



A REPORT ON THE ALABAMA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
COMPETENCY NEEDS ASSESSMENT,
2015

Report Prepared by

Alabama and Mississippi Local Performance Site
of the Region IV Public Training Center



Alabama-Mississippi Public Health Training Center

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INTRODUCTION

In spring 2015, the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), with assistance from the Alabama-Mississippi Local Performance Site of the Region IV Public Health Training Center, conducted the Alabama Competency Needs Assessment to inform its Workforce Development Plan. As a required component of Domain 8 of the PHAB (Public Health Accreditation Board) Standards, this assessment is intended to support efforts by ADPH to secure PHAB Accreditation.

The survey is based on the national Core Competencies for Public Health Professionals developed by the Council on Linkages Between Academia and Public Health Practice. These competencies were designed for public health professionals at three different levels. Survey respondents were asked to classify themselves into one of three professional Tiers based on the following definitions:

- **Tier 1 (entry level):** Individuals who carry out day-to-day tasks of public health organizations and are not in management positions.
- **Tier 2 (supervisors and managers):** Individuals with program management and/or supervisory responsibilities.
- **Tier 3 (senior managers and CEOs):** Individuals at a senior/management level and leaders of public health organizations. Tier 3 public health professionals (e.g., health officers, executive directors, CEOs) typically have staff member who report to them.

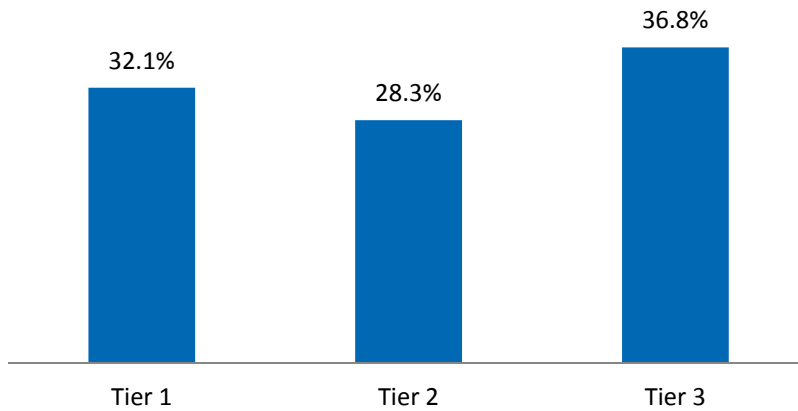
During spring 2015, all employees in the Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH) were provided the opportunity to participate in the anonymous survey. This assessment focused on public health competencies as well as basic demographic and professional development questions.

ALABAMA PUBLIC HEALTH WORKFORCE CHARACTERISTICS

Job Classification

A total of 1,159 ADPH employees completed the survey (44.6%). Based on job classification, 372 individuals were categorized as Tier 1 (32.1%), 328 as Tier 2 (28.3%), and 426 as Tier 3 (36.8%).

Tier Distribution of ADPH Employees

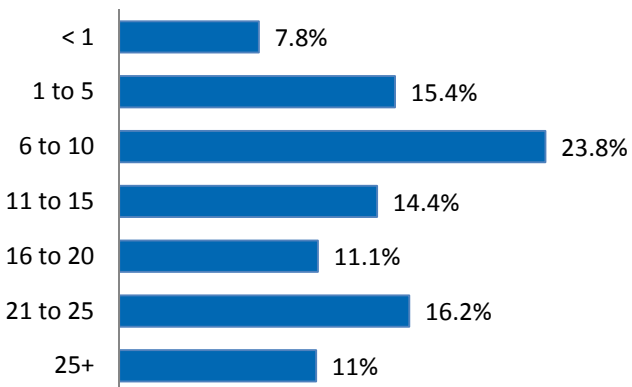


Note: For question regarding Job Classification, there were 33 missing responses.

Years in Public Health Service at ADPH

Approximately 53% of respondents (n=612) have worked for ADPH for 11 years or more.

