

Public Health Employee Performance Management Competencies

Public Health Competency Based Employee Performance Management Toolkit
OPHA & Partners, Version 2 (2010)



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Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada (Release 1.0) have been identified by the Public Health Agency of Canada for individuals with training in public health including front line providers, consultants/specialists and managers/supervisors. The core competencies describe the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the practice of public health.

The following **Public Health Employee Performance Management Competencies** (Competencies) with associated behavioural statements have been developed to give specific examples of how an employee can demonstrate the behaviours associated with each of the Core Competencies for Public Health in Canada (Release 1.0) for the purpose of performance management.

The Competencies are only one component of public health competency based employee based performance management. Other competencies specific to an organization, program or discipline should be considered when assessing performance.

Public Health Employee Performance Management Competencies

Public Health Sciences and Professional or Technical Knowledge This category includes key knowledge and critical thinking skills related to the public health sciences and technical knowledge: behavioural and social sciences, biostatistics, epidemiology, environmental public health, demography, workplace health, and the prevention of chronic diseases, infectious diseases, psychosocial problems and injuries. Competency in this category requires the ability to apply knowledge in practice.				
Level 1: Demonstrates introductory understanding and ability and, with guidance, applies public health sciences and /or technical knowledge in a few, simple situations.	Level 2: Demonstrates basic knowledge and ability and, with guidance, can apply public health sciences and/or technical knowledge in common situations that present limited difficulties.	Level 3: Demonstrates advanced knowledge and ability, and can apply public health science and /or technical knowledge in new or complex situations. Guides other professionals.	Level 4: Is recognized as an expert and develops new approaches, methods or policies in relation to developing knowledge of public health sciences and other technical knowledge.	
I N D I C A T O R S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participates actively in learning opportunities related to knowledge area provided (e.g. public health sciences courses, feedback from supervisor or peers) to meet current job requirements Reflects on own work performance (what did I do, what worked well, what did not) to identify lessons learned and determine learning needs Applies acquired public health knowledge and/or technical knowledge to practice within parameters of work scope Demonstrates knowledge about the following concepts: the health status of populations, inequities in health, the determinants of health, strategies for health promotion, disease and injury prevention and health protection, as well as the factors that influence the delivery, use of health services and other technical knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitors progress in meeting learning goals and adapts learning plan as needed Draws on the knowledge of own discipline and those of others through networking, teamwork and partnering Shares learning and public health sciences and or technical knowledge with others Keeps up to date with current evidence-based research, literature, and other developments and applies learning to one's practice Integrates information from diverse sources, often involving large amounts of information. Applies knowledge of the following concepts: the health status of populations, inequities in health, the determinants of health, strategies for health promotion, disease and injury prevention, health protection and non-public health topics, as well as the factors that influence the delivery, use of health services and other technical/professional knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively pursues learning opportunities beyond current job role and/or area of expertise that add value in current position Supports others in their learning and development by providing feedback, coaching and identifying learning goals and opportunities Creates opportunities to share best knowledge, tools, expertise and experience within the organization Applies knowledge of public health sciences and other technical knowledge to practice as a source of inspiration and insight into new options and solutions Thinks several steps ahead in deciding on best course of action, anticipating likely outcomes. Assesses knowledge gaps within the following concepts: the health status of populations, inequities in health, the determinants of health, strategies for health promotion, disease and injury prevention, health protection, and non-public health topics as well as the factors that influence the delivery, use of health services and other technical/professional knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considers the potential for new learning opportunities for self and others when assessing new projects or programs Creates opportunities to share best knowledge, tools, expertise and experience with other organizations Collaborates in research to advance knowledge in the field and to inform the development of health and other policies and/or programs Actively contributes to building a learning culture, encouraging learning and knowledge sharing and advocating for professional development activities Employs innovative and creative strategies to promote and maintain continuous learning opportunities in light of resource constraints Collaborates in research of the following concepts: the health status of populations, inequities in health, the determinants of health, strategies for health promotion, disease and injury prevention, health protection and non-public health topics, as well as the factors that influence the delivery, use of health services and other technical/professional knowledge

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Assessment and Analysis This category describes the core competencies needed to collect, assess, analyze and apply information (including data, facts, concepts and theories). This competency requires that a person make evidence-based decisions, prepare budgets and reports, conduct investigations and make recommendations for policy and program development.

