

Pennsylvania Public Health Training Center

Pittsburgh, Drexel



Overview

The Pennsylvania Public Health Training Center (PAPHTC) is based at the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public Health and is operated in partnership with Drexel University's School of Public Health and the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford's Center for Rural Health Practice. PAPHTC's purpose is to improve the performance effectiveness of the public health system in Pennsylvania by enhancing the competencies of public health workers to carry out the essential public health services. The training audience is a professionally diverse workforce of public health professionals from state, county and city health departments, community-based organizations, voluntary health associations and clinical practice sites as well as municipal health officers.

Key Activities

Pennsylvania is the sixth most populous state in the nation; nationally, it has the third highest number of rural residents and many large medically underserved areas and health professions shortage areas. The public health system across Pennsylvania's 67 counties is sparse and fragmented with a professionally diverse workforce. In 2000, Pennsylvania had by far the nation's lowest ratio of formal public health workers to population. Six county and four city health departments provide full service to less than 50% of the Commonwealth's population. The remaining population is served by six district offices of the Pennsylvania Department of Health and a limited number of municipal health officers.

PAPHTC delivers training to the current public health workforce employed in urban and rural areas using multiple formats (face-to-face, Internet-based self-guided and interactive, blended, video conference). Faculty, staff and independent trainers facilitate workshops in topic areas of assessed need (health communications, program planning and implementation, diversity, management, leadership and grant writing) in order to improve individual as well as organizational performance. PAPHTC responded directly to the needs of Pennsylvanians by developing The Flu: Know What to Do and training community-based practitioners on delivery as well as by convening stakeholders from multiple community sectors (including public health, government, and transportation planning) to promote the Complete Streets concept in Western Pennsylvania and ultimately increase physical activity.

The three PAPHTC sites collaborated to present a webinar titled Perspectives on Public Health and Safety to recognize National Public Health Week; PAPHTC co-sponsored the launch of the National Stakeholder Strategy for Achieving Health Equity and the Action Plan for Reducing Health Disparities as well as a Biomedical HIV Prevention Update targeting public health practitioners, physicians, nurses, case managers and social workers. Overall, PAPHTC delivered 24 trainings to over 600 participants from September 2010 through June 2011. Two speaker series are under development in partnership with The Ohio State University and the Area Health Education Center. Using an Internet-based platform, the first series targets public health practitioners and focuses on topics relevant to public health practice (e.g. adverse childhood experiences, the culture of poverty, interactive logic models); the second series targets clinicians in rural community-based family practices and addresses modifiable health risk behaviors (e.g. tobacco use, sedentary lifestyle) by integrating public health constructs into clinical practice.

Additionally, PAPHTC enhances the skills of the future public health workforce by providing internships and volunteer experiences in collaboration with local health departments and community-based service organizations.

Public Health in Action



Key Partners

- Pennsylvania Department of Health
- Allegheny County health Department
- Erie County Department of Health
- Philadelphia Department of Health
- Montgomery County Health Department
- Public Health Management Corporation
- The Health Federation of Philadelphia
- Area Health Education Center
- University of Pittsburgh Health Sciences Library
- The Ohio State University

Leadership

Principal Investigator: Margaret A. Potter, MS, MD

Co-Principal Investigator: Jennifer Kolker, MPH

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HRSA Public Health Training Centers



The Health Resources and Services Administration funded Public Health Training Centers (PHTC) are partnerships between accredited schools of public health, related academic institutions, and public health agencies and organizations. The PHTC Network improves the Nation's public health system by strengthening the technical, scientific, managerial, and leadership competence of current and future public health professionals. Public Health Training Centers assess the learning needs of the public health workforce, provide accessible training, and work with organizations to meet other strategic planning, education, and resource needs.

<http://www.publichealthtrainingcenters.org>



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