Years of Service at ADPH

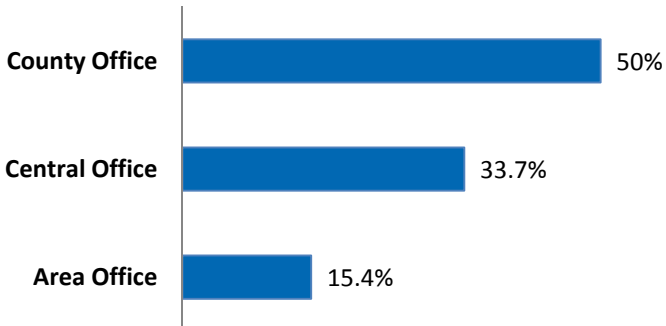


Note: For question regarding Years of Service, there were 2 missing responses.

Worksite Distribution

The worksite distribution of ADPH employees was divided among County Office (50%), Central Office (33.7%), and Area Office (15.4%).

Work Location

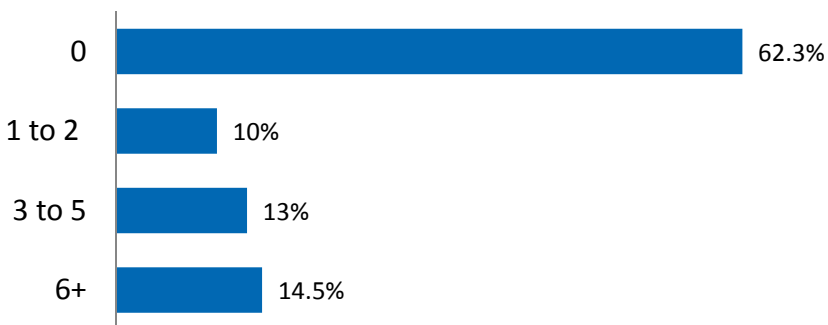


Note: For question regarding Worksite Distribution, there were 10 missing responses.

Supervisory Responsibilities

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (62.3%) indicated that they did not have any supervisor responsibilities.

Number of Employees Individuals Supervise



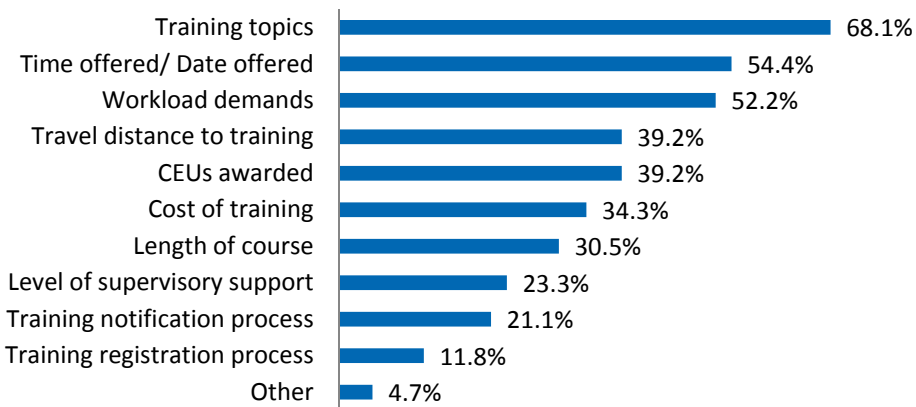
Note: For question regarding Supervisory Responsibilities, there were 2 missing responses.

TRAINING

Factors that Positively Influence Participation in Training

Individuals identified a number of factors that positively influenced their participation in training activities. The top three influencers were: training topics (68.1%), time and date offered (54.4%), and workload demands (52.2%).*

Factors That Positively Influence Participation in Training

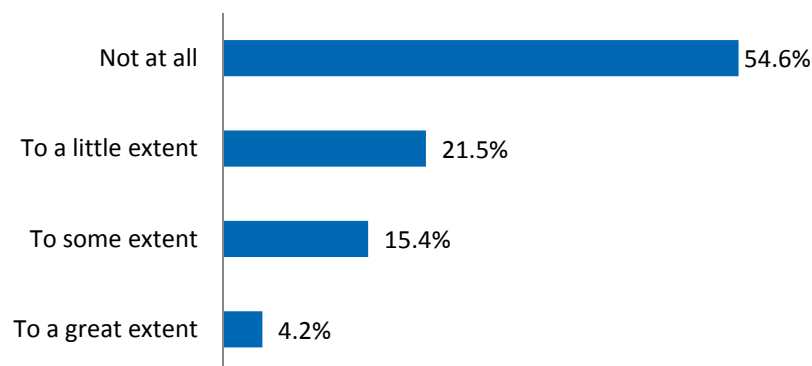


*Note: Total does not equal 100 since individuals could select more than one factor.

