



PHTC Annual Narrative Report
Upper Midwest Public Health
Training Center 2011

Executive Summary

The Upper Midwest Public Health Training Center (UMPHTC) serves the tri-state region of Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota. UMPHTC, in its tenth year of funding, has continued to build and strengthen a collaborative network that is composed of both academic and diverse practice partners. This collaborative includes the Iowa Counties Public Health Association, Iowa Department of Public Health, Iowa Primary Care Association, Iowa Public Health Association, Great Plains Public Health Leadership Institute, Nebraska Health and Human Services System, Public Health Association of Nebraska, University of Nebraska Medical Center, South Dakota Departments of Health, Education, and Labor, and the State Hygienic Laboratory at the University of Iowa. Recognizing the importance of linking to other HRSA-funded programs to maximize resources and increase reach, UMPHTC has included other HRSA programs in its planning activities with representatives from geriatric education centers, area health education centers, maternal child health programs, rural health centers, and primary care associations attending UMPHTC regional meetings.

UMPHTC has made significant contributions to workforce-development activities that enhance the capacity of the region's public health practitioners, with a special emphasis on medically underserved areas. These activities include assessment of need, identification of gaps, development of competency-based training programs and electronic resources to meet these gaps, and evaluation of programming to determine impact, opportunities for improvement, and further needs. Realizing that time is a major barrier to participation, UMPHTC has made many of its programs available in an asynchronous format that the learner can access at any time on the Prepare Iowa Learning Management System (PILMS). The focus on distance education has paid off as reflected in the increased number of individuals participating in trainings.

Highlights

Training

From July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011 UMPHTC helped to support 47 training programs as well as several electronic toolkits. The number of participants in UMPHTC supported trainings was 16,807.

Below are highlighted several online trainings that were developed in collaboration with practice partners at the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH).

UMPHTC collaborated with the WIC program to develop ***Cross-Cultural Communication and Nutrition Assessment***. Awareness of cross-cultural communication strategies allows WIC personnel to create more rich and enhanced assessment and counseling experiencing with clients. The goals of the course are to define cross cultural communication and potential outcomes of effective cross-cultural communication, provide examples of effective cross-cultural communication techniques when completing nutrition assessments, and identify appropriate strategies for communicating with clients with language differences. This course will be marketed to WIC programs across the country to increase reach.

UMPHTC partnered with the WISEWOMAN/Care for Yourself program to develop two trainings. ***Cholesterol: Everything You Need to Know to Provide Patient Education*** is designed to increase healthcare providers' knowledge base about the detection, evaluation, and treatment of high blood cholesterol with the overall goal of increasing their ability to provide quality education to their patients diagnosed with high blood cholesterol. ***Salt/Sodium Reduction: Opportunities for Change*** is designed to provide healthcare providers with the knowledge and critical steps to optimize patient education and, ultimately, health outcomes. The goals of the course are to increase awareness and knowledge regarding



Highlights cont.

the impact of salt/sodium intake and its relationship to high blood pressure and cardiovascular diseases; increase ability to conduct patient education on ways to reduce salt/sodium intake; and identify efforts in the United States and globally to reduce salt/sodium consumption.

Developed in collaboration with the Bureau of Nutrition and Health Promotion, ***Motivational Interviewing: Supporting Patients in Health Behavior Change*** is designed to equip healthcare providers and ancillary staff with the knowledge and tools to optimize patient behavior change to ultimately improve health outcomes. The goals of the course are to implement effective patient communication strategies based on individualized readiness to make a behavior change, increase healthcare providers' knowledge on the importance and utilization of the patient-centered model of behavior change, and implement motivational interviewing techniques during patient visits for improved health outcomes.

On-going Programs

In addition to core activities such as the Regional Steering Committee meetings, colloquia, and student internships, several ongoing UMPHTC-supported activities are highlighted below.

UMPHTC supports the efforts of the ***Health Occupations for Today and Tomorrow (HOTT)*** program in South Dakota. HOTT focuses on public health/health career information and opportunities for South Dakota students at all grade levels. Thousands of students in South Dakota have participated in HOTT projects, increasing their exposure to the wide range of public health and health careers available. HOTT ventures include health care academies, Health care in Partnership with Education (HIPE) week, and the virtual career fair. HOTT has implemented "scrubs camp," an innovative program that helps recruit kids into health/public health. Held in various South Dakota communities, scrub camps are free, one-day, hands-on camps for high school students during which students develop a personal learning plan.

