

Queensland Health, Health Practitioner Core Competency Descriptor

Public Health Officer

DISCIPLINE DESCRIPTOR:

Public Health Officers protect and promote health and prevent illness through the design, coordination, implementation and evaluation of a range of population health strategies and interventions to improve the wellbeing of individuals, communities and the population as a whole.

Public Health Officers focus on multiple public health issues to target the population as a whole and/or specific at-risk sub-populations or communities.

CORE COMPETENCIES:

1. Knowledge in Practice

1.1 Knowledge of population health prevention, promotion and protection concepts and strategies including but not limited to health status of populations, inequalities in health status and the determinants of health (biological, social, cultural, environmental, economic and physical).

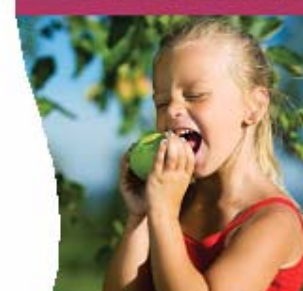
1.2 Use of evidence and research to target and inform population health interventions and influence access to and delivery of health services.

1.2.1 Knowledge of theories and models of population health interventions in the primary health care setting

1.3 Knowledge of state, national and international developments in population health prevention, promotion and protection strategies.

1.4 Understand how the determinants of health (biological, social, cultural, environmental, economic and physical) influence the health and well-being of the population and the interaction between public policies, lifestyles, consumption patterns, urbanisation and health.

1.4.1 Knowledge of the health system and the broader systems eg. political, economic and cultural environments and how they impact on health and well being.





1.5 Knowledge of project management principles (including scope, time, cost, procurement, quality, risk, human resource, and communication management) as they apply to population health interventions.

2. Health Intervention Planning and Implementation

2.1 Develop evidence based options to address a specific population health issue and assess the implications of each option to formulate appropriate and measurable program goals, objectives and strategies.

2.1.1 Apply relevant theory and evidence in the planning, implementation and evaluation of population health interventions in primary health care settings

2.2 Understand the principles and processes of policy development and implementation in promoting and protecting health and preventing disease and injury.

2.3 Plan and implement multi-strategy population health interventions to contribute to defined policy and program outcomes.

2.3.1 Plan and deliver interventions using multiple strategies, including:

- Policy
- Legislation and regulation
- Health risk management, including health risk assessment
- Health standards
- Social marketing
- Creating supportive social and physical environments (eg. community and regional planning)
- Organisational and community development
- Disease prevention and control (eg. surveillance, population-based screening and immunisation)
- Health service re-orientation and influencing broader systems that impact on health and well being.
- Advocacy.

2.3.2 Plan and deliver population health services rapidly in an emergency or disaster management situation.

2.3.3 Participate in population health planning; strategy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation within a population health program area

2.3.4 Coordinate and provide leadership for the processes of population health planning, strategy development,

implementation, monitoring and evaluation across all population health functions.

2.3.5 Apply the project management body of knowledge when planning and implementing multi-strategy population health interventions.

2.4 Identify risks and apply principles of risk management.

2.4.1 Undertake risk management regarding factors which may impact on health status, drawing upon knowledge of relevant information (eg. health standards, toxicology and epidemiology), stakeholder and community perceptions and expectations.

2.4.2 Address emergent issues impacting on service delivery and modify delivery to address these issues.

3. Needs Analysis and Assessment

3.1 Identify the health issues that exist in and impact on populations.

3.2 Identify behavioural, environmental and organisational factors that promote or compromise health.

3.3 Identify relevant and appropriate sources of information

3.4 Collect, manage and analyse data to determine appropriate implications, uses, gaps and limitations in information on population health issues.

3.5 Interpret the meaning of information, considering the current ethics, political, socio-cultural and economic context.

3.6 Recommend specific actions based on analysis and interpretation of information.

3.7 Report and communicate through appropriate channels to inform population health policy and practice.

4. Partnerships, Collaboration and Advocacy

4.1 Identify partners and other stakeholders through a process of proactive and responsive engagement.

4.2 Participate in, develop and maintain sustainable community and professional partnerships to enhance population health outcomes.

4.2.1 Provide advice to and develop close and collaborative working relationships with the education and training sectors to ensure population health workforce needs are met.





4.3 Collaborate with partners and other stakeholders in the planning and delivery of clinical services to achieve positive population health outcomes.

4.3.1 Provide support to agencies outside of health whose services impact on the determinants of health.

4.4 Advocate on issues of population health significance to influence healthy public policy and practice across sectors and jurisdictions.

5. Cultural Competency Skills and Health Equity

5.1 Consider population diversity and health inequality and apply culturally- relevant and ethical approaches based on the Cultural Respect Framework when planning, implementing and evaluating population health interventions.

5.2 Interact sensitively, effectively and professionally with people from diverse cultural, socioeconomic and education backgrounds.

5.3 Understand and respect cultural differences when engaging with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

6. Communication

6.1 Communicate effectively with a range of stakeholders and populations by using appropriate resources, techniques and technologies.

6.2 Apply interpersonal skills in communication with colleagues, partners and the public.

6.3 Inform and influence individuals and communities by using appropriate media, community resources and social marketing techniques.

6.4 Provide expert advice on population health matters.

7. Leadership

7.1 Communicate and apply shared visions, missions and values as well as building capacity, improving performance and enhancing the quality of the working environment.

7.2 Contribute to team and organisational quality and performance standards, through ethical practice that

acknowledges and respects the dignity, culture, values, beliefs and rights of individuals and populations.

7.3 Understand the context and the environment in which decision making occurs in relation to population health interventions.

7.4 Understand the contribution and role of other government and community partners for improving the health and wellbeing of the population.

7.5 Promote and contribute to reflective practice, professional development and an active collegiate learning environment.

7.6 Build the capacity of communities and organisations to improve population health outcomes by sharing knowledge, tools, expertise and experience.

7.6.1 Contribute to the development of future directions for population health capacity and capability, flexible resource use and alternative service models

7.7 Recognise the competencies and qualities that make successful leaders.

8. Evaluation, Research and Knowledge Translation

8.1 Utilise relevant literature and research findings to improve evidence based practice.

8.2 Locate and systematically review the information and assess its quality and usefulness for the purposes of public health research, policy and practice.

8.3 Conduct research and evaluation according to research and project management principles.

8.4 Select and design appropriate evaluation and research methods and instruments.

8.5 Monitor programs, objectives and strategies based on the analysis of data.

8.6 Analyse quantitative and qualitative data to understand program effectiveness

8.7 Report and communicate findings through appropriate channels to contribute to the evidence base and promote population health outcomes.





9. Use of Technology

9.1 Uses appropriate technology and software to collect and analyse data relevant to Population Health.

9.2 Uses appropriate technology to communicate effectively.

9.3 Awareness and use of current and emergent technology in delivering population health services.

10. Management and Administration

10.1 Apply financial human and operational management frameworks to population health interventions

10.2 Manage population health interventions and strategies within quality, time and budget constraints.

10.3 Demonstrate skills that foster collaboration and support, partnership and team building to achieve population health outcomes.

11. Learning and Development

11.1 Understand the importance of and engage in the activities of lifelong learning and development

11.2 Maintain professional currency.

11.2.1 Participate in research and development initiatives which enhance population health service planning and outcomes.

11.3 Support and develop the competence and professional development of colleagues.

Primary source:

- Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada Release 1.0 (Public Health Agency of Canada)

Secondary sources:

- Competency Standards for Public Health Practice 2007 (Public Health Education Research Program)
- Public Health Practice in Australia Today, A statement of core functions (National Public Health Partnership)

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