Availability of Technology

The majority of individuals (79.5%) reported that the availability of technology either did not limit their ability or minimally limited their ability to participate in distance education offerings. The remaining individuals (20.5%) indicated that the availability of technology either limited their ability to participate in distance education to some extent or to a great extent.

Availability of Technology



COMPETENCY DOMAINS

Based on their self-identified Tier, respondents were asked to rate Tier-specific competencies within each of the eight domains of the Core Competencies for Public Health professionals.

Domains

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Analytical/assessment | 5. Community dimensions of practices |
| 2. Policy development/program planning | 6. Public health sciences |
| 3. Communication | 7. Financial planning and management |
| 4. Cultural competency | 8. Leadership and systems thinking |

Each domain has seven to fourteen competencies for each Tier. These individual competencies describe desired skills for professionals at progressive stages of their careers.

For each of the eight domains, respondents identified the two domains in which training was most needed. Table 1 below shows the eight core competency domains and the numbers and percentages of respondents identifying these as the most needed areas for training.

The Analytical/Assessment Skills domain ranked highest in terms of need for all three tiers. Emphasis was also placed on Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills for Tier 1 (entry level) and Tier 3 (leadership) respondents and Communication Skills among Tier 2 (management) respondents.

Table 1

Respondents Indicating High Relevance and Skills Gap for Any Competency Listed in Domain

Tier	Domain	High Relevance	Respondents with High Relevance/Identified Need	
			N	Percent
Tier 1	1. Analytical/ Assessment Skills	71	42	59.2
	2. Policy Development/ Program Planning Skills	72	24	33.3
	3. Communication Skills	110	44	40.0
	4. Cultural Competency Skills	69	27	39.1
	5. Community Dimensions of Practice Skills	64	14	21.9
	6. Public Health Sciences Skills	59	18	30.5
	7. Financial Planning and Management Skills	74	22	29.7
	8. Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills	93	46	49.5
Tier 2	1. Analytical/ Assessment Skills	112	95	84.8
	2. Policy Development/ Program Planning Skills	85	39	45.9
	3. Communication Skills	115	87	75.7
	4. Cultural Competency Skills	81	59	72.8
	5. Community Dimensions of Practice Skills	70	40	57.1
	6. Public Health Sciences Skills	86	44	51.2
	7. Financial Planning and Management Skills	87	32	36.8
	8. Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills	75	45	60.0
Tier 3	1. Analytical/ Assessment Skills	138	116	84.1
	2. Policy Development/ Program Planning Skills	106	72	67.9
	3. Communication Skills	116	83	71.6
	4. Cultural Competency Skills	85	49	57.6
	5. Community Dimensions of Practice Skills	83	40	48.2
	6. Public Health Sciences Skills	95	55	57.9
	7. Financial Planning and Management Skills	129	72	55.8
	8. Leadership and Systems Thinking Skills	123	93	75.6

Based on responses to the top two most needed domains for training, Table 2 lists the top 10 skill gap/high relevance competencies by tier.