UMPHTC also works closely with the Workforce Development Committee of the Iowa Counties Public Health Association (ICPHA) to identify training and education priorities. UMPHTC continues to work with ICPHA on electronic resources for the local public health workforce. This year, in order to make the resources more user-friendly and facilitate "one-stop-service," UMPHTC developed the ***Public Health Practitioner Gateway*** that includes three separate, but related, toolkits: Local Boards of Health Toolkit, Public Health Toolkit, and New Public Health Administrator Resources.



New Initiatives

In addition to the trainings described above, UMPHTC had several other new initiatives.

The Public Health Association of Nebraska (PHAN) identified the need to improve the knowledge and capabilities of their local board of health members. They asked UMPHTC to develop an online resource to meet this need. The *Nebraska Local Board of Health Toolkit* includes materials that introduce public health and public health law, and explain the roles of local board of health members and health directors. PHAN has requested UMPHTC continue to work with them to expand the toolkit along with other distance-based programs.



High turnover among direct care providers is a concern. In an effort to increase retention rates UMPHTC worked with IDPH and the IOWA Direct CareGivers Association to develop a *Direct Care Provider (DCP) Peer Mentor Program* which is being offered via an online toolkit. The goal is to train staff in mentoring new employees. Modules include management role and commitment, steps to implementing a DCP Peer Mentor Program, mentor support, and how to evaluate your program. The goal of the toolkit is to provide helpful information and resources to aid in the successful implementation of a DCP Peer Mentor Program.

Developed in collaboration with the Center for Disabilities and Development at the University of Iowa, *An Introduction to Working with Children with Brain Injuries* is designed to educate school nurses, allied health professionals, and teachers who work with students K – 12 to increase their success in school. The program includes three modules that cover understanding brain injury; interventions, accommodations, and technology; and assistive devices and troubleshooting. UMPHTC worked with the VA Health Care System to develop a *Smoking Cessation in Hospitalized Veterans* for use in the Midwest. The goal of the course is to help nurses better appreciate the public health importance of smoking cessation in the inpatient setting, understand the principles of smoking cessation counseling, and apply the 5A's algorithm for brief assessment and counseling. The course includes a tutorial on best practices in smoking cessation counseling.

PHTC Accomplishments

Center Strengths

During the past several years UMPHTC has focused more of its efforts in the area of *distance education*. Realizing that time is a major barrier to participation, UMPHTC has made many of its programs available in an asynchronous format that the learner can access at any time. UMPHTC has built an impressive infrastructure to develop and deliver distance education that includes instructional designers and developers; an educational media specialist with expertise in video design, recording, and editing; a graphics designer; evaluators; an item writer; scenario developers; a flash developer; a learning management coordinator; and program managers. The focus on trainings. UMPHTC uses the Prepare Iowa Learning Management System (PILMS) to deliver online programming. The PILMS also allows individuals to assess competencies and track courses that have been completed. Additionally, UMPHTC has developed a repository of reusable learning objects (e.g., templates for interactive learning simulations) that can conveniently be customized for use in future training programs.

PHTC Accomplishments - Outcomes

Improved Workforce Development

An important part of public health accreditation efforts at the state and local levels is the incorporation of continuous quality improvement into the culture and normal day-to-day activities of public health. IDPH conducted several face-to-face trainings for “QI Champions” across the state. To help reinforce the face-to-face sessions UMPHTC’s Director provided a series of webinars on *Quality Improvement Tools and Techniques*. These sessions were provided both live via web-conferencing as well as archived. Additionally, Dr. Uden-Holman serves on the IDPH Public Health Evaluation Committee which is responsible for the ongoing evaluation of Iowa’s public health system and the accreditation process.

Improved Organizational Development

A primary partner of UMPHTC is the Iowa Primary Care Association (Iowa PCA), which represents community health centers (CHC) in Iowa. Workforce retention continues to be a critical issue for CHC. To address this issue, UMPHTC worked with the Iowa PCA to develop the CHC Orientation Toolkit. In addition, UMPHTC continues to work with the Iowa PCA on an Electronic Competency-based Resource and Training Center. The purpose of this electronic center is to identify and link to trainings and resources that address the CHC Management Competencies. It provides staff with easy access to trainings and resources tailored to meet their needs.



In Nebraska, UMPHTC funds help support the *Great Plains Public Health Leadership Institute* (GPPHLI). The GPPHLI is a year-long program designed for senior and emerging leaders in public and private organizations whose primary mission is to improve the health and well-being of populations and communities in the tri-state region. It also strives to increase the value of public health within these communities through greater leadership in action. Scholars who participate have the opportunity to discover their own leadership assets and learn how to best utilize their strengths to improve public health practices. They are also able to apply effective leadership practices to increase the impact of the organizations they serve. Since 2005, the GPPHLI has trained more than 100 leadership scholars. These graduates move forward to complete advanced leadership training, interact with new scholars, and become involved in peer coaching.