	Level 1: Processes complex information.	Level 2: Integrates and interprets broad and complex information.	Level 3: Identifies and handles ambiguity.	Level 4: Formulates broad strategies on multi-dimensional strategic issues.
I N D I C A T O R S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses public health and other data collection tools to gather accurate and appropriate information on public health and other issues • Identifies relevant, credible and appropriate sources of information including community assets and resources • Confirms analysis on completeness of information collected with subject-matter experts or other authority • Explains and provides justifiable accounts of facts, issues, public health and other data and information populations • Organizes information in a way that facilitates later use • Recognizes that a health and other concern or issue exists • Understands the impact of findings from an ethical, political, scientific, socio-cultural and economic perspective on communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consults multiple sources of information to obtain comprehensive information on issues, concerns or situations • Identifies implications, uses, gaps and limitations of information collected • Identifies connections in information and public health and /or other data that are not obviously related • Demonstrates awareness of underlying issues and digs for information below the surface • Constructively questions and assesses new information using logic and critical thinking processes • Draws logical conclusions based on relevant experience knowledge and evidence-based criteria • Identifies relevant connections, patterns or trends in the information/data available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies novel and creative ways of obtaining information while ensuring reliability and integrity of information collected • Identifies gaps in information and makes assumptions in order to continue the analysis and/or take action • Identifies and evaluates alternative causes or ways of interpreting complex or ambiguous information/situations • Assesses the impact of findings from an ethical, political, scientific, socio-cultural and economic perspective on communities • Identifies appropriate course of action and makes recommendations based on in-depth analysis and understanding of information including the underlying issues • Makes decisions in line with knowledge of the budget process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrates information from diverse sources, often involving large amounts of complex information • Considers a multiplicity of interrelated factors for which there is incomplete and/or contradictory information • Makes complex inferences using general experience, knowledge and contextual information • Develops conceptual frameworks that guide analysis by describing patterns of complex relationships among elements and events in the operating environment and within the community • Analyzes information to identify emerging issues and trends and incorporates relevant findings into strategic decisions and recommendations for policy and program development • Develops strategic plans which demonstrate a high level of understanding of system pressures and funding cycles

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Policy and Program Planning, Implementation and Evaluation This category describes the core competencies needed to effectively choose options, and to plan, implement and evaluate policies and/or programs in public health and other professional areas. This includes the management of incidents such as outbreaks, emergencies and other process systems.					
Level 1: Demonstrates introductory understanding of public health and other policies and programs		Level 2: Conducts basic program planning and evaluation with assistance		Level 3: Independently designs programs and policies, identifying necessary actions and resources required for implementation	Level 4: Guides other professionals in policy and program development and conducts risk assessments
I N D I C A T O R S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates awareness of key public health and other policies and programs in legislation, standards, regulations, and risk management frameworks, Demonstrates general understanding of how policies and programs are developed, implemented and evaluated Monitors the quality and timeliness of ones own work in line with program goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applies knowledge and evidence in related field to assist with program design and development Follows the action steps and priorities in the program implementation plan Carries out program evaluation using established objectives and standards Suggests amendments to improve the effectiveness of programs and policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans and designs programs and develops policies to address specific public health and other issues Develops implementation plans taking into account relevant evidence, legislation, risk management frameworks, regulations and policies Secures and allocates program resources and ensures coordination of resources during program implementation Establishes procedures and standards for evaluating the effectiveness of programs and policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees multiple program or policy implementation initiatives in the public health or other domain Conducts comprehensive risk assessments for program or policy implementation and develops a contingency plan to mitigate the risk identified Supervises other involved in planning, implementing and evaluating policies or programs 	

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Partnerships, Collaboration and Advocacy This category captures the competencies required to influence and work with others to improve the health and well-being of the public through the pursuit of a common goal. Partnership and collaboration optimizes performance through shared resources and responsibilities. Advocacy— speaking, writing or acting in favour of a particular cause, policy or group of people—often aims to reduce inequities in health status or access to health services.