Table 2
Top 10 Skill Gap/High Relevance Competencies by Tier

Tier	Competency	Domain	Percent (%) ^[1]
Tier 1	1. Applies ethical principles in accessing, collecting, analyzing, using, maintaining, and disseminating data and information	Analytical/ Assessment	53.5
	2. Uses information technology in accessing, collecting, analyzing, using, maintaining, and disseminating data and information	Analytical/ Assessment	52.1
	3. Selects valid and reliable data	Analytical/ Assessment	50.7
	4. Collects valid and reliable quantitative and qualitative data	Analytical/ Assessment	49.3
	5. Identifies quantitative and qualitative data and information that can be used for assessing the health of a community	Analytical/ Assessment	47.9
	6. Uses quantitative and qualitative data	Analytical/ Assessment	46.5
	7. Selects comparable data	Analytical/ Assessment	45.1
	8. Describes public health applications of quantitative and qualitative data	Analytical/ Assessment	45.1
	9. Describes ways to improve individual and program performance	Leadership and Systems Thinking	44.1
	10. Identifies gaps in data	Analytical/ Assessment	43.7
Tier 2	1. Uses information technology in accessing, collecting, analyzing, using, maintaining, and disseminating data and information	Analytical/ Assessment	69.6
	2. Assesses community health status and factors influencing health in a community	Analytical/ Assessment	68.8
	3. Applies ethical principles in accessing, collecting, analyzing, using, maintaining, and disseminating data and information	Analytical/ Assessment	67.9
	4. Describes factors affecting the health of a community	Analytical/ Assessment	65.2
	5. Analyzes quantitative and qualitative data	Analytical/ Assessment	65.2
	6. Identifies assets and resources that can be used for improving the health of a community	Analytical/ Assessment	65.2
	7. Advocates for the use of evidence in decision making that affects the health of a community	Analytical/ Assessment	65.2

Tier	Competency	Domain	Percent (%) ^[1]
	8. Communicates information to influence behavior and improve health	Communication	64.3
	9. Communicates the roles of governmental public health, health care, and other partners in improving the health of a community	Communication	64.3
	10. Interprets quantitative and qualitative data	Analytical/ Assessment	64.3
Tier 3	1. Uses information technology in accessing, collecting, analyzing, using, maintaining, and disseminating data and information	Analytical/ Assessment	73.2
	2. Evaluates the validity and reliability of data	Analytical/ Assessment	68.1
	3. Ensures the management of organizational change	Leadership and Systems Thinking	67.5
	4. Ensures continuous improvement of individual, program, and organizational performance	Leadership and Systems Thinking	65.0
	5. Creates opportunities for organizations to work together or individually to improve the health of a community	Leadership and Systems Thinking	64.2
	6. Ensures use of professional development opportunities throughout the organization	Leadership and Systems Thinking	64.2
	7. Takes measures to minimize internal and external barriers that may affect the delivery of the 10 Essential Public Health Services	Leadership and Systems Thinking	63.4
	8. Ensures availability of professional development opportunities for the organization	Leadership and Systems Thinking	63.4
	9. Ensures ethical principles are applied in accessing, collecting, analyzing, using, maintaining, and disseminating data and information	Analytical/ Assessment	63.0
	10. Ensures collection of valid and reliable quantitative and qualitative data	Analytical/ Assessment	63.0

^[1] Percent of respondents indicating high relevance and skills gap for the specified competency

PERCEPTIONS OF TRAINING NEEDS

SELF | SUPERVISOR | STAFF

Respondents identified content areas in which they (personally) felt they most needed training.*



*Note: Total does not equal 100 since individuals could select more than one content area.

Respondents identified content areas they felt training was most needed for their manager/supervisor.*



*Note: Total does not equal 100 since individuals could select more than one content area.

Respondents identified content areas they felt training was most needed for their staff and/or co-workers.*



*Note: Total does not equal 100 since individuals could select more than one content area.

Top Skills Needed – Identified by Tier

Other General Training Needs		
<i>You (personally)</i>	<i>Manager/Supervisor</i>	<i>Staff/Coworkers</i>
Information Technology	Management & Leadership	Communication & Interpersonal Skills
Human Resources	Communication & Interpersonal Skills	Team Building
Financial Management	Financial Management	Professional Development
Maternal and Child Health	Time Management & Organizational Skills	Financial Management
Policy Development & Implementation	Team Building	Customer Service
Fire Protection & Life Safety	Public Health Policies & Programs	Public Health Policies & Programs
	Human Resources	
	Building & Life Safety	

