

# Public Health Association of BC - Public Health Core Competencies Project Summary Survey Results for INTERIOR Health Pilot on COMMUNITY CAPACITY- BUILDING Skills

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## INTRODUCTION

Interior Health has been participating along with Vancouver Coastal Health in the exploration of skills and training needs for *community capacity-building* - a key competency area in Public Health - in support of the Public Health Association of BC's (PHABC) Public Health Core Competencies Project.

An online assessment tool has been developed to measure public health staff's self assessed understanding of skill level, how essential the skills are to their work and the need for professional development. The overall aim is to identify and develop a training/education response to meet these needs. This assessment tool has been developed for the competency area –*community capacity-building* - with the intent that it be adapted for broader use in other competency areas. Work is underway on a second competency area – *leadership for all*.

A survey tool was developed for decision makers with the aim of identifying managers' general understanding of the professional development needs of the staff in their organization, how essential these skills are to meet the goals of the organization, the type of education and training response that would meet these needs and the types of professional development supports available within the organization.

These tools used questions validated in competency assessment surveys conducted elsewhere in Canada and were reviewed for B.C. relevance by representatives from Vancouver Coastal Health and Interior Health as well as members of the PHABC Public Health Core Competencies Project Advisory Committee. Both survey tools were posted on-line for completion by a sample of staff and managers in Vancouver Coastal Health, revised and piloted again with a sample of staff and managers in Interior Health.

## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Identified below is a summary of the key results from **104** respondents in Interior Health who completed the employee self assessment survey and **13** respondents who completed the survey for managers and senior decision-makers.

### Who Completed the Surveys?

78% of the respondents who completed the employee self-assessment survey were front-line staff and 74% were public health nurses. The remaining respondents came from a variety of other public health disciplines.

77% of the 13 respondents who completed the manager/employer survey were public health nurses. 77% of the respondents had more than 10 years of experience.

### **How important is the Community Capacity-building competency area?**

35% of employee respondents indicated that they use community capacity-building to deliver public health programs regularly or fairly often.

An additional 38% indicated they sometimes use community capacity-building.

56% felt they should have the opportunity to use their community capacity-building skills more often in their work.

54% (7) manager/employer respondents indicated that the community capacity-building competency area is critical to achieving the goals of their program area/portfolio.

### **Is professional development in Community Capacity-building identified as a need?**

75% of employee respondents indicated a current need for professional development in community capacity-building.

68% of employee respondents indicated that professional development in community capacity-building is important to their future career goals.

92% of manager/employer respondents thought that their staff required additional professional development in community capacity-building

### **What are the priority skill areas that require professional development?**

Both manager/employer and employee surveys asked respondents to rank their top five priorities for staff professional development from among the 13 community capacity-building competency statements (skill areas).

**The same competency skill areas were ranked as the first or second priority for professional development by both managers/employers and employees:**

- *Able to establish effective working relationships with diverse individuals, organizations and groups*
- *Understand the concepts of community capacity-building and able to apply these to practice*

The following additional competency skill areas were ranked by employees in the top five priorities for professional development:

*Able to apply a population health and social determinants of health approach to improve the health and well being of communities.*

*Able to influence others, foster leadership and mobilize a community to action.*

*Able to apply at least two of the following: group facilitation, consultation techniques community engagement processes.*

### **Is there a perception that the organization supports Community Capacity-building?**

50% of employee respondents indicated that in their opinion their organization values community capacity-building.

41% indicated that their organization supports community capacity-building efforts.

38% of the manager/employer respondents indicated there is support for community capacity-building from the corporate leadership of the organization.

At least 75% of employee respondents indicated that the organization provides or should provide the following:

- give time off during work hours to take training
- offer workshops free of charge
- recognize courses in performance plans

### **What is the preferred training delivery approach?**

Employee respondents preferred:

- a *combination of classroom, online and workplace learning* (58%; 60);
- a *one or two day workday session* in terms of length of time (52%; 54); and
- an in-service workshop format (45%; 47) over other options provided.

### **Is the Organization willing to participate in professional development activities?**

When manager/employer respondents were asked whether their organization would be willing to participate in specific professional development activities, most respondents selected one or more of the following:

- to teach some aspects of the program/course
- provide field placement or expertise to develop a professional development program
- provide mentoring support
- provide expertise to develop program.

**For further information** about the PHABC Public Health Core Competencies Project please contact: Michael Barnes, Executive Director, [execdir@phabc.org](mailto:execdir@phabc.org)