	Level 1: Operates effectively within partnerships	Level 2: Manages existing partnerships	Level 3: Seeks partnership opportunities	Level 4: Facilitates partnerships
I N D I C A T O R S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works cooperatively with interdisciplinary professionals and allied community groups in pursuit of common goals • Develops and maintains professional contacts who can provide relevant information and resources • Respects all existing legal guidelines, policies and mandates of other organizations when collaborating • Participates in bringing closure and achieving settlement between individuals in simple-situations. • Communicates openly, builds trust and treats other professionals and community groups fairly, ethically and as valued allies. • Demonstrates an understanding of basic negotiating principles. • Identifies needs and opportunities to advocate • Identifies opportunities to develop new contacts for potential internal, external, or interdisciplinary partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggests possible collaborative efforts with members of the public health and other communities • Advocates for public health and other applicable policies and services that promote and protect the health and well-being of individuals and communities • Persuades others by identifying their needs and presenting alternative options • Uses a wide range of strategies and techniques to effectively manage conflicts and disputes. • Identifies and participates in organized professional and interdisciplinary events to expand one's public health and other networks • Strives for mutual, in-depth understanding and agreement. • Initiates new contacts and partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotes direct communication between organizations and other stakeholders to share information, discuss relevant issues and develop solutions to common problems • Leverages existing partnerships and alliances to promote public health and other objectives • Builds on successful public health and other initiatives to gain support for new programs or services • Uses experts or other third parties to influence key stakeholders in decisions concerning public health and other policies and services • Negotiates mutually acceptable agreements with partners and stakeholders • Plays an influential role in the development of healthy public and other policies, services and programs • Carries out informed advocacy of public health and other issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiates and maintains strategic partnerships that support and enhance the long-term direction of public health and other domains • Ensures that suitable policies, practices and other supports are in place to foster networking and collaboration • Monitors partnerships to ensure continued effectiveness, identifying when changes to the nature of the partnership are needed • Uses understanding of competing stakeholder interests to manoeuvre successfully to a win/win outcome e.g. through negotiating agreements, using direct chains of influence etc. • Identifies approaches and opportunities to advance negotiations that lead to mutually beneficial agreements • Facilitates the engagement and mobilization of public services and other stakeholders in shared advocacy efforts

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Diversity and Inclusiveness This category identifies the socio-cultural competencies required to interact effectively with diverse individuals, groups and communities. It is the personification of attitudes and practices that result in inclusive behaviours, practices, programs and policies.				
	Level 1: Respects Diversity	Level 2: Creates an Inclusive Environment	Level 3: Embraces diversity and builds needs of others into plans	Level 4: Drives diversity within the organization and surrounding community
I N D I C A T O R S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledges how own cultural influences and biases can affect personal attitudes, beliefs and feelings towards others of diverse backgrounds Seeks out opportunities to learn about cultures and lifestyles different from their own e.g. participating in educational and training programs Demonstrates understanding of how various biological, social, cultural, economic and physical issues influence the health and well-being of specific population groups Identifies services and programs available for clients of diverse backgrounds (e.g. gender, geographic, economic, education, sexual orientation, physical abilities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes referrals to available programs / groups that are responsive to diverse needs Takes action to prevent exclusion of diverse groups from service opportunities (systemic and intentional) Advocates for the creation of programs / services to address and accommodate diverse populations Takes reasonable steps to provide services in the languages of the client population Uses clients' natural support systems in addressing needs / problems Participates in initiatives and programs to support intercultural awareness and diversity Creates a work environment that values diversity, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducts comprehensive assessments of client cultural norms and behaviours Integrates culturally competent practices into activities, services and programs of the organization Validates applicability of new techniques, research and knowledge for use with diverse client groups Reviews current and emergent demographic trends to determine service / program needs Communicates the importance of delivering services / programs that meet the unique needs of diverse groups Ensures program / service environment is reflective of the diversity of the communities served Implements effective change management efforts to foster diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes standards, service delivery guidelines and program models that respect and address population diversity Involves stakeholders of diverse cultural backgrounds in the development of programs and services Monitors quality services and programs to ensure they are respectful of diversity Develops policies and procedures that support relevant and appropriate approaches to ensure access to support that accommodates diversity Allocates resources to the development of training programs to enhance understanding of diversity among staff and volunteers Evaluates the work environment and develops effective change management practices where required