Behavioral Health		
<i>You (personally)</i>	<i>Manager/Supervisor</i>	<i>Staff/Coworkers</i>
Working with Patients	Behavioral Health Issues at the Workplace	Working with Patients
Mental Health Illnesses & Treatment	Working with Patients/Individuals	Behavioral Health Issues at the Workplace
Strategies to Encourage Behavioral Change	Mental Health Illnesses & Treatment	Mental Health Illnesses & Treatment
Access to Care & Community Resources	Access to Care & Community Resources	Access to Care & Community Resources
Behavioral Health Issues at the Workplace	Communication & Cultural Sensitivity	Understanding Behaviors & Attitudes
Understanding Behaviors & Attitudes	Substance Abuse	Health Behaviors & Infectious Disease Transmission
		Working with the Community
		Geriatric Behavioral Health
		Substance Abuse

Cancer		
<i>You (personally)</i>	<i>Manager/Supervisor</i>	<i>Staff/Coworkers</i>
Access to Care & Community Resources	Prevention, Causes, and Treatments	Prevention, Causes, and Treatments
Prevention, Causes, and Treatments		Access to Care & Community Resources
Breast Cancer		Diagnosis & Detection
Cervical Cancer		Breast Cancer
General Information		Cervical Cancer
Advancements in Testing, Treatments, & Research		

Diabetes		
<i>You (personally)</i>	<i>Manager/Supervisor</i>	<i>Staff/Coworkers</i>
Diabetes Treatment & Management	Diabetes Treatment & Management	Diabetes Treatment & Management
General Information	General Information	General Information
Diet & Nutrition		Diabetes Prevention
Maternal & Child Health - Diabetes		Educational Material for Patients
Diabetes Prevention		Diet & Nutrition
Advancements in Treatments & Management		Recognizing Diabetes

Environmental Health		
<i>You (personally)</i>	<i>Manager/Supervisor</i>	<i>Staff/Coworkers</i>
Environmental Effects on Health	Professional Growth	Professional Growth
Professional Growth	Role of Environmentalist & Public Health	Sewage & Water
Food Safety	Sewage & Water	Environmental Effects on Health
Improving Environmental Health	Environmental Health Safety	Food Safety
Role of Environmentalist & Public Health	Food Safety	Role of Environmentalist & Public Health
Sewage & Water	Rabies	Environmental Health Safety

Infectious Disease		
<i>You (personally)</i>	<i>Manager/Supervisor</i>	<i>Staff/Coworkers</i>
Current Trends & Treatments	TB	Current Trends & Treatments
General Information	Outbreak Planning & Notification	STDs/STIs
STDs/STIs	General Information	General Information
Infectious Disease Prevention	HIV	TB
HIV	Emerging/Re-emerging diseases	Disease Investigation
TB	Disease Investigation	Emerging/Re-emerging diseases
Emerging/Re-emerging diseases		Public Education re: Infectious Diseases
		Infectious Disease Safety

Health Disparities, Health Equity, and Social Determinants of Health		
<i>You (personally)</i>	<i>Manager/Supervisor</i>	<i>Staff/Coworkers</i>
Working with Patients	Factors Contributing to Health Disparities	Working with Patients
Factors Contributing to Health Disparities	Working with Patients	Factors Contributing to Health Disparities
Health Disparities in Access to Healthcare	Resources to Address Health Disparities	Influence of Race, Ethnicity and Culture
Influence of Race, Ethnicity and Culture	Influence of Race, Ethnicity and Culture	Regional & Community Health Disparities
Regional & Community Health Disparities	Regional & Community Health Disparities	Resources to Address Health Disparities
Income & Health Disparities		

Health Informatics/Health IT		
<i>You (personally)</i>	<i>Manager/Supervisor</i>	<i>Staff/Coworkers</i>
Electronic Health Records (EHR) & Electronic Medical Records (EMR)	Electronic Health Records (EHR) & Electronic Medical Records (EMR)	Best Practices in Health Informatics/Health IT [HIT]
Best Practices in Health Informatics/Health IT [HIT]	Best Practices in Health Informatics/Health IT [HIT]	Electronic Health Records (EHR) & Electronic Medical Records (EMR)
Emerging Health Informatics/Health IT [HIT] Technologies	Basic Computer Skills/Troubleshooting	Emerging Health Informatics/Health IT [HIT] Technologies
Microsoft Office	Microsoft Office	Microsoft Office
Basic Computer Skills/Troubleshooting	Insurance/Billing	SAS
SAS	Conducting Technical Trainings for HIT	Geographic Information Systems

Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity		
<i>You (personally)</i>	<i>Manager/Supervisor</i>	<i>Staff/Coworkers</i>
Maternal and Child Health	Obesity	Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Education for Employees
Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Education for Employees	Nutrition & Physical Activity	Interventions to Encourage Healthier Lifestyles
Education & Training Materials for Patients	Motivational Tools to Encourage Healthier Lifestyle	Obesity
Weight Management	Weight Management	Maternal and Child Health
Community Health & Resources	Interventions to Encourage Healthier Lifestyles	Weight Management
Nutrition & Physical Activity		
Motivational Tools to Encourage Healthier Lifestyle		

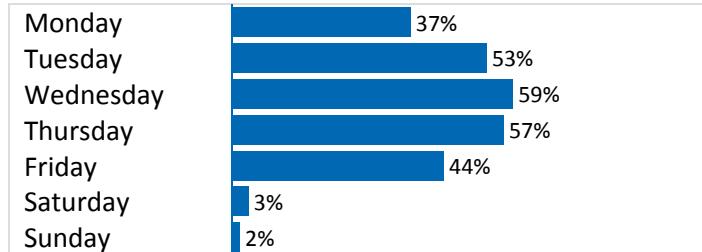
Public Health Preparedness		
<i>You (personally)</i>	<i>Manager/Supervisor</i>	<i>Staff/Coworkers</i>
Emergency Preparedness	Roles & Responsibilities of Employees during a Public Health Emergency	Roles & Responsibilities of Employees during a Public Health Emergency
Roles & Responsibilities of Employees during a Public Health Emergency	Emergency Preparedness	Emergency Preparedness
Public Education regarding Emergency Preparedness	Drills & Exercises	Disaster Response
Disaster Response	Disaster Response	Drills & Exercises
Functional	Up-to-Date Trainings	Personal Preparedness
& Medical Needs Support Services	Personal Preparedness	
Drills & Exercises		
Personal Preparedness		

Violence & Injury Prevention		
<i>You (personally)</i>	<i>Manager/Supervisor</i>	<i>Staff/Coworkers</i>
Violence in the Workplace	Violence in the Workplace	Violence in the Workplace
Violence and Injury Prevention	Violence and Injury Prevention	Rape & Domestic Violence
Rape & Domestic Violence	Rape & Domestic Violence	Violence and Injury Prevention
Recognizing at Risk Patients/Victims of Violence	Recognizing at Risk Patients/Victims of Violence	Risk Factors for Violent Behavior
Resources		Recognizing at Risk Patients/Victims of Violence
Violence & Injury Prevention in Youth		Active Shooter Training
Impact of Mental Health Issues & Substance Abuse		

TRAINING PREFERENCES

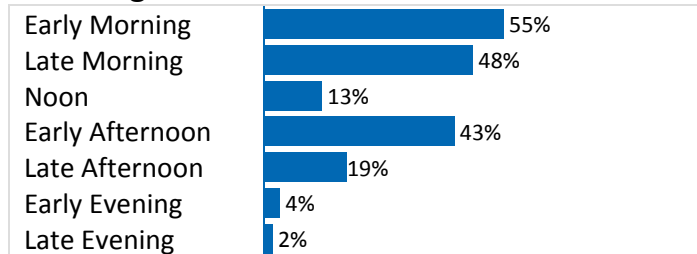
Respondents identified preferences for training days and times.

Days of the Week



*Note: Total does not equal 100 since individuals could select more than one day.

Training Times



*Note: Total does not equal 100 since individuals could select more than one training time.

TRAINING PREFERENCES (continued)

Respondents identified preferences for delivery methods of training (1=Least preferred, 2=Somewhat preferred, 3=Most preferred).

Delivery Methods for Training

