice.
• Identify emerging issues for public health nursing practice.

Accountability

• Education
• Licensure
• Agency-level accountability
  – Use Scope and Standards, Core Competencies
  – Performance Appraisal System
  – Agency Accreditation
• Individual efforts
  – Literature, Conferences, Professional Organizations
  – Credentialing
• Public – Boards of Health

Public Health Nursing

• History – scope, education, complexity of public health nursing has changed over time
• Changing times, changing expectations – same core mission of health promotion

Services, Standards, Competencies – All Aligned

• Performance Standards – an expected level of performance
• Essential Services of Public Health – what public health does
• Core Competencies – a set of desirable skills
• Credentials – a verification of achievement
Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals

- Developed by the Council on Linkages
- Set of skills desirable for the broad practice of public health
- [http://www.phf.org/resources/tools/Pages/Core_Public_Health_Competencies.aspx](http://www.phf.org/resources/tools/Pages/Core_Public_Health_Competencies.aspx)

Core Competencies for Public Health Nurses

- Developed by the Quad Council of Public Health Nursing Organizations
- Follow Council on Linkages format
- Also 3 tiers/8 domains
- [http://www.astdn.org/publication_quad_council_phn_competencies.htm](http://www.astdn.org/publication_quad_council_phn_competencies.htm)

Domains

1. Analytic and Assessment Skills
2. Policy Development/Program Planning Skills
3. Communications Skills
4. Cultural Competency Skills
5. Community Dimensions of Practice
6. Public Health Sciences Skills
7. Financial Planning and Management Skills
8. Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills

Tiers

1. Public Health Nurses carrying out day-to-day functions in local and state health departments, prepared at BSN level
2. PHNs with program management and/or supervisory responsibilities, prepared at Masters level or 10 years of experience, certification
3. Senior/management/leadership level

Scope and Standards of Practice for Public Health Nurses

- American Nurses Association in collaboration with the Quad Council
- Define, guide and direct public health nursing practice in all settings
- Expected level of performance

Scope and Standards of Practice for Public Health Nurses

- 6 Standards of Practice
- Additional Standards of Professional Performance
- Currently being updated
## Practice Standards

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<td>Assessment</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Population Diagnosis and Priorities</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Outcomes Identification</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Planning</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Implementation</td>
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<td>5a. Coordination, b. Health Education and Promotion, c. Consultation, D. Regulatory Activities</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
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## Professional Performance

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<td>Quality of Practice</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Education</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Professional Practice Evaluation</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Collegiality and Professional Relationships</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Collaboration</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Ethics</td>
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<td>Resource Utilization</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
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## Scope of Practice

- Nurses practice to their level of education
- Scope expands with new advances
- Research incorporated in practice enhances the scope of practice

## Standards for Education

- Basic PHN skills taught at BSN level
- Some states require BSN for practice as PHN
- Education and licensure standards vary by state
- National Council of State Boards of Nursing
  [https://www.ncsbn.org/index.htm](https://www.ncsbn.org/index.htm)

## Credentialing

- Workforce Credentialing
- Nursing Specific Certification - or -
- Public Health Specific (Generalist) Certification

## Workplace Credentialing

- Verification of qualifications for a particular job
  - Verify identity
  - Required licensure
  - Education
  - Employment history
  - May be used to ensure qualification for reimbursement for services
### Specialty Certification

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<tr>
<th>Through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) <a href="http://www.nursecredentialing.org/">http://www.nursecredentialing.org/</a></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Clinical Nurse Specialist in Public/Community Health (RN-BC) —or—</td>
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<td>• Public Health Nurse – Advanced (APHN-BC)</td>
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<td>• Initial testing with 5-year renewals</td>
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<td>• Practice hours, continuing education, research, other activities required to renew</td>
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### Generalist Certification

| • National Board of Public Health Examiners (NBPHE) |
| • Administers CPH exams for graduates of accredited MPH programs |
| • A generalist credential for public health, not nursing specific |
| • Dilemma for PHNs who are MPH graduates: Get another credential or ignore? |
| • [http://www.nbphe.org/](http://www.nbphe.org/) |

### Public Health Nurse Ready Certificate

| • Available free, online from the University at Albany School of Public Health |
| • Offers the basics of public health nursing |
| • Based on Quad Council competencies |
| • Self-paced |
| • Available 24/7 |
| • [www.phnready.org](http://www.phnready.org) |

### Agency Accreditation

| • Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) |
| • National voluntary accreditation program for state, local, territorial and tribal public health departments |
| • Goal: Improve and protect the health of every community by advancing the quality and performance of public health departments |
| • To be launched this Fall. |

### Accountability

| • Education |
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| • Agency-level accountability |
| • Individual efforts |
| • Public – Boards of Health |

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Affordable Care Act (ACA)

- PHN workforce shrinking – services contracting
- Opportunity for a National Prevention Agenda
  - A system of care for population health
  - Documenting Public Health Nursing’s contributions
  - Thinking about the workforce and future roles

Institute of Medicine Report: The Future of Nursing

- Emphasis on Scope of Practice
- BSN for entry
- More doctorates in Nursing
- Enumerate and understand the nursing workforce
  - A better data system to track the workforce
  - What education system need to do to prepare nurses for the future

Major Changes on the Horizon

- Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
  - Including disease management
  - Working with people at risk
- Emergency Preparedness
- Patient-Centered Health Care Homes
  - Care management, navigators
  - Determinants of Health

Greater Policy Role for PHNs

- Social Justice Issues
- PHN as Window on the Population and Community: How well are things working in the community?
  - Advocate for Policy Changes

Time for a Public Health Nursing Renaissance?

Renew our focus on a healthy population:
- Policy
- Prevention
- Advocacy
- Practice-Based Research

PHN Practice-Based Research

- Public Health Practice-Based Network
  - At the local health department level
- Association of Community Health Nursing Educators Research Committee - Priorities for PHN Research
  - Population health outcomes
  - Vulnerable populations
  - Health equity
  - Chronic disease, epidemiology
  - Community-Based Participatory Action Research
  - Using large databases
Resources

- Association of State and Territorial Directors of Nursing [www.astdn.org](http://www.astdn.org)
- Association of Community Health Nursing Educators [www.achne.org](http://www.achne.org)

Resources

- American Nurses Credentialing Center [www.nursingworld.org/ancc](http://www.nursingworld.org/ancc)
- Exploring Accreditation [www.exploringaccreditation.org](http://www.exploringaccreditation.org)
- National Board of Public Health Examiners [www.nbphe.org](http://www.nbphe.org)
- Public Health Nurse Ready Certificate Program [www.phnready.org](http://www.phnready.org)

Resources

- Public Health Accreditation Board [www.phaboard.org](http://www.phaboard.org)
- Empire State Public Health Training Center [www.empirestatephtc.org](http://www.empirestatephtc.org)

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