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Communication involves an interchange of ideas, opinions and information. This category addresses numerous dimensions of communication including internal and external exchanges; written, verbal, non-verbal and listening skills; computer literacy; providing appropriate information to different audiences; working with the media and social marketing techniques.				
	Level 1: Listens and clearly presents information	Level 2: Fosters two-way communication	Level 3: Adapts communication	Level 4: Communicates complex messages
I N D I C A T O R S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively listens to understand others without judgment or bias, attending to verbal, emotional and contextual cues Communicates with honesty, respect, sensitivity and confidentiality where appropriate Aligns non-verbal communications and tone of voice with the intended message Uses a range of communication strategies that meet the needs of special needs audiences (e.g., persons with hearing impairments may lip read) Appropriately uses of current communication technology (computers, voicemail, etc.) to convey messages and information Presents written information in a clear and logical manner, using appropriate phrasing and vocabulary, correct grammar, spelling and punctuation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tailors communication to the audience, adapting style, language preference, content and format as appropriate Reads body language, emotional cues, verbal and non-verbal cues and adjusts communication approach accordingly Checks own understanding of others' communication (e.g., paraphrases and uses questions) Prepares required documentation (e.g. assessment, discharge and referral reports) with sufficient clarity, accuracy and level of detail Demonstrates proficiency in a variety of writing styles and effectively adapts style to the appropriate audience Selects the most appropriate and effective medium to convey information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fosters open communication with others, choosing the communication method, messages and timing in a strategic manner Conveys information with expression, insight, and persuasion when needed; is efficient in the transfer of knowledge Interprets and relays technical both oral and written information to non-professional and community audiences without "talking down" to them Writes reports that address sensitive issues being cognizant of the potential impact of the information being communicated Writes creative marketing or educational material designed to influence people's health behaviour or other relevant areas Builds trust and credibility with key community figures and groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scans the environment for key information and messages to inform the development of communication strategies to achieve specific objectives Uses varied communication vehicles and opportunities to promote dialogue and develop shared understanding and consensus Communicates complex issues clearly and credibly with widely varied audiences Adeptly addresses difficult on-the-spot questions (e.g., from government, the community, or the media) Produces written communications documents that address complex/strategic organizational issues, clearly and articulately presenting a position while demonstrating an understanding of the needs and sensitivities of varied audiences Scans the environment for leading edge technology to assess if relevant and the utility of its use Uses appropriate communication channels/technology for relating with key individuals, public health partners and stakeholder groups