Improvement Health of the Communities and Populations



UI College of Public Health student interns, faculty, and UMPHTC staff collaborated with the Susan G. Komen for the Cure affiliate in the Quad Cities to conduct a 2011 community profile designed to better understand breast cancer in this region. The project included data analysis to measure breast cancer impact, interviews with public health professionals to assess health care services, and focus groups to better understand the data and the real issues. This collaborative project helped the affiliate align its programs, funding, and activities aimed at reducing breast cancer in target populations. Students, faculty, and staff were able to apply their knowledge, and skills towards improving women’s health in local communities.

Partnerships

UMPHTC works with practice partners in traditional and non-traditional public health settings. Partners have been a critical component of the training center's success over the past ten years; as is shown by the examples provided in the narrative. This section focuses on our partnerships with other public health training centers (PHTC) and primary care associations (PCA) which are also HRSA funded.

With the advent of national healthcare reform, community health centers (CHC) have an increasingly important role in the provision of public health services for diverse populations in medically underserved areas. CHC and public health agencies are experiencing similar challenges regarding the recruitment, retention and training needs of their workforce. In May 2010, UMPHTC convened an initial meeting three PHTC (UMPHTC, Heartland PHTC, MidAmerica PHTC) and their respective state PCA. Since that time the PHTC and PCA have been meeting regularly to discuss workforce needs and to share information regarding training activities. Based on recommendations from these encounters, a **Regional Initiative for PHTC/PCA (RIPP)** is being developed. This innovative partnership aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of the CHC workforce in order to help CHC better meet their mission of providing care to underserved, underinsured and uninsured populations.

Challenges and Strategic Directions

UMPHTC's infrastructure has allowed it to meet the unique needs of partner organizations in the tri-state region. UMPHTC staff continues to look for the most effective technologies and learning strategies that will enhance the learning experience and produce better outcomes for the learner. For instance, UMPHTC is enhancing learning by incorporating video into interactive learning opportunities through scenario based activities. Gaming is incorporated into programs as an incentive to assess responses to specific situations in a non-threatening environment. The use of distance learning technologies has allowed UMPHTC to expand its reach beyond the Upper Midwest to learners across the US and even internationally.

Suggestions

There are a variety of ways that practice partners can utilize PHTC resources and capacities. Based on UMPHTC's experience with its partners we would suggest the following:

- Utilizing learning management systems to develop training plans
- Developing online modules to increase accessibility and reach of programming
- Creating electronic toolkits to bring together a variety of resources and provide a "one-stop-shop" for learners to more efficiently access what they need, where and when they need it

Maintaining Partnerships

Key UMPHTC partners include:

- Iowa Counties Public Health Association
- Iowa Department of Public Health
- Iowa Primary Care Association
- State Hygienic Laboratory at the University of Iowa
- Nebraska Health & Human Services System
- Public Health Association of Nebraska
- University of Nebraska Medical Center
- South Dakota Departments of Health, Education, and Labor

Collaborations

Recognizing the importance of linking to other HRSA-funded programs to maximize resources and increase reach, UMPHTC has included other HRSA programs in its planning activities with representatives from geriatric education centers, area health education centers, maternal child health programs, rural health centers, and primary care associations attending UMPHTC regional meetings. The HRSA Region VII Office has actively participated in a variety of face-to-face meetings and conference calls with UMPHTC and its partners and is aware of current training programs and the infrastructure UMPHTC has developed to meet training and education needs. For example, the HRSA Region VII Office contacted UMPHTC to participate in a conference call with the Iowa Direct Care Workforce initiative to see if there were opportunities for collaboration. This initial call led to UMPHTC working on the online Direct Care Provider Peer Mentor Program.

SPH Support and Collaborations

UMPHTC supports the University of Iowa College of Public Health through its extensive continuing education and outreach activities. By developing and delivering online training and education that is available anytime, anywhere, UMPHTC has strengthened the public health workforce in the state and met identified partner needs.

UMPHTC strengthens practice-based experiences of current students through funded internship projects with partners from across the state. Examples of internships include:

- Developing a comprehensive employee respiratory protection program for a community health center
- Developing consumer education materials
- Compiling a “Community Collaboration Guide” to be used by Live Healthy Iowa in outreach efforts
- Analyzing data related to high-risk drinking in Iowa City for the Partnership for Alcohol Safety
- Assisting in the development and implementation of a communication system for sharing information regarding public health issues, and concerns at a local public health department
- Working with the Mobile Clinic to conduct a review to evaluate the clinic’s services and provide direction for future expansion
- Assisting with a workplace wellness program and student-led garden program for the Obesity Prevention Task Force of a rural local public health department

Networking and joint learning opportunities are extremely important to both our students and practice partners. Each fall UMPHTC convenes a colloquium to present and discuss contemporary topics and best practices that are of interest to the practice community as well as students. A portion of the program is dedicated to having students and practice partners talk one-on-one about possible practice-based opportunities and enhance student learning.

