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

Vancouver Coastal Health and Interior Health have been participating 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[1].

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 comparative summary of the key results from **48** respondents in Vancouver Coastal Health and **104** respondents in Interior Health who completed the employee self-assessment survey, and from **7** VCH respondents and **13** IH respondents who completed the survey for managers/senior decision-makers.

Who completed the survey?

In both VCH and IH the majority of respondents (over 75%) who completed the employee self-assessment survey were front-line staff and public health nurses. In both VCH and IH the majority of respondents who completed the manager/employer survey were public health nurses. In VCH, 57% of the manager/employer respondents had more than 10 years experience and in IH, 77% had more than 10 years experience.

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

Key Survey Question	VCH	IH
How important is the Community Capacity-building competency area? .	**75%** of employees indicated that they use community capacity building to delivery public health programs regularly, fairly often or sometimes. **63%** of employees feel they should have the opportunity to use their community capacity-building skills more often in their work. **4 of 7 manager/employer respondents** indicated that community capacity-building competency area is critical to achieving the goals of their program area/portfolio.	**78%** of employees indicated they use community capacity building to delivery public health programs regularly, fairly often or sometimes. **56%** of employees feel they should have the opportunity to use their community capacity-building skills more often in their work. **7 of 13 manager/employer respondents** indicated that community capacity-building is a critical competency area to achieving the goals of their program area/portfolio.
Is there a perception that the organization supports Community Capacity-building?	**52%** of employee respondents indicated that in their opinion their organization values community capacity-building. **50%** indicated that their organization supports community-capacity-building efforts. **3 of 7** manager/employer respondents there is support for community capacity-building from the corporate leadership of the organization. There appears to be some agreement among employer and employee respondents regarding the availability of <u>financial supports</u>. Beyond this, a range of supports were selected by both employers and employees.	**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. **5 of 13** manager/employer respondents, five indicated there is support for community capacity-building from the corporate leadership of the organization. There appears to be some agreement among employer and employee respondents that there are <u>tools</u> available to support community capacity-building. Beyond this, a range of supports were selected by both employers and employees.

Key Survey Question	VCH	IH
Is professional development in Community Capacity-building identified as a need?	**88% of employee respondents** indicated a current need for professional development in community capacity-building. **92% of employee respondents** indicated that professional development in community capacity building is important to their future careers goals. **72% of manager/employer respondents** thought that their staff required additional professional development in community capacity-building.	**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 careers 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 first or second priority for professional development by managers/employers and employees in both VCH and IH.

- *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*

What is the preferred training delivery approach?

In both VCH and IH employee respondents preferred:
- a *combination of classroom, online and workplace learning*
- a *one or two day workday session* in terms of length of time
- an in-service workshop format.

Is the organization willing to participate in professional development activities?

In both VCH and IH, when manager/employer respondents were asked whether their organization would be willing to participate in specific profession development activities, most respondents indicated one or more of the following:
- teach some aspects of the program/course
- provide field placement or expertise to develop a professional development program
- provide mentoring support.