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Leadership This category focuses on leadership competencies that build capacity, improve performance and enhance the quality of the working environment. They also enable organizations and communities to create, communicate and apply shared visions, missions and values.				
	Level 1: Meets organization's fundamental needs	Level 2: Facilitates achievement of results	Level 3: Builds strong teams	Level 4: Empowers team members
I N D I C A T O R S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands and articulates the mission and priorities of the public health organization Consistently meets expected organizational and professional public health and other standards Makes appropriate personal contributions to the quality of overall team performance, proactively offering assistance to team members when needed Understand the importance and relevance of our role in achieving public health and other applicable outcomes Ensures quality of own work and seeks clarity on priorities as needed Embraces and adapts to new ideas and/or organizational change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displays dedication in achieving public health standards of excellence and acts as an inspiration to others for high performance Recognizes team member's competencies, interests and concerns when sharing work Acts with integrity and is trusted by others to follow through on commitments Sets clear and realistic goals, activities, timelines, deliverables and accountabilities for own team/function in conjunction with team members Communicates support for new ideas and/or organizational change Recognizes and personally acts on opportunities that are consistent with organizational public health and other applicable goals Transfers or seeks to transfer public health knowledge and skills (e.g. mentorship, preceptorship, peer circles) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes and rewards or redirects the performance of others to support organizational and professional public health and other applicable standards Challenges processes or practices that present inappropriate barriers to organizational success. Sets project/program goals that support the mission and priorities of the public health organization Leads by example, modelling the desired behaviours, and acting with professionalism and integrity Facilitates cooperation and motivation within and across teams through various means including formal team-building activities Builds support for and commitment to new initiatives, including non-traditional or innovative activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Articulates the organization's vision and values in compelling terms to promote enthusiasm and commitment Sets organizational goals and performance standards to achieve the mission and priorities of the public health organization Monitors current developments and trends that may affect implementation of organizational direction, programs or plans Ensures that organizational structure and processes support the strategic direction of the organization Uses understanding of the dynamic relationships, viewpoints and agendas, both acknowledged and implicit, of key players and stakeholders to further the public health organization's success Continuously scans environment to keep abreast of emerging developments in the public health field in order to provide leading edge programming that supports the needs of internal and external stakeholders

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Ethics and Professionalism is the ability to demonstrate and support organizational ethics and values and adhere to professional codes of conduct to manage self, others, information and resources.				
	Level 1: Demonstrates the organization's ethics and values.	Level 2: Proactively identifies ethical implications	Level 3: Promotes the organization's ethics and values	Level 4: Inspires others through ethical leadership
I N D I C A T O R S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adheres to principles, standards, professional boundaries and codes of conduct established for own professional/regulatory body and/or organizational ethics and values Acquires and expands knowledge of and abides by relevant legislation for region and area of professional practice (e.g. PIPEDA, PHIPA) Restricts practice to one's area of training and expertise and consults or makes appropriate referrals where lack of expertise and/or mandate of organization dictates Ensures that the privacy and confidentiality of client information (including client records) is maintained except where disclosure is required under law or to protect the client or others from clear and imminent danger Sets personal and professional boundaries Sets limits to prevent and/or mitigate against job related fatigue and burnout Takes responsibility for one's own learning and professional development in relevant public health science knowledge and other applicable areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acts in an honest, trusting, and respectful manner with others at all times, contributing to the integrity associated with outstanding health care and other services Balances public health interests with the rights of the individual client and community or population understanding that they may not be aligned Demonstrates how ethics inform professional conduct and the legal implications of protecting confidentiality, including the conditions whereby information can be shared Demonstrates accountability to the public and acts to ensure practice meets legislative requirements and regulatory standards (e.g. Ontario Public Health Standards) Self-assesses and seeks feedback from others to identify skills and knowledge gaps and seeks to close these through self-study, continuing education and seeking assistance, advice and/or coaching Applies existing risk management framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes the values and beliefs of public health ethical frameworks and/or regulatory college Provides guidance to others to ensure they understand the implications of unethical behaviour and how to practice in an ethical manner Deals directly and constructively with lapses of integrity (e.g. intervenes to remind others of the need to respect the dignity of others) Establishes and maintains respectful and collaborative professional and ethically sound relationships with all clients, colleagues, partner organizations, sponsors and employees under supervision Articulates and practices a model of ethical decision-making to inform practice and provide reasonable alternatives and solutions to ethical dilemmas/issues Maintains and continuously improves competence by participating in professional development and regulatory college maintenance of competence requirements Seeks learning opportunities in rapidly evolving and emerging subject areas within and peripheral to one's professional practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plays a key role in shaping organizational ethics and values by defining, communicating and consistently exemplifying them Partners with clients to help them make informed choices about public health interests and individual rights Monitors the work environment, identifying and addressing any ethical issues that could negatively affect staff, clients or stakeholders Documents and reports all instances of serious ethical violations/conduct by colleagues and professional associates and takes appropriate actions to resolve situations Strategically undertakes learning activities related to future public health needs and/or activities that expand professional networks Recommend or advocate for program or policy change to build organizational capability to address emerging ethical issues