The focus of the fall 2010 colloquium was *Improving the Public Health System: Innovation You Can Apply*. Seventy public health practitioners, health care providers, and students gathered to discuss Iowa’s accreditation preparation and quality improvement activities conducted by local health departments and identify lessons learned from recent projects. Guest speakers included staff from the Iowa Department of Public Health who discussed current and future activities related to state accreditation preparation. Panels from local public health departments provided information on techniques they had used to complete a self-assessment process with the Iowa public health standards. Resources that could be used in conducting accreditation preparation and quality improvement activities were also shared.

Overview

The Upper Midwest Public Health Training Center (UMPHTC) provides education and training on the latest public health techniques and practices for professionals and students in Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota. The target audience is practitioners in traditional and non-traditional public health settings, with an emphasis on medically underserved areas. UMPHTC also supports the emerging public health workforce by providing practice opportunities for graduate students and supporting K-12 pipeline activities.

Key Activities

- UMPHTC supports the efforts of the Health Occupations for Today and Tomorrow (HOTT) program in South Dakota (SD). The SD Departments of Education, Health, and Labor and the SD Board of Regents created this program to address the shortage of health care and public health workers in the state. HOTT focuses on health career information and learning opportunities for students at all grade levels. Thousands of students have participated in HOTT activities including health care academies, Health care in Partnership with Education (HIPE) week, a virtual career fair, and scrubs camps.
- UMPHTC has worked with its PCA for many years on workforce development activities. Two other PHTCs –the Heartland Public Health Education & Training Center and the MidAmerica Public Health Training Center have also been working with their state PCAs in various ways. In May 2010, UMPHTC convened an initial meeting of the three PHTCs and their respective PCAs to discuss workforce needs and share information on training activities. Based on recommendations from these meetings the three PHTCs are developing a Regional Initiative for PHTC/PCA (RIPP). This innovative partnership aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of the CHC workforce to better meet their mission of providing care to underserved, underinsured and uninsured populations.
- The aging public health workforce has implications for organizational development and the next generation of leaders. In Nebraska, UMPHTC funds help to support the Great Plains Public Health Leadership Institute (GPPHLI). GPPHLI is a year-long program designed for senior and emerging leaders in public and private organizations whose primary mission is to improve the health and well-being of populations and communities in the tri-state region. Since 2005, the GPPHLI has trained more than 100 scholars from Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota. These graduates move forward to complete advanced leadership training, interact with new scholars, and become involved in peer coaching.

Impact on Public Health Workforce

- UMPHTC uses the Prepare Iowa Learning Management System (PILMS) to provide individuals with the ability to assess their level of confidence on several sets of competencies. The assessment results are used to determine in what areas the individual could enhance their knowledge and skills. Individuals are also able to directly access trainings on the PILMS. For example, WIC professionals across the state of Iowa used the PILMS to assess their confidence level on a range of skills and abilities they need to carry out their job. Based on the results of the assessment, cultural competence was identified as an area where workers did not feel confident. To meet this identified need, two online courses were developed that focus on cultural competence for WIC professionals.
- During the past several years UMPHTC has focused more of its efforts in the area of distance education. Realizing that time is a major barrier to participation, UMPHTC has made many of its programs available in an asynchronous format that the learner can access at any time. UMPHTC has built an impressive infrastructure to develop and deliver distance education that includes instructional designers and developers; an educational media specialist with expertise in video design, recording, and editing; a graphics designer; evaluators; an item writer; scenario developers; a flash developer; a learning management coordinator; and program managers. The focus on distance education has paid off as reflected in the large number of individuals participating in trainings.
- UMPHTC strengthens practice-based experiences of current UI College of Public Health students through funded internship projects with partners from across the state.

Public Health in Action

Welcome to Iowa PCA Resource and Training Center



Workforce retention continues to be a critical issue for community health centers (CHC). To address this issue, UMPHTC and the Iowa Primary Care Association (IA PCA) partnered to create an electronic competency-based training and resource center. The purpose of this electronic center is to identify and link to trainings and resources that address the CHC Management Competencies.

Key Partners

- Iowa Counties Public Health Association
- Iowa Department of Public Health
- Iowa Primary Care Association
- State Hygienic Laboratory at the University of Iowa
- Nebraska Health & Human Services System
- Public Health Association of Nebraska
- University of Nebraska Medical Center
- South Dakota Departments of Health, Education & Labor

